

On Blood, The Pandemic, Mitch McConnell, Jesus, and My Uterus



by Rachel Allen

Blood: Pandemic Part I

I stopped bleeding at the beginning of the coronavirus when everything was so intense, but I didn't know I would stop bleeding so I bought extra pads to use with my cup because I didn't know how long my own stash of pads would last or if the coronavirus was as unpredictable as my bleeding, or that the chain of supply would continue, but I am 53 and

still bleed— although with some pauses like the pause two years ago when I didn't bleed for two months, but emerged from the forest to hear on NPR on the long car ride home, of the existence of Christine Blasley Ford, who had accused the Supreme Court Justice nominee Brett Kavanaugh of sexually assaulting her—and I felt this in my womb, which responded by bleeding for long weeks during the hearings with white guys talking and Dr. Ford breathing and clumps and clots of blood flowed, and I imagined driving to DC and smearing this blood on the faces of Lindsay Graham and Mitch McConnell, all over their faces and hair and their suits and ties, but I stopped myself because I remembered that my blood is sacred and finite, and perhaps I should save it for art or magic, so I put some in an unlabeled container in the refrigerator which my husband found almost two years later, during the beginning of the coronavirus when we were organizing our refrigerator, and he held up this plain unmarked container and asked me if I knew what it was, and I replied, "Of course I do, it is my sacred blood from my holy uterus," and he did not like that this was in the refrigerator, next to the mustard and the mayonnaise so he asked me to dispose of it and I did, and I have not bled since I spotted in March and I don't know if I will ever bleed again or when the coronavirus will be over.

Blood: Pandemic Part II

I haven't bled for a year, a year of masks, of almost becoming feral-dancing, moving, breathing in the forest, porch sitting on a swing, swinging and staring at the giant white oak tree across the street, wise oak witnessing three floods, economic devastation, two pandemics, now, its roots buried beneath the gravel of a parking lot, its branches tower over the domed church across the street - the church with the stained glass window featuring the angel in the empty tomb, the tomb where women showed up grieving, women who bled, the women saw Jesus first, and bleeding women- the woman who couldn't stop bleeding ran to grab the sleeve of Jesus, likely anemic as well as stigmatized and deemed unclean from her bleeding - all the lives lost this year, the ceasing of blood to flow from Black Lives, from 593,000+ Americans who contracted COVID and died while my womb aches but doesn't bleed but aches with grief, rages with anger seeing white men with weapons breaking windows, carrying flags not of my country tis of thee where is the liberty and justice for all-where is the freedom to be safe with a black body, a brown body, an Asian body any body that is not white/hetero/male- a body with a uterus-even one that does not bleed now but has a lived experience of bleeding for 43 years, bleeding without dying, all that blood- still exists in some form in the Earth and I am still here while 530,000 people died, I am still here, not bleeding but alive-I am here for art, magic, and my uterus is holy and sacred with or without the flow of my blood.