

Jane Siberry "Mimi Speaks"

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There is a girl out on the sea
Floating on a pink surfboard
With a picnic lunch and parasol
Sitting there like a typical girl

You don't know me but I've been watching you all day
I thought that by ignoring you, perhaps, you'd go away
I thought it was just too much sun as I faced out across
the bay
Hearing all these voices telling me how to spend my
day

Then I turned around and I saw you standing there
Talking all this time, talking like you care
It's been ten years and you haven't gone away
So I'm finally speaking up, it's time to have my say

First of all, my name isn't Mimi
It's Ruth, Ruth Mimadoni Castradicus Phaterpithecus
Triumvatini
And I come from a family of ten children
A tomboy, the youngest, I learned to fight before I
learned to walk

To fight for my place in a space without grace
All cannons open by the age of two
By six I ruled the schoolyard, by fourteen, I ruled the
shopping malls
Loud, active, restless, arrogant, aggressive and strong

I couldn't understand these flimsy things called
teenage girls
They scattered before me like ineffective dolls
So I bullied them even more in my consternation
Trying to make them break out, trying to beat them into
consciousness

And then one day, I was working on this little bit of a
thing
Trying to whip her into three dimensions
She was shaking and looking confused
Way beyond her ken

I was just about to give her one last kick
When all of a sudden, she got real silent, I mean, real
silent
And from somewhere faraway, someone called my
name
Ruth Mimadoni Castradicus Phaterpithecus Triumvatini

And a pink surfboard was handed to me
And a voice said, "Her name will be Mimi"
And they gently urged me forward to the edge of the
water
And we moved out onto the sea, Mimi and me

And the language between us was wordless and hung
in the air
And I spent a lot of time thinking about chains
That bound the others but not me
And then I started to feel so trapped by feeling, oh, so
free

And some days I hated the pink, I hated the pink
Pink for weakness and girls and little posies
Pink for subjugation, oppression, asexuality, moral
shriverness
Ignorance and painted toesies

And yet, it's pink that is my friend out here
Out on the sea that I'm learning to fear
Pink that's showing me the way
Learning how to not have my say
To hear what you might have to say

Stand up, Mimi, stand up
And so you're saying 'stand up' to a natural athlete
It's much harder for me
To sit here feeling, oh, so incomplete

Something strange occurred
On the local beach that day
One girl paddled out to sea
The other slowly walked away

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