

Quiet Victories

©Stephen Savitzky. Some Rights Reserved¹

This isn't meant to be a tragic song: It's a *victory march*.

G D7 G C G
 Sit down with me and talk a while;
 G C D7
 And please believe me when I say
 G C G
 I don't need much to make me smile,
 G D7 G
 Just tell me how you spent your day.
 C G C
 I don't need tales of heros bold
 G C D7
 Gentle lady, tell to me,
 G C G
 Some tale of yours you've never told;
 G D7G
 About some quiet victory.

G DC G C
 Forget heroic fantasy
 G C D7
 That's not the tale I need to hear,
 G C G
 Tell me of quiet victory
 G D7 G
 Of love and life against your fear.

Don't tell me of the Amazon
 The battle-lust hot in her breast;
 Just tell me what the mirror showed:
 A warrior's scar across your chest.
 Would he still love you after that?
 Would you die beneath the knife?
 The cancer gave you Devil's odds;
 You rolled the dice and won your life.

And still you see your friends and kin
 Make their throw, to lose or gain
 Against the old familiar foes
 Grief and fear and death and pain.

Don't tell me of the shieldmaid bold,
 Her laughter in the face of death
 I'll take the smile you gave your son
 To cheer him as he fought for breath.
 No matter that your heart was filled
 With fear you gamely had to hide;
 No matter what it cost to spend
 The next two days there at his side.

You tell me that it wasn't hard,
 and it was love that saw you through.
 Yes, I believe you when you say
 It's what a mother has to do.

I've heard you sing a Goddess' praise
 On Athens' ramparts standing fast;
 What did your grey-eyed lady sing
 When she proclaimed her love at last?
 What does it cost you two to share
 A love that half the world despise?
 What did it take to tell your Mom
 And face the anger in her eyes?

It's not a myth you're living now
 The hate you'll face is all too real;
 You'll make it through the coming years
 With hearts of glass and nerves of steel.

That tale of dwarves, and rings of gold,
 Dragons flying through the air
 Is that the movie that your girl
 Was watching in intensive care?
 And when at last she's home again,
 You dread the word you'll have to say:
 She asks, can she walk home from school?
 You swallow hard, and say "OK".

Tires squeal all afternoon;
 Sirens make your blood run cold.
 She'll be a woman all too soon;
 You let her grow up strong and bold.

¹This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-Share Alike 3.0 US License.
 20080608 quiet-victories.flk

mine, life, friends, family, long

C(G *capo* 5) 12:00

(Written 2008-06-11 for N.)

Agamemnon stands prepared
To sacrifice his only joy,
That Artemis might free the wind
And let him sail at last for Troy.
Upon the altar lies a dream
And now it's you who holds the knife;
Your body's weakness holds it down:
Bid it farewell, and free your life.

No honor waging useless war
Against a foe you can't destroy.
Accept the dream you're living now,
Sail back to family, home and joy;

(Written 2008-06-17 for E.M.)

Mirror, mirror, on the wall,
Mirror, mirror, tell me true.
It must be lying after all:
The face you see is never you.
Terror as you drain the cup;
Anger as you smash the glass.
But still you fear to tell your friends
About the change that's come to pass

You pass a mirror in the hall
The face you've chosen meets your eyes
Till now you've seen it but in dreams—
The mirrors never told you lies.

(Written 2008-08-16 for C.P.)

Prince Charming sweeps you off your feet
And boldly carries you away;
Your rescuer has come at last—
But that's not what the bruises say.
You try to be the perfect wife,
But fail no matter what you do.
You hope that he won't see you cry.
There must be something wrong with you.

A friend comes by while he's away
You pack a bag and quickly leave
Those must be tears of joy, you say:
There's nothing left behind to grieve.

(Written 2009-08-18 for Callie, Naomi)

The air is dark with demon wings;
The box's lid is open wide.
Pandora looks for treasure there,

I guess I'll need this verse, too...

And it's Oh, No! a thousand times no /Even though it's my blood you'll be spillin'
I shouldn't write songs more than 10 minutes long; /I'm afraid I'm as bad as Bob Dylan.

20080608

But only Hope is left inside.
Grief and terror, plague and pain
Lay hidden 'neath a golden lid;
Who would have thought that such as these
Would be the spawn of what she did?

And in the darkness of despair,
It seems that even Hope has flown.
With friends around, you join to sing
The song that lights her way back home.

(Written 2008-07-16 for Bev) keep at end

It's not the woods you're walking in;
That was a foolish thing to do:
There's worse than big bad wolves tonight
Who prey on little girls like you.
He says he'll kill you, makes you kneel;
There's just one chance that you can snatch:
Squeeze, twist, and pull with all your might;
Nobody told you they detach.

And in the station, safe at last,
The laughter slowly calms your fears.
They'll tell their daughters what you did,
A legend growing through the years.

Instrumental first 2/3 of the next verse

men

Here's to the women, gently brave
Mothers, daughters, sisters, wives,
And to the quiet victories
We seldom notice in their lives.

women (optional, if onstage with a woman)

We stand together, sisters all
Braver than we realized
To celebrate the victories
We seldom speak of in our lives.

men and women together

*Sometimes I write verses for particular
people; they don't always get performed.*