

Silver and Sun notes
By Angie Pittman

These places of possibility within ourselves are dark because they are ancient and hidden; they have survived and grown strong through darkness. Within these deep places, each one of us holds an incredible reserve of creativity and power, of unexamined and unrecorded emotion and feeling. The woman's place of power within each of us is neither white nor surface; it is dark, it is ancient, and it is deep.

-Audre Lorde *Poetry is not a Luxury* (1985)



Amber Hopkins and Angie Pittman featured in *Silver and Sun*
Photo by Shana Crawford

Angie 2/11/21:

So here's the thing, I think, like, the first thing that I want to talk about is **garlic**. you know? You know, I think it's so effective, I think it is antimicrobial, antiviral, maybe. And, you know, it grows deep in the earth and grows in darkness, so there's this super effective thing that grows from dark. As I say those words I'm hearing Audrey Lorde, say the power of darkness inside of us as



places of possibility [i:funny.c@](#), which makes me think about the treatment of black women in here. And particularly with Karen. Karen's really taken for granted, I would say, she invented something way more stronger than garlic and cared for herself, and cared for everyone. you know "I'll carry myself and I'll carry you all with me". And it is written that she still had to offer up her blood as a sacrifice, so yeah I have problems with that. In my experience of Black Pentacostal tradition, I think mostly about spirit and blood. Spirit being hard to see with your eyes and blood being the most visceral evidence of sacrifice and struggle. I guess the next thing I want to talk about is **silver** you know like metallic, shine. I did this piece, you all might know about this piece, I did this piece called *Sequined Kisses and Vaseline Love*, and, to be reductive for a sec, it's all about my love for shiny things and flashiness and reflective materials. And I think about the power of shine, and I think about how its related to home for me. and Blackness. and hope. I think about James Brown's cape, like how that was a repellent of too much performance heat. A reflective source to recharge and energize? Silver's a weapon. Silver can kill these things and, you know, I think someone also told me once that it speaks to our primal instinct to find water, you know that thing that we absolutely need in order to live. So it makes sense that silver is such an effective tool to kill vampires because... it's like vampires can't stand it. [Can't stand the shine](#). Can't stand silver and I'm like, oh that's a connection to shine and thriving and water and life and breath and Blackness and of course vampires can't stand it! [They white as hell! So crunchy too...](#) But Blade is real shiny though and Black, you know like he has the long trench coat/cape, the leather; he wears leather all the time. All of his weapons are shiny and they're made of silver. What's important about Blade is that he's a daywalker. So you should see the movie to understand why that's important. He was infected in utero, his mother was bitten while she was pregnant with him. What makes him such an effective killer of vampires is that he is one of them. He's this intermediary. He is like in the world but not of the world, you know, he's like Jesus. He knows both sides, and he kind of floats above. And I guess the last thing I want to talk about is **sun**. Sun is so romantic. To me, I'm like, ahhh sunlight, people who love to be out in the sun, I'm like, oh that's really... You seem like a really well functioning person because sometimes I can't stand the sun, you know, but this is going against what I'm trying to say. What I'm trying to say is, sun. Vampires can't stand the sun,

which is the amazing thing about melanin right? like I've never had a sunburn in my life. Like you can't go out in the sun though?! I don't know if there's anything more to say for me on that.



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Photo by Shana Crawford

So I want to talk about this time when I was baptized. I was at church. We went to Walmart, the previous night. And we bought white sweatpants because we needed to wear all white for the service. [Purity or some shit](#). Anyway, I remember it being a big deal, getting baptized and all, my main concern was the fact that I didn't know how to swim. How could I get baptized and not know what to do in water.

[I think there are a lot of reasons why I didn't know how to swim](#). Most of the reasons being that I wasn't allowed to get my hair all the way wet. Being socialized as a Black girl, maintaining the pristine nature of my straight hair was really important. There was a lot of energy put into that which, you know, was connected to a bunch of internalized racial oppression, but that's another story.

It's all the same story. I didn't know how to swim. And I was a little worried about that because, wait, I'm going to get baptized. I need to figure out how to be in this water. But my mom assured

I wanna be baptized

I wanna be...

I wanna be...

Please, let me be, let me be...

-The Blind Boys of Alabama

I just have to say, We are righteous. Some vampires are righteous too.

[I get to the pool: it's kind of like a hot tub behind the pulpit](#). The preacher's standing there knee deep in [this water](#). The preacher put a white towel over my face and then dunked me swiftly. A dunk dunk, [like a weight shift back and forth](#). And when I was done I was drenched in water. I was cold, but not too cold. I then was immediately wrapped in towels and then shuffled back down to the basement to change into some dry clothes. My mom picked me up. She was there in the audience, I mean, congregation.

So the big thing about being baptized is that afterward, you are covered by the blood of the Lamb. But this is water. What if we were baptized in actual blood or even [fake blood](#) for that matter? That would be terrifying and look a lot like the opening scene of *Blade*(1998), but alas symbolism was there to save the day. Remember when they wouldn't use red liquid in tampon commercials? No one menstruates blue liquid. [At least I don't think](#). The symbolism of the water as a cleansing and [the symbolism of the blood as a sacrifice](#) that is able to cover your sins. That's sweet.

Amber 8/26/19:

The first layer is earth.

Garlic grows in the soil, in dark place.

And

that's where it draws its power from.

And

that's what makes it accessible to the masses ,to everybody, not just people.

That is the thing the depth and the darkness of the soil

it's

the original medicine really...

at least for everyone when it grows the original but I think also, as powerful as it is,

It seems to be the least lethal. You could build your tolerance of it somehow. You would really have to have enough of it.

It doesn't just immediately kill. As soon as it comes into contact.

Not like a gun.

I don't know how to shoot a gun... So

I'll just move on to the next thing which is also Earth based.

And then there's the **stake**.

I don't know what kind of wood it needs to be in order to work.

But it seems a little more lethal, although you have to be very specific

You have to place it right in your heart,

I think that's how it works.

just seems a little bit like too much deforestation is necessary to derive the stake.

so I'll move on to the **silver**,

and the silver has like a very particular kind of formidable quality.

Maybe because of its capital,

sort of

value.

The way it is commodified. It's definitely lethal.

First, maybe it turns you blue, but after that it's complete poison.

And I have this idea that the **silver** more than the **garlic** being something that would absolutely

would destroy a(n) empire (vampire). No matter what the context was.

I don't know why,

but

the thing that is absolutely, without a doubt, the most lethal is

sunshine.

I think the reason why this is because it's the ultimate life giver, its the ultimate revolver, in the sense that it creates cycle. It is the basis of our cycle on earth.

And I think that's the thing that the vampires are missing.

They are estranged from the life cycle.

Silver and **sunshine** are both antimicrobial, and **garlic** too.