

After Astra: Image Sheet

Captions:

1. Astra Blaug, *Demanding Better State Pensions*, date unknown. ©the artist, courtesy Feminist Library
2. Astra Blaug, *Green Glasses and Reflections*, date unknown. ©the artist, courtesy Feminist Library
3. Astra Blaug, *Women's Peace Camp Greenham Common*, date unknown. ©the artist, courtesy Feminist Library
4. Astra Blaug, *Astra's Typewriter*, date unknown. ©the artist, courtesy Feminist Library
- 5-7. Astra Blaug, *Untitled Ceramic Form*, date unknown. ©the artist, courtesy Feminist Library

1



2



3



4



5-7



Poems

terminus

we are scraping bottom these days
and it hurts

the slimy sand inside us builds no pearls

instead stoned and bones erupt
chipped on every edge
top strip our shadows
clip our wits

we are scraping bare boards
and our skin is thin :
this is the end
of our line

questions

infant witnesses attest to
concussion contusion scar tissue miscarriage
and daily fear
that family life's facade conceals
as bullying with tongue and fist dominates
them and their mothers

where are our charts of action
our codes of conduct
our campaigns of underground intelligence
our hideaways and escape routes
and most of all
our warriors
to expose the conspiracy of control
by the fathers
of the mothers
and the infant witnesses?

where are our vigilantes
to oust the fathers
who menace the mothers
and the infant witnesses?

why do we dally at drawing links
marking converts to
our insights our experiences our lives?
are we too well bred
to tread on the fathers
who trample the mothers
and the infant witnesses?

we defend to the death
our children
but not ourselves
yet without us
the infant witnesses
die too
attesting to
too little too late

is it for this
we bring forth flesh
from our flesh?

Both from *Battle Cries*, 1981

Haven she hankered after country life
though there she could have been more scarred
by her imagined foes
her memories of her absent husband
her fears for me
 had she fled her city

I'd have been more exposed
to her moods and tempers
in a village or a town

the city was a haven
for the likes of her and me
with its possibilities and distractions
to relieve the melancholy
which even our companionship

could not quell

From *Back You Come, Mother Dear*, 1986