



Not a question of faith,  
but a call to action...

**"Afraid to wear my Garments"**

If I put  
my garments on,  
This body,  
They will steam, crawl up my neck, wrap  
Silently, slowly around my throat.  
Compressed embrace, unyielding chains  
They will say, "this is love."

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*Who is they?*

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Growing-taut-tight, taughtbyabook.  
"These are good..." they say  
"To be one with us, you must wear:  
High heads, stiff necks, solid virtues,  
In the marrow and in the spine.  
You must hold rigid precepts in your hands,  
Stand firmly in this place, with your feet.  
And with your body, be thorough in your worship.  
To get into his castle, wear his armor.  
To walk in through his doors and enter at his gate,  
you must model for others how  
The arms grow heavy with his labor, to  
make the brain worthy of his love.  
You must coerce the heart, the breasts, the genitals, that ass...  
Ensure all is virtuous, forever more."

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Change me garments, strangle me; assure.  
Make me sing, "Oh, Beautiful Zion!"  
Stressed, strained, stretched. Verify that I'm your own.  
Eyes, look up, see my beautiful garments?  
Becoming, always becoming,  
Holy, white, and glistening,  
Their arms wrapped all around me...

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My heart cries out like a child,  
searching, ear/nest, genuine.  
Dear Saviour, can you hear me?  
See this sweat and feel that heat?  
So many fingers pointing, voices whispering.  
Their venerated stories beat my heart.  
So many hands, drag me up with firm forgiveness,  
Substantiating me as their own.  
Force me, take me, swallow me up into broken pieces,  
Gulped me down like the throat of that whale,  
Who swallowed Jonah whole,  
In the deep, raging-blue sea.

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Eyes turn away, do not see  
People dying, flies, flees, disease, snakes, naked starvation,  
Sing, "...forward saints! No toil, no labor, fear."

Feel that desert heat, against the skin.

Feel those sharp rocks under that wagon.

"Pull harder Saints!"

It's all their fault for not praying

Harder, with more conviction.

So many frozen bodies.

Babies, women, children, left by footsteps in the sand.

Two sets, one set, none.

Nothing left but bones,

The meat eaten away by scavengers,

Left to rot.

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**"WOMAN, ANGEL OF THE HOME, BE THOU PERFECT, WEAR  
HIS BEAUTIFUL GARMENTS, WORK TO THE BONE, LIKE SO  
MANY BEFORE YOU.**

**ANIMAL, NATURE, SUBORDINATE CREATURE, DRY THOSE EYES.  
WORK ROBOT, BASK IN HIS GLORY.**

**TAKE HIM INTO YOU: HIS BODY AND HIS BLOOD"**

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Heart don't feel

Ears don't hear

Eyes don't look, for yourself.

Oh, my heart, please don't cry out

"Christ, are you there?"

Blindly follow in his footsteps...

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"BEAUTIFUL CHILDREN OF ZION,  
MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT.

CINDERELLA, BUILD ME A TEMPLE

OPEN YOUR LEGS AND CLOSE YOUR EYES, TIGHTLY.

FOLLOW, ALWAYS FOLLOW; TAKE THEIR HOLLOW HEARTS  
AND MAKE THEM NEW.

ENTER THE CASTLE; SWEEP AWAY THE SOOT; STAY WAY BACK. YOU  
ARE NOT WORTHY."

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Wobbly knees, bee still

Sweat-stained hands slip, grip that railing,

Always climbing higher, together forever.

Remember, don't taint his castle.

Continually ponder, recall his words.

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"CLIMB STILL HIGHER, TORTOISE.

WEAR YOUR BABIES ON YOUR BACK!

DON'T LET THEM SLIP OFF. CLIMB HIGHER.

LET THEM THROW THEIR STONES AT YOU!"

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*Who am I?*

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Daggers, stones, spit upon my face.

Beautiful Saviour, kind redeemer, whose are these?

Empty hearts saddled on my back

Voices weeping, "make me whole?"

Gentle Saviour, please, can you hear?

So many eyes look down on me.

Whip me with their lashes

Taunt me, bleed from every pore...

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Oh, man, please, don't touch my garments...

Not one spot of blood

Give me mercy, relieve me of these stones,

Help me please, carry them on your back.

They are too heavy.

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Oh, Great Jehovah, redeemer of Israel,

Christ are you there?

Climb that hill, wear my cross, my own crown of thorns...

Watch me, hear me, be me,

Heal that ear lying on the ground,

In the darkness.

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*Lips and tongue tell the truth*

*Clawing hands ripping my perfect, radiant skin. Flesh  
and blood torn to bits*

*Beating heart, creeping, snapping, shaking.  
Nail my hands, my wrists, my feet, dangling  
vinegar.*

*That blade, all silver, glimmering, waiting... To  
slice my side.*

*Hunched over, splintered, subdued.  
So much shouting and whipping, like those in Egypt.  
Those people of Moses,  
Who carried boulders across so many shoulders...*

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**"ADD MORE STONES! DON'T LET HER SEE OUR WAYS,  
SHE IS LOOKING. STOP HER EYES--CLOSE THEM!**

**LOOK AT HER PITIFUL, STOOPED FRAME,  
HER LACERATED HANDS AND FEET, ALWAYS WORKING, NEVER CEASING.  
REMEMBER, WOMAN, THE SEVERED EDGE**

**WHICH PIERCED HIS SIDE, GUSHING OUT WITH THEIR BLOOD.  
REMEMBER, YOU, SHE-HER-CREATURE, HIS SHAME."**

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*Now, all mine...*

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*Look mirror, recognize me?  
Once curious eyes, warm with chocolate  
Swirled with rich mint petals, made glorious with wild, worldly vigour  
Once brimming, free?*

Replaced by chains, precious steel, metallic grey.  
Inside 'this' temple, whirling, raging, untamed blue-grey storm.  
Choppy waves roaring, wishing to bash their feeble, wooden ship  
Into bits.

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"HER FACE MUST BE SYMMETRICAL, FLAWLESS.  
HER HEART MUST BE FRIGID.

SNOW WHITE SKIN CONSTANTLY TIGHT, SMOOTH.  
BLOOD-RED LIPS WITH UPTURNED CORNERS,  
MUST SAY TO THE NEW, 'BE THOU PERFECT!' LET  
THE BLOOD DRIP INTO PLUMP PERFECTION.  
ALWAYS STARVING AND NEVER SATISFIED.

BE STILL STATUE! HAND THIS KNOWLEDGE DOWN TO THE NEXT GENERATION.  
GIVE HER SONS THEIR WHIPS AND GIVE HER DAUGHTERS THEIR CHAINS."

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Oh, my heart and eyes that wet my pillow,  
Secret shapes crouch behind every corner,  
Hiding behind my garments, egocentric man.  
Quivering lips whisper, "Saviour, son of God, please... make me whole?  
Carry me upon your back, yolk my burden, make it light."

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"BACK! DON'T LOOK AT HIM DIRECTLY IN THE FACE.  
STAY HERE, BLINDFOLDED, UNWORTHY FEMALE,  
NOT MAN, JUST WOMAN, WRAPPED IN GLIMMERING GARMENTS,

COVERED IN HER FAMILY'S BLOOD.

SHE MUST WEAR THEIR BLOOD IN HER TORN GENITALS,  
RIPPED, OOZING, DRIPPING WET,

ALWAYS READY, THIGHS WIDE OPEN, WAITING...

SO MUCH BLOOD ALL OVER HER BODY, STICKY AND HOT.

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*Where are my garments?*

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"TAKE HER, SHE IS NOT HER OWN,

THAT SHE-HER-CREATURE WRAPPED IN GLISTENING WHITE PAPER,  
WITH A BOW.

A CHILD-BRIDE GIFT FOR A HUSBAND, STUCK TOGETHER WITH TAPE. SMILE,  
NO? TOO MUCH SPIRIT. ADD MORE STONES!

HIDE HER IN THOSE GARMENTS.

KEEP THEM GLIMMERING, CELESTIAL-DOVE.

NOT ONE SPOT OF BLOOD FROM THAT MOUTH,

WILL DRIP DOWN ON THOSE GARMENTS,

NEVER.

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Don't curse, don't feel, climb now higher,

in those soft, white slippers across

Frigid, stone steps.

Ever higher to his heavenly home.

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"BLEED HIS BLOOD, AND LET ME SEE YOU,

AS A LAMB SACRIFICED TO THE SLAUGHTER

YOU ARE NOTHING MORE THAN A WOMB OWNED BY A HUSBAND.  
STAY! BELONG IN SHADOWS NATURE-OBJECT-FERTILE ANIMAL,  
ORDAINED BY GOD TO BE OWNED IN INVISIBLE DARKNESS. BRING  
TO PERFECTION THOSE CELESTIAL GARMENT-CHAINS LET HIM  
TOUCH IT, CARESS IT, WITH HIS CLAWS.

THEN GO TO HIS CASTLE. IF YOU AREN'T A MAN, YOU MUST..."

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*Let my people go*

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"KILL HER SPIRIT, ADD MORE TAPE OVER  
HER EYES

STILL MORE GLUE OVER GLISTENING UPTURNED LIPS.

CUT HER HAIR; MAKE HER NOTHING.

REMEMBER, ALL HER VALUE CAN BE SEEN, SKIN-DEEP.

RETURN TO DARKNESS. YOU MATTER NOT."