

Silent

Paula Cole

When Karl and his sister, united me in their tribe
I felt a strength in numbers emboldening my shyness
I laughed at other people
At their bodies, at their hair
I became the vicious girl inside parroting her despair

And one day cold as calculation, Karl went too far
Intentional in his hurting, physical in his war
To the shyest one of all of us
The tenderest lonely heart
I watched in horror, helpless, silent, as the moment passed me, gone

Flying to the world tour, 25 and free
With condescending attitudes, from British men in cliques
When I imbibed too much Schnapps one night, in a Swiss hotel
One tour manager, felt this was the green light, pressed me down

On the bed, by my surprise, dick and tongue pressed hard
What a sad excuse of a man, thinking this what one does
Showing him out with deep disdain I kept the truth concealed
Cutting myself off from my own feelings, I kept on in silent hurt

My introversion in the kitchen, 30 years past, amongst the Moms
I don't share with them my secrets, staying safe from all their gossip
Their husbands in the parlor, Huddled close together
Palpable discomfort when I join them in their circle

Looking for a conversation I listen to them speak
Jockeying one-upmanship, subconscious insecurity
I add my twenty cents to the room - how flatly it does land
Unaccustomed to a woman of mind, they wish to conquer me instead

"Hush, child!" - I hear my great grandmother whisper in my mind
It remains as relevant today here amongst this boring party
I don't know where I stand
I go rogue, go quiet quicksand
Folding into myself, losing voice, to a moment passed again

Absorbing painful lessons, standing on my ground
I advocate, I'm blue in the face, I'm the leader of the crowd
But inside I'm a coward, still the little girl
Bystanding in my silence next to Karl bullying her

For nothing is so simple, the bully is the weak
Afraid to be tormented, tormenting for pre-empting
For Karl yearned for Father, for love, for attention
He acted out the monster inside his lonely hurting

There is never enough love, there is never enough listening
There is never enough of our mothers, to give us all we're missing
I took on the silence, mandated by generations
But no more shall I be the mute and deaf and dumb submissive