

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

She always knew there was somethin' wrong
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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She always knew there was somethin? wrong

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