

Eva Colombo, *Music for water women*, sixth chapter: *The red river and the face I had, the face I have* (inspired by William Blake's *Triple Hecate* and Led Zeppelin *Four Sticks*)

That river was a boundary, I'd warned you. But you didn't listen: you looked at the river, at my reflection on the water. That river was red like a sunset which is becoming a night that will change you, red like a dawn you glance at for a moment just before falling asleep after a night that has changed you. You looked at my face reflected on that river and it seemed to you another woman's face. You've been afraid for a moment... then you've plunged your face into the river, you've drunk that water. It tasted like a never poured wine, a never eaten fruit. Then you've looked at me and it was as if you saw me through the red veil of that water, and I saw that red reflection into your eyes and I knew I will always see it. I used to tell you that your eyes seemed those of the owl drawn by Blake beside the Triple Hecate. That owl too should have drunk that river's water, I told you, that owl too should have crossed that boundary. And, like you, that owl always bears the red reflection into the eyes. And, like you, that owl has to find a way... an unknown way, an untracked way. I used to tell you that a boundary divides and joins at the same time and if you cross the boundary tracked by the red river you come in contact with something... something that you don't know, something that you used to believe it couldn't even exist. Something that changes you, even if you don't want to. Something that forces you to find a new way, even if you don't know.

“Oh baby It's crying time / Oh baby I got to fly
Got to try to find a way / Got to try to get away
Because you know I gotta get away from you, babe”

Every time you looked at me it was as if you saw me reflected on the red river and I seemed to you another woman, a strange feeling... you used to

laugh at it but I knew you were frightened. And I knew you would get away but you didn't know which way.

“Oh baby, the river's red / Ah baby, in my head

There's a funny feeling going on / I don't think I can hold out long”

Look at the owl drawn by Blake beside the Triple Hecate, I used to tell you. That owl too always bears the red river's reflection into the eyes, that owl too wants to get away but it doesn't know the way. Hecate knows. Her feet have trampled every ground and run along all the ways, her hands have turned over the pages of every book and opened all the doors. Hecate shows the way to those men who bear the reflection of the red river into the eyes, to those men who cannot stand the sight of a loved woman who suddenly appears different to them. Hecate's profile is like moon's profile... when you look at the moon and she seems to you an eye that turns somewhere else inviting you to look somewhere else.

“And when the owls cry in the night

Oh, baby, baby, when the pines begin to cry

Baby, baby, baby, how do you feel ?”

At night, I felt that the owls would voice the fright of those men who suddenly discover another face of the woman they love. At night, I felt that the wind would bend the pine – needles forcing them to show the way to those men: the way to get away, the way to come back.

“If the river runs dry, baby how do you feel ?”

Now it's night, it's December full moon. I'm alive and the red river cannot freeze, I'm alive and the red river cannot run dry. With my fingers that are cold and thin as pine – needles on the bank of that river I gather pebbles to compose a mosaic. A mosaic which will portray my face, the face I had when you looked at me reflected on the red river. Into my pupils there

will be the reflection of the face you had when you looked at me and I seemed to you another woman and you've been afraid. Moonlight will make this mosaic glitter so much that I'm sure you will find it. And you will recognize yourself in the reflection of my pupils. And you will recognize that the other woman was however me, is however me. On the bank of the red river I wait for you: you will not be afraid, this time.