

This is My Body

This is my body
an orchard of pomegranates
eyes like doves
lips like a crimson threat
breasts like two fawns
 that feed among the lilies
rounded thighs like jewels
hands dripping with myrrh
stately as a palm tree
comely as Jerusalem
This is my body, shared, with you.

This is my body
bone of your bone
flesh of your flesh
sanctifying the marriage bed
bearing the fruit
breasts rounded with babies
stretch marks tracing
 the pangs of childbirth
wrinkles trading
 the streams of tears
This is my body, wedded to you.

This is my body
sacrilege--sacrifice
punched, kicked, slapped, bruised
stalked and pillaged
split lip, broken bones,
 battered heart
eyes like shadows
 of a civil war
where love is strong as death
and passion fierce as the grace
This is my body, broken by you.

How will you remember me?

From *Broken by You: Men's Role in Stopping Woman Abuse*, by Morten Paterson, The United Church Publishing House, 1995.