GARY CLARKE COMPANY

Women Against Pit Closures - Christmas speech

I knew, when I heard about this strike it were going to be a long one
I were right behind it, don't get me wrong, but I were worried

I wouldn't of said 'boo to a goose' then though
I just used to cry, cry and cry, all on me own in the bloody house.

Then, I remember hearing about these la-di-da ladies burning bras
And I thought, who's got the money to burning bras? You've got to hold on to em'.

That's when I met this lot
There were only a few ion us to begin with, but then it grew
And we knew there were others round about
So we organised us selves a rally
At Barnsley Civic Hall - very grand
and we thought, maybe a few groups might come
but you would never have bloody believed it, 10,000 women came - 10,000
The atmosphere - it were amazing, they were all there waving their banners up high and singing - it was wonderful.

We went and got us selves a banner made for Women Against Pit Closures
It's all embroidered - Beautiful
and we got ourselves a song
shall we?

We are Women, we are strong
We are fighting for our lives
Side by side with our men, who work the nations mine
United by the struggle, united by the past
And it's, here we go, here we go
For the women of the working class

We bloody love singing that

Ey, my husband says he wants his wife back
says I'm not the women he married
well happen he's right
I got so fed up when I were making the tea
they were all complaining about what they had to eat
I poured it out - no plates - and I went out that door and said 'Your dinner's on the table!'

this one - were feeding her family with a packet of biscuits
breakfast, dinner, tea - just biscuits - well that's not right is it
Something had to change
we did whatever we could to get us families fed

Then the lorries started arriving

lorry loads and lorry loads of food from everywhere
from Poland, Spain, Germany even bloody Russia
And I didn't know where Russia were
but I do now - I know a lot of things now

This one - she's head of soup kitchen her
she gets these giant cans of soup she's got to open
they're not alway soup are they? Cause they haven't always got their labels on
But the things this lass can do with a can of baked beans
she's a bloody marvel

We're always doing something
it never stops
we go off to picket line now
got to keep the numbers up
it's not for everyone mind
we took one of our lasses and she were shaking like a leaf
it can be a bloody bloody battlefield sometimes

Her husband said she weren't going
too dangerous
so he looked her in the house
front door back door locked
then I saw her, she were climbing out the bathroom window
I laughed so hard I had tears running down my leg

You wouldn't think it from looking at her
tough as old boots this one
she got her knees smashed in with a truncheon
the police they don't bother if yer a man or a woman they're gonna get yer anyway
you can see it in their eyes

This police man
he says to me I know you **I said I know you**
he said I don't forget a face **I said I don't forget a face**
he said who are you? **I said who are you?** he said tell me your name **I said tell me your name**
he said tell me **I said no** he said you will **I said I won't**
he said you bloody will **I said I'm bloody not …**
and he arrested me
but that's not the end of it
I get told
and it were a woman who said this, she said..
Take yer clothes off
all of them
I get stripped searched
It were humiliating
the sight of a police uniform sends me cold
and there's no trust now
not for the police - that's long gone

But we do have a laugh though
and we know how to have a laugh though dunt' we.
she's a right one
we were in the car on way to the picket and got stopped
she went and stuffed a cushion up her jumper
police man, put his head through window, and she starts
arrgghhh arrrgghh it's coming, I'm having a baby, he waved us through
he weren't right pleased to see us on picket line later
the police say they'd rather deal with the men rather than us women
they say we don't do what were told

And Christmas, it has been the best bloody Christmas we've ever had
we've not had much but we've had each other
turkey or no turkey we've had a real good time
and we'll stick it out right to the bitter end because we're not just fighting for us jobs
we're fighting for u bloody lives
and it's not over yet.