

When shackles come off

They said they loved me
For years and years and years
They saw me suffer and be brave
They saw me struggle with life

I told them I was awake
I told them I was me
I told them I was alive and
I asked them to be pleased

She said be free be real be my new friend
He said many unkind words of harsh disbelief
She wanted the false me she knew
He wanted me to do my job

She and I played nice
He and I played it very cool
She bossed me to stop my new life growing
He held his disapproving distance

They wanted the past and I wanted to wait
Waiting for them to remember
To remember they said they loved me
For years and years and years

I facilitated her active abuse
By waiting and tolerance and excusing her in her grief
I facilitated his passive abuse
By waiting and tolerance and excusing him in his ignorance

They said they loved me
They will learn
They said they loved me
They will see my joy and approve

They said they loved me
They will respect I am a full equal human

They did not

I waited perhaps pathetically
I announce the next step in my life
They said I was too difficult

I made them feel,
made them feel
made them feel,
I made them feel

They left
They said they loved me, and they left
Vulnerable, new, climbing a mountain
And they left.

Sad, sad, sad,
Sad and relieved
No longer shackled by my loyalty
No longer shackled by my fear

They did love me
They may still

I step forward to my life
More alone
And not at all alone
more free
still brave.