

## Anne Braden

Flobots

What I've realized since is  
That it is a very painful process  
But it is not destructive  
It's the world deliberation

That what really happened in the '60s  
Was that this country took just the first step  
Toward admittin' that it had been wrong on race  
And creativity burst out in all directions

From the color of the faces in Sunday songs  
To the hatred they raised all the youngsters on  
Once upon a time in this country, long ago  
She knew there was somethin' wrong

Because the song said yellow, red, black, and white  
Everyone precious in the path of Christ  
But what about the daughter of the woman cleanin' their house  
Wasn't she a child they were singin' about?

And if Jesus loves us black and white skin  
Why didn't her white mother invite them in?  
When did it become a room for no blacks to step in?  
How did she already know not to ask the question?

Left lastin' impressions  
Adolescence's comforts gone  
She never thought things would ever change  
But she always knew there was somethin' wrong

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She always knew there was somethin' wrong

Years later she found herself Mississippi bound  
To help stop the legalized lynchin' of Mr. Willie McGee  
But they couldn't stop it, so, they thought  
That they'd talk to the governor about what happened and say  
"Were tired of bein' used as an excuse to kill black men?"

But the cops wouldn't let 'em past  
And these women they struck 'em as uppity  
So, they hauled 'em all off to jail  
And they called it protective custody

Then from her cell she heard her jailers grumblin' about outsiders  
When she called him out and said she was from the South  
They shouted, "Why is a nice Southern lady  
Makin' trouble for the governor?"

She said, "I guess I'm not your type of lady  
And I guess I'm not your type of Southerner  
But before you call me traitor, well, it's plainest just to say  
I was a child in Mississippi but I'm ashamed of it today?"

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And all of a sudden I realized that I was on the other side

Imagine the world that you're standin' within  
All of your neighbors and family friends  
How would you cope facin' the fact  
The flesh on their hands was tainted with sin?

She faced this every day  
In people she saw on a regular basis  
People she loved in several cases  
People she knew were incredibly racist

It was painful but she never stopped lovin' them  
Never stopped callin' their names  
And she never stopped bein' a Southern woman  
And she never stopped fightin' for change

And she saw that her struggle was in the tradition  
Of ancestors never aware of her  
It continues today, the soul of a Southerner  
Born of the other America

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What you win in the immediate battles is  
Is little compared to the effort you put into it  
But if you see that as a part  
Of this total movement to build a new world  
You know what cathedral you're buildin'  
When you put your stone in

You do have a choice  
You don't have to be a part of the world of the lynchers  
You can join the other America  
There is an other America