

***every bit of the girl***

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*I am no Helen.  
No legions of gilded warships will scour the sea for Me.*

*I am no Boudica.  
No armies of blood angry men will gather and wilt for Me.*

*I am no Marie.  
No honor of reverent awards will garnish the grave for Me.*

*Yet I have sent out a thousand ships for You.  
And faced down the armies of hell for You.  
And given my nights shrouded in questions  
For You.*

*Quietly,  
Stubbornly,  
On my “only.”*

*Because I am a woman.  
And that’s just what we do.  
Simply, I am a woman.  
Is that not enough?  
For Me*

*For You*

*Amy Loynd*

# Sappho

In tombstone parchment  
my love, we lay you down.

I, scribe to your sepulchre  
you, angel to my shoulder.

Your spirit takes any form  
the reader could maladapt.

A soldier in silver heart,  
a husband not his own,

A lady richer or poorer,  
under veil and incense.

But they will never see  
how she appeared to me.

## Joan of Arc

Never enough sermons whispered aloud  
or prayers shouted under foggy breaths  
could save a world rusting into apathy  
and burning alive into anarchy.

I never feared the flames,  
but being the only one left behind  
to sweep away the ashes.

## Olga of Kyiv

Salt clinging to my lashes,  
lips biting into cracks,  
grinding enamel to gums,  
fingernails digging into dermis,  
ribs aching as lungs expand.  
You've cried a throat bloody.  
Embers rooted in your feet  
pulsate a once fledgling pyre,  
and it reignites a second time.  
You're not dead yet, my love.  
Burn them to the pits hell,  
and start building again.

## Matoaka

They have sewn her name onto lifetimes,  
but never the one that she truly lived.

Ahono created her in the water's tide,  
man stole her in baptismal fonts.

Are not the spirits of heaven the ones  
who are meant to curse the land?

Has man surpassed the wrath of gods,  
great Oki now crushed under boots?

They preferred the simple taste of home,  
and shared the recipe she never ate.

When the taste of her being was bitter,  
they traded in her foreign syllables.

## Frances Ellen Watkins Harper

In hissing meadow glens  
where a shepherd's pride  
rests in woolen paradise  
with nary evil inklings.

The very same olive tree  
under which Christ bled  
sits the dove on its twigs  
warming eggs underwing.

Mankind to rule the beast  
that only raises her claws  
to feast, protect, defend.  
Alas, we are not equals.

Because how can a man  
look upon his own kin  
and imagine they'd suit  
manacles better instead?

While man has his faults,  
you fall short of the word.  
Are you not ashamed to be  
undermined by animals?



# INDEX

(in chronological order)

## Eve

Considered in Christianity as the first woman on earth, she was the wife of Adam and the mother of all humanity. She was often assigned responsibility for eating the forbidden fruit that led to their banishment from the Garden of Eden.

## Lilith

According to Jewish legend, she was Adam's first wife made from the same soil as him. She was banished from the Garden of Eden for not being subservient to Adam and turned into a she-demon.

## Jael

The heroine of the Battle of Mount Tabor in the Hebrew Bible and the Christian Old Testament. She killed the commander of the Canaanite army by hammering a stake through his skull in the Book of Judges.

## Sappho (c. 610–570 B.C.E.)

An Archaic Greek poet from the island of Lesbos, she has been regarded as one of the greatest lyric poets of all time. Most of her poetry today only exists in fragments, but it is believed that she wrote over 10,000 lines.

**Mahapajapati Gotami (c. 600– c. 480 B.C.E.)**

The aunt and adoptive mother of Siddhartha Gautama, the founder of Buddhism. According to Buddhist tradition, she was the first woman to request ordination and became the first bhikkuni, or Buddhist nun.

**Lucretia (d. 510 B.C.E.)**

An ancient Roman noblewoman whose story has fallen into mythohistory. Following her rape at the hands of Sextus Tarquinius, she plunged a dagger into her heart, which is portrayed in various works of art throughout the Renaissance.

**Artemisia I of Caria (c. 5th century B.C.E.)**

Queen of Halicarnassus, she commanded ships during the naval battles of Salamis and Artemisium and allied with King Xerxes of Persia.

**Cleopatra (c. 69–30 B.C.E.)**

One of the most identifiable women in history, she was the last active ruler of the Ptolemaic dynasty of Ancient Egypt. Despite her political prowess and intelligence, she is most remembered for her love affairs with Julius Caesar and Mark Anthony and her suicide.

**Boudica (30–61)**

Queen of the Iceni tribe in Ancient Britain. When Roman forces annexed her late husband's kingdom into their territory, they flogged her and raped her daughters. In retaliation, she led uprisings against the Roman forces until her death.

**Procula (d. 81)**

Believed to be the wife of Pontius Pilate, who intervened on Christ's behalf during her husband's judgment in the New Testament. She has been canonized as a saint in the Eastern Orthodox Church.



Cay Bluestocking is an American-born writer and public historian based in the United Kingdom. She received the Rising Star award from the Nature of Words at the age of 15. Her previous publications include various short stories and poems for Creative Communications, It's All Write, Outlet and RiPPLE. In 2020, she was included in the largest anthology of poets in the world for *Poets for Peace* and won the ArtCabbage 2024 award in the category of Literature. She works as a supporting writer and actress for the Other Mysteries Theatre Company and as a representative for young artists and creatives through The Humanities Guild. Cay can be found on all social media platforms at @CayBluestocking where she makes informative and comedic content about history, art, culture, and museums.