

Violet Violence by Katherine Manley

'Violet Violence' was composed in the midst of many betrayals. It hopes to illustrate that the best revenge for tiny hands and bad sex is to take heartbreak and turn it into art.

I think of what it means to 'grab'
And I consider it the first rule I was ever taught:
That you do not grab.
You ask, you say please,
You learn compassion and empathy and respect, and
That you do not grab people.

A whirlwind of comments yelled from passing cars
Drunken whispers chilling my neck as young as twelve
this must be what it feels like to live in a slaughter house.

I pour myself into tiny poems
and i write and i write and i write
met with a chorus of *i have felt what you have felt*
yet a smaller voice screams
one with volume and a platform and tiny hands
that women in western civilization have nothing to complain about
and then i hear men screaming from a car on my own campus
Grab them by the pussy, that's how we do it

get over it
Weak
that doesn't really happen
Weak
overreacting
Weak

You say I am weak:
I am not justified in my spite,
That I do not contain complexities beyond what you can comprehend.
Bigger and more beautiful than what you can hold in a choke hold;
The only choking sounds you want to hear are the ones on your dick,
Reminding me that you are the one who takes up space,
My mouthpiece a tool for temporary pleasure,
permitting sound only when it is good for you,
Silent as as your mouth slithers into intimate crevices,
ones I kept secret and sacred
and only revealed in dreams of Kubla Khan.
I lift my eyelids to a reptilian gaze,
demanding my response.
Slicked phallic snakes are the most powerful things in this world -

Having destroyed shades of purple
and colonized fields of lilacs which were never planted for you in the first
place.

My violet base is built upon fertile soil;
do not mistake it for a weak foundation.

Innumerable male builders bear responsibility for buildings and ships
which failed to stay erect (not unlike some of you).
take this not as a vindication
feminine institutions might have have sunk
but we have not been given the privilege to fail.
The vessels waving flags in our honor only seek to capitalize upon
our curled smiles and caressing touch -
They are never built for us.
These ships bear feminine creatures crucified up front,
our sisters hanging like an offering,
A servitude of sneaky reminders:
women are just as easily bought, sold, and traded
as the planks of deteriorating wood we are named after.

We are sinking.
lower, deeper,
crumpling and ebbing
Wading through murderous hands,
and I hope my skin stays slippery
to avoid the constraint of your enclosed fist.
We are jumpy, anxious, nervous,
We offer shakey smiles and clipped laughter
we do not know if and when you will turn on us.

Grab her by the pussy -
I want to slice the smile off of your face.
Grab her by the pussy -
Do not touch me.
My body is payment for a favor never offered -
do not offer a life vest,
you will rip it off whenever you see fit.

Still sinking, we are asked why we jumped,
why we made our skin so heavy -- *Couldn't you stand to lose a few pounds?*
For we must enjoy being grabbed so much -- *You like being grabbed, don't
you?*
I am accused of finding it hard to breath when you've decided the only ones
worthy and deserving of oxygen are the people you haven't condemned:

The people who look like you, speak your tongue, who also equate dick size with personhood.

You tear down tree after tree in an attempt to find fields for grazing or oil for fracking, and I wonder if you realize the ridiculous, ironic metaphor you're making as you desperately search for more places to put your lubed up meat. You might as well add some 'no homo' stickers to the bulldozers you use upon land you claimed in a toddler-like fashion of *I wanted it, so it's mine now!*

The Earth speaks through me, but you refuse to listen to *us*, her Oracles.

Our gospel placed upon mod podge covered placards

I scream out that my pussy will grab back and my voice is curdled and sour and has run dry.

You place my body under murky waters, my soul and mind deprived, my Earth, my life, of everything living -- you're killing everything.

and you expect complacency.

After all of this, you still expect a quiet smile and a quick uncomplicated encounter.

Do not question a supposed inferiority you have thrust upon and into me.

Do not ask me why we am tired of fighting,

why we am exhausted,

why we am gasping for breath.

Do not ask me why we am not weak

we are not weak,

and we are not ever, ever asking for it.