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<https://sapelosquare.com/2020/06/10/an-elegy-for-george-floyd/>

An Elegy For George Floyd

Did lightning just flash from the far northern plains?

Or is it thunder crying out with their names?

Is it from recalling our beloved slain

that tears mix with blood in the hot, heavy rain?

Or has the tear gas on the smoked southern breeze

brought news of strange fruit, from new, mace-perfumed trees?

Is that dawn in the West? Or the midnight firelight?

Has the sun finally set on this nightmarish life?

Red sky at morning, old soldiers take warning

You strike a rock and the earth quakes in mourning

The long night withheld its sweet sleep from me

Like grains in my eyes are the bitter killings

His murder made ev'n the driest eyes weep,

the heartless of this age ripe with mis'ry

Our tears fell like rain, as vast as the seas

but vanish in their desert's sympathy

How then to write, for George, elegy?

my only ink's tears, my paper's burning

My grief has made me a pillar of salt

the water's run out, but the sobs will not halt

On God, I'll mourn you as long as there's talking

as long as the flesh on my bones moves with longing

How can I praise you, when we cannot breathe?

When there are no more words, what words do we need?

Bring music, light fires, let them see us bleed

What can we say now, except, “now you fly free.”

He cried for his dead, ‘cause the living were deaf

But where were you, God, at his hard, last breath?

—We are closer to him, but you do not see

I was sick, you ain’t visit; hungry, nothing to eat

And dying, you choked me, ‘till I couldn’t breathe—

But what of the murderous devil, his knee?

—take refuge from all such dark shadows in Me—

God, your lovers are fine but your fan club’s a mess

and I’m honestly not too sure ‘bout the rest

the earth’s choked with so much injustice and greed

Where is there left any humanity?

What shrouds can we stitch with shreds of decency?

Is it only in death that we can be free?

There’s none like him in life, and there never will be

but in death, he joins a vast company:

Ahmaud, Breonna, Trayvon, and Sandra

Philando and Alton, Atatiana

Amadou, ‘Umar, and Fatoumata

Biko, Cabral, Emmett, Lumumba

Breffu, Boukman, Makandal, Dandar

Tamir, Tony, David, Walter, Mujinga

Takyi and Jati, Bouna, Eliza

Michael and Eric, our mothers and fathers

Huey, Fred, Medgar, and Malcolm and Martin

Millions more—names lost—but they, not forgotten

For you, I will weep as long as doves cry

As long as the stars and the moon in the sky
brighten the way of a kind passer-by

As long as the truth stands out from the lies

As long as there's water and light in the eyes

and warmth in a hug, soft strength our thighs

I'll never make peace with your enemies

There's no truce for light with the shadows of fleas

We fight and we struggle, how? By any means.

'til the sun's burned to ashes, all cold and unseen

'til we reach that home where life's just a dream

What'd we do to you, Death, that you do us like this?

I know life's unfair, but where's your justice?

My heart's well of tears is rising higher

they toss bodies in, our souls catch fire

They trample and curse, spit, shit all on ours

and just like the earth, we keep feeding them flowers

It seems some evils even time can't devour
because they refuse to repent 'till the Hour

Time's gnawed at this wound, and bit me and cut
it's about damn time, even Hell says "enough!"

No doubt, we'll beat those who've forgotten defeat
their bloody idylls are perched on clay feet
Their idols all stained by the lives of the meek
as they sacrifice us for their cannibal feasts

Their laws and their order are causes of murder
the jaws of their jails filled with dreamers deferred
The Big House is built on our ancestor's bones
bricks baked with their blood, sweat mortars each stone
What ghouls could ever call such places home?
Only the most hungry, amnesiac ghosts

But with all of these bodies in the wall
this house built on crimes is bound to soon fall
Like 'Ad and Thamud, like Rome, Babylon
this piled-up dust will be scattered and gone

God bless all those brave and desperate souls
thrown out in the fields, shivering in the cold
Nothing left to lose, no more fucks to give
they give all the fire to stand up and live

The comfortable kneel and pray for taut peace
but real ones are out here stirring up a breeze

I envy the birds, I envy the trees
they've never seen such from their own species
Our hearts are broken, now smash theirs, diseased!
return them to form, or destroy the donkeys!

Come down now Moses! Your people are dying!
Ditch the palace, come run with the lions
There's no time to wait, no place for hiding
Kick off your shoes and come take us flying

Part the waters, make Sinai's climb
Bring down the light and the fire this time

You were sent as mercy to the Red and the Black
Now our black blood runs red from the stripes on our backs
from the blows of the Pharoah's warlocks and their staffs
Deaf, dumb, and blind, will they never go back?
Intercede now and heal us, they're on the attack
Have we not always sheltered the people of Haqq?

They lie on our skins, dance and feast on our pain
And then pretend to care, liars without shame
Their faces like death, armored, masked in hate
The Legion Christ cast into pigs now renamed

God give us the strength, and please keep us sane

Please grant us justice, and keep us humane

From Oakland to Addis, London to Brisbane

We ask by our best, your Mightiest Name

Have mercy upon all of our friends slain

by poverty, hate, by illness and Cain

they're not dead, but living, in skies and our veins

Bless all our mothers, and our sisters in pain

Bless our fathers and our brothers in chains

Bless all those who stand with us not for fame

And grant us a good end, free of any shame

But now we'll still shout and still dance and still sing

the desperate joy of the last human beings

Did lightning just flash from the far northern plains?

Or is it thunder crying out in our pain?

-Oludamini

12 Shawwal, 1441