

peace in pieces

*why you wanna fly, blackbird?
you aint never gonna fly.*

*no place big enough for holding, all the tears you gonna cry
cos your mommas name was lonely, and your daddys name was pain.*

*oh dont you try to fly, balckbird.
cos their bullets will shoot you down*

i remember a time, when all i ever craved was some silence
when even my solitude was always interrupted by the constant whining in
my ears. **silence**

i thought, was all you needed, when trapped in this space and forced to
play the same dreadful role day in, day out. **silence**

i thought, was all i needed since there was no escaping this rat race.

and so i seized my dried-up tongue and placed it in-between the whites
with every forced conversation, i squeezed even harder.

not withdrawing when i drew blood and tasted metal.

not stalling even when my whites grew tired.

until one day.... it came clean off. **silence**

i thought, was what i deserved.

so with a stolen confidence and an altered ego i would
stray with my head held high.

red betrayal gushing out my mouth.

half my tongue hung on my basement wall - it was safe there, i thought.

no one trusts screams in the dark anyways.

im almost sure i made judas proud.

because silence, I thought, was what i deserved.

i no longer had to explain my motives

i was no longer expected to defend my oppressed brothers with 9mm
pistols held to their heads by uniforms.

i would just shrug my light shoulders and as though it was not i to blame,
point to the empty space where my tongue used to lay and in pretentious
dismay, turn away and think.

if they had been silent, and not tried to run, they wouldnt be in that
position.

my silence would later be interrupted by the click and the familiar bang that
immediately follows.

and once again the whining would tear through the quiet in my ears.
silence. i thought, what does one have to give to get just a little.

and when i saw my daughters being mishandled
and shamefully stripped of their youth by men
who just couldnt understand that in these babies, the earth bore her roots,
i ... dared not intervene.
i would only through crocodile tears, point to the empty space where my
tongue used to lay and in pretentious dismay, turn away and think. if they
hadn't been born, they wouldnt be in that situation.

because i know im not willing to play the role of the brave hero,
in place of those who simply can't.
whose hands are tied
whose lands have died
whose legs are tied to a wheelchair,
who are being slaughtered like insects with insecticide,
forced to risk whats left of their lives
and get on wracks and boats in search of a better future
because theres no where else for them to hide,
and they know it's either that
or they have to abide by the laws of their oppressors
while their every step is monitored

when will we finally learn to appreciate and act on now?
and not reply with "later", "maybe" or "tomorrow",
but instead with "yes, how?"
because God knows hungry stomachs won't feed on more time.

neither will my mothers who are broken under the expectations of being
as they are stripped of their voices
and suppressed by a culture that forbids they ask for any more than they
are given.
seeking equality of any form would definitely go unforgiven and inevitably
mean their ruin -
and even then, i ... only managed to express an ounce of pity by looking
twice before walking past and just then i realized

these sufferings were no different from my own.
with the very exception that mine was self inflicted.

i just hadnt become aware of the fact that my absense of speech did in fact
not induce silence within my cracked fence,

but rather, only enhanced the noise and loud became ... even louder.

in instant disgust, i dashed to my forlorn basement and didnt even care to take note of where my overdue tears fell in the darkness.

i grabbed my tongue and in between silent prayers, managed to hold it in place.

now, with every poem i write, and with every word i speak, i speak my truth in the hope that this truth stitches my tongue just a little

and restores my voice,

until i can finally learn to speak forgiveness unto myself out loud.

because history teaches, the battle is lost once you are silenced.

- Precious Nnebedum