

gypsy chain

crack! the sound splinters the silence
the logger shouts.
your body falls.
and a hundred generations of grandmothers gasp,
and cry out in horror, in fear.
your name, in death, becomes the rallying cry
of a new generation of activists
burning midnight vigils
swinging, tarzan-like, through the trees
building bridges, platforms and tripods
to protect this ancient brood from the angry mills.
gypsy, you began this chain of nomads
as we scurry, choking, bleeding, through the tear gas
holding quorum across ages and borders
raising fists in sharp defiance
in prague, caracas, cochabamba and rio
with traders and investment bankers nipping at our heels
with stormtroopers sharpshooters putting up barbed wires...
while on the outside of the prison,
we burn bonfires and candles in your memory.
now one million strong, rabble rousers, pilgrims....
we pour through their fences, unstoppable
while your body, motionless on the forest floor, reminds us,
we lead not to be led but indivisible
you are the strongest link
in this gypsy chain

by jenka soderberg

(for david gypsy chain - killed in 1998 by a purposefully felled
tree, while trying to protect old growth forests)