

“We Are”

a poem by May Cotton

We face away.

 We look away.

 We turn away.

 We run away.

 We dance away.

We dance back.

We show our backs

 our bows and full skirts,

 our intricately arranged hair.

Our special shoes and tiaras are in place.

We dance in our varied skirts

 our varied patterns and colors

 our varied selves.

We are safe here

 dancing together

 facing away from our fears

 celebrating our oneness as women

Our power as women.

We embrace our vulnerability here

 our brokenness

 our pain.

We are the storytellers

 the keepers of our truths.

We are the teachers, the purveyors of our myths.

When you do not understand

 we will dance for you

 write for you

 act for you

 sing for you

 paint for you

 stitch for you

Always and forever
being what you need us to be
teaching you
that you are you
and we are we.

We are your mothers
your sisters
your wives
your wise grandmothers
and great grandmothers
and beyond

We are your lovers and distractors
Your masters and your slaves

(We are you
from age to age
except for those of you who are not.)

We are the mothers of your children
For that alone you should attend to us
listen to us
dare to believe
What we say.

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