WIND OF FURY - SONGS OF FURY

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The sling of my rifle presses on the base of my neck and
in the hollow of my shoulder-blades...
– Monique Wittig, “Virgil, No!”

I’ll stitch the wounds on your body with my hair
and kiss them until they heal

My black-browed companion rises
my black-browed companion opens her eyes
And I see them like butterflies
moving fast in the dark
and flashing

She smiles baring sharp teeth in her strong mouth
We walk across the red dust
I can’t see where your body ends
I can’t see where your small hard fingers end
You say that beyond the horizon there might be something for us
and for other women like us

Slowly we move as fires flicker behind us and warm our backs
There are no nights they’re finished
where thousands of hands dropped in desolate factories
There are no nights they’re finished
where all the lovers fed on one another
There are no nights they’re finished
where dragonflies and lightening bugs are transfixed by
the blaze

No nights
they’ve dissolved in the blaze
Now there is only red dust
The wind doesn’t whip it up

The wind is finished
where becalmed seas have drunk their fill of oil
The wind is finished
where I breathed a confession of love in your ear
And you lifted your head
To meet my eyes
And we saw the blaze

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I don’t see any women on the dark squares
at night their transparent silhouettes wander in
mushroom-shaped treetops
in empty metro cars I squeeze a key into my tense and
sweaty palm
and I emerge from the underground passage
into the world of men

I see them in their clothes styled to look like military uniforms
above swim brackish eyes
they slip along my body
they give me a signal:

you’re just a woman
you were born to disappear/you were born to dissolve into a
cloud of ashen fingers trembling with lust/you were taught to get
wet at the mere sight of their
terrible smiles/to sigh from their gaze that cuts your body/to
choke on it
I walk along narrow streets through the whisper of catcalls hey you
Across the squares I walk like I’m naked
Through dark parks I walk
trying to distinguish the shadows of trees
from the shadows of men
After a tender meeting with my beloved I’m walking
And I carry the warmth of her kisses in my belly
After a tender meeting with my beloved I’m walking
And I remember every hair on her body
After a tender meeting with my beloved I’m walking

I’m walking
I see the look
That she gives me each time we part
This looks says
kill anyone who dares to touch you

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My mother has become an Amazon
she sat upon a boulder
and in one stroke cut off her left breast
To make it easier to hold the bow
To leave nothing for the feeding of babies
her right breast became heavy wood long ago

Mama woke up one day
And decided – what mama was
Is no more
she got on a train and went west and then south a ways
she rode and thought: I am an Amazon
the ivory gears of steel factories rustle beneath me
my evil past lies beneath me
my children who were never born lie beneath me

Enough now I will be happy
Now I will be warlike and beautiful
Now I will pierce the bellies of men

My fingernails sharpened like knives
anyone who doubts I have become an Amazon will learn the truth
I’ll spit in his face

And mama sat on a stone
The stone as if covered in frost
shards of mica glistening in the sunlight
Mama felt a chill
And inside herself she repeated: now I will be an Amazon
And she drew a sharp black knife across the base of her breast
Blood filled her eyes
The pain hardened in her body

She understood that rejecting her breast was not enough
She had to become a lesbian
And she will if she has time
If she has the strength to rise from the cold stone
And walk across the desert
To meet her sisters

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I had a lot of blood in me
It has all gone black with fury
I have no enemies
They’ve drunk their fill of my fury
The one who dared to touch
My white body
My tender white body
My white body
star-strewn with birthmarks
The one who dared to touch me
My fury will sing in your throat
I will walk with heavy steps my iron steps across your fingers that dared to touch me and sow crowds of gnawing worms in your eyes and all your parts still defecating and slowly moving I will hack them off and feed them to a dog and the dog gone mad from your foul meat will run across the steppe run along the roads stumbling from madness in its eyes madness and a chasm and from the wasting of its own flesh the dog will drop dead

That’s how the life of your filthy dick will end
Everything else that’s left of you
I will leave upon the earth under the wind

Unburied
And women will come
To urinate on your body
To spit upon your breast
To comfort themselves
And defile you

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Their faces are made of earth and sawdust
their faces tinted yellow in the light of factory lamps
all of them looking as a thousand-headed woman
all of them waving with the hand of thousands
Their alarm makes the leaves of heavy trees tremble
their stomachs absorb potatoes and meat by the ton
they are looking at us with one full face

And if a tear should fall from their eyes
we’ll all choke on the salt
salt will eat through our skin
And if a woman loses but one organ of her body
another will say – take my breast take my fingers
there are so many of us that there is enough
sweat and flesh for everyone
And no one will notice
and not one of them will say
and not one will dare call you damaged

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they sleep under the earth
like large tired beasts
moles and shrewmice feed off their sweat and dead skin
I hear them breathing under the dry barren soil
sometimes in the steppe you see hollows in the sand
between bushes of thorns
the passage of oxygen to their dozing nostrils
sometimes you can come and listen
to their singing as one a single song in their sleep
it has no words only a drawn-out sound
they are sleeping
they are waiting for the dry cratered earth
inflamed from their strides
to touch the sky
and they will walk
their hair long with time sweeping the roads
collecting thorns dry grass and roots in their braids
and they will walk
drinking up lakes when they stop to rest
and they will walk
tucking the hem of their skirts into their belts
each will walk
inhalin the air
with a breast without breasts
and exhaling
the slate-gray spirit of fury and destruction
and they will walk
leaving traces
all these women—disfigured by violence. murdered. imprisoned
by feelings of guilt. humiliated. broken.
they are lying in the earth
they are walking across the earth— to the kindergarten to
collect their children—the fruit of domestic violence.
into a shop for bread and milk— to feed their rapist
they sit on swollen penises with a whisper: and you said you
didn’t want to, look how wet you are
they moan from the pain cutting through their vaginas
they are all lying in the earth
they can walk this earth
ey can sleep
ey can drink tea in the kitchen
swallow sticky sperm
they are all under the earth
in the dark
and there is no language
to describe the fury
it sleeps like a tired animal
in their hearts
many throw up their hands— how can we punish our rapist. we
can’t touch that. the ones who raped us. or are raping now. the
ones who will rape again.

who are they
we can’t stop it
we can’t respond with violence
we can’t do anything at all
we look on petrified
and wait

when N. was in the fifth grade—during the breaks the
boys from her class and the parallel one waited in ambush for
the girls in the dark hallway the girls were afraid to walk there
alone this dark intestinal hallway can be found in every school
the boys (and in the fifth class that’s 10- and 11-year-olds) waited
for their female classmates in threes they’d push them up
against the wall pull down their skirts and stick their hands in their
pants the noise of the break drowned out the girls’ screams the
scream dissolved when the girls told their teacher about it she smiled and said they like you that’s all
those insensitive to violence explain it as attraction or deny its
existence when the girls didn’t find the protection of an
adult woman several of them hid in the corners of the hallway
it was called using live bait one of them was the bait
she walked back and forth along the hallway during the half-
hour break until the little rapists arrived they came
and surrounded her pushed her up against the wall and then
the other girls came out of the dark corners and doorways they
went up behind the backs of the little rapists and beat them
beat them as hard as they could they emptied little juice-
boxes on their heads spat in their faces the little rapists
cried and told their parents there was an investigation the little
rapists cried—it’s not fair

there are no words in their song only drawn-out sounds
some of them have no breasts no teeth
many of them remember the faces of their rapists
and all that was done to them
but as if not to them
but with some other bodies
other bodies someone else's vagina
someone else's hair
someone else's eyes
their glassed over eyes watched
and couldn't cry but only blink and see
they couldn't make a sound but howled howled howled
about the loss of their body
the loss of their will
the loss of self under the earth
they howled
and their howl didn't hit the walls didn't rebound to their ears
it dissolved in the rootless gray earth
the earth dissolved their bodies
the earth eased their pain
the earth sang the petrified to sleep
the armless the eyeless
just as long as it doesn't hurt so much

A. tells me that when the murder of a woman is discovered
they only try the perpetrator for murder it's like a sale
the second thing is free and you can choose any second thing
with the same price or less all the rapists who kill women
are given a few years of freedom on top of their sentence
for murder A. adds this means that almost all women
who were murdered were raped first and only then killed
the wedding gold

has fallen from their fingers
now darkness is our home
now subterranean darkness is our home
now hideous, subterranean darkness is our home

my mother told me he only beat me once yes, just one time
compared to that rapist who lived with her after the divorce
one time is just a fart this fart dissolved in the air when
she said I have forgiven all of them and you will learn
to forgive I will never forgive
I lie in the darkness under the earth
I lie and beneath me I sense
other women sleeping in the
darkness
their hearts beat in their ribcages like whispers
interspersed
with a song of hatred and pain
I feel under the earth
I feel above me
winds are blowing full of fury
they sing the song of fury
and call us to rise and walk
to avenge ourselves

our womanly tribe

he only beat me once when he found out I cheated on
him the linoleum was covered in blood and the wallpaper and
the molding good thing the wallpaper is pink imitation marble
I thought at the time the blood won't show and then when
my eyes filled with blue spots when I spat the shards of my front
teeth onto the linoleum he threw me against the radiator
was summer so it wasn’t hot   he raped me for several hours
and then  when it was already getting light  he brought me a
bucket and a rag and told me to clean up the mess  I couldn’t
stand up for a long time  everything hurt  no tears though!
heard the birds singing outside my window in the dawn and  him
snoring on the other side of the wall  he was sleeping I got up
and mopped the floors

We are covered in a crust
of blood and sperm
she stretched out her skin
she lowered us into the earth

new breasts will grow
new lips will grow
new hair will grow
black breasts black teeth
black hair will grow
new black with fury

awash in blood up to the vagina
it will harden into a black scab
an invincible armor
it will grow into our meat
and there will shine upon it
like clean steel on a black ground
long sharp spikes

we’ll tuck our skirts into our belts
so we don’t soil them in the blood of our enemies
so everyone we meet will see
how our legs have gone red
up to the vagina our legs are red

with the blood of rapists
they won’t be able to hide from the blood
the wind will lead us in their tracks
the wind of fury
the wind of vengeance
the wind lifting us
swiping the earth
the wind of fury
the wind of vengeance

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motionless at the bottom of the plain
they gaze into the distance
women waiting for a new world

their hands will grow full with care
the moist muteness between their legs will shudder into life

when at last just one returns
from a walk in the heat
from the smoggy city
from the war
from idle strolls along paths hard from the heavy tread of men

when they return

they will see that our eyes are dry we’ve learned to see thin
bent shadows among the quiet trees
our eyes see the plain settling under years of movement
and the horizon rises above our heads
they will see and will cover our eyes with their hands   and
our strained inflamed eyes will rest and grow moist
our eyes have already seen it all
we saw the light it ended before our eyes and then lit up again
they’ll cover our bodies with heavy bellies
they’ll warm our skin with their hot love
they’ll help deliver the heavy burden of expecting a new world
with them we’ll give birth to a new glorious entrancing world
of precious beings
precious people whose steps leave only light and pure water
    upon the earth
grown still for a moment
the wind
brings the smell of fire
brings flakes of ash
sometimes it smells of burning skin
the wind
moves our forelocks
ciaresses the hairs on our calves
it sings – no one will come
no one will ever return from the war
no one will return from the walk
no one will return home

you must fall upon the ground
yielding to a gust of wind
give up the pain of waiting to the earth
to grow and sprout anew
to grow up and walk
to become convinced

that there never have been any men

we smell of body and earth
we drag a trail of blood behind us
blood on the grass it means we’re alive
and nature is alive and it carries us upon its body
it takes a great strength to bear our weight
we move out wide and on

this means they’ll hear our howl they’ll hear it and be terrified
that’s not the wind in the trees brushing through rough hollows
that’s not an animal moaning caught in a trap
it’s us breathing
it’s our pores secreting the poison steam of pain
and everything changes when we pass

the green grass under our feet is filled with blood
charmed beasts set off after us
and become indistinguishable from one another
their bodies weave together into one cruel black body
with a multitude of paws and heads
a multitude of sharp nipples

they follow us and with each day their bodies grow more firmly
    into ours

we walk with our exhausted body close to the earth
with myriad glands drained of milk
with the plucked petals of lips
and we gather up everything that crosses our path
no one will touch us now
those who reached their hands toward us have stuck to our
body and move with us
those who looked at us with lust have dissolved in our black
blood
and choked on our black anguish
and without noticing have themselves become our body
those who saw us out of the corner of their eye sleep without
rest he sees before him he catches
the scent of our terrible body our heavy body

only the earth can bear our body
when it is covered with us and swallows us and explodes

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And if I am not these bright-red

Desperate poppies
Above the graveyard earth
collapsed under the earth

Then who

Their procession
With tender petals like the fingernails of infants
They touch the air on the wind

And if I’m not them then who

Above the paternal grave fluttering like the flame of flowers
Black flies land on my face
The sticky steppe sucks in my gaze

Who am I
If not these bright-red poppies
No not crimson
Bright-red
Translucent in the sunlight
They cast the shadow of threads upon the dry earth
The blood has faded
The blood will grow up through the earth