
Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Babatunde Babafemi: Five Poems

Babatunde Babafemi · Wednesday, March 13th, 2019

SONGS OF WILLA

And then you heard your name resonate,

As if

Someone familiar calling out from the woods

As if

the darkness in your life has come to being.

You see,

There are wars as silent as a beggar headstone.

Here you are fighting each day as if it's your last or

Fighting to pray to a god without face;

there are prayers at the lair of heaven waiting to be eaten by thoughts.

In my house

there is mystery to every cry but all still we laugh as if our lives has been mended by prayers.

A boy died two times only to be waking one time by the stench of a bean cake

& a woman's fetus become a boy after a rainfall.

*

HOW god ARE YOU?

How are we able to drink up the sea

& lighten up our lantern in daylight to seek God face?

The first contact a child ask about God is

By piercing his eyes into the sky to search for God face when he come home late.

Such a man in Gida alights from a bus and found darkness in his pocket,

He tore his mouth into cries and shouts

“O God how hast thou forsaken me”

“Hast thou died?”

A beggar in his scornful smile lay howling in the pavements of a weary

Street replied

“God has died; his putrefaction is oozing out of decaying bodies in Nigeria.”

*

ABIGAIL

Her silence has words burning inside her throat

Like a letter on a wreath.

A girl that laughs to the river to bathe her feet,

Alone without a cohort returned with light

Patches of gloom.

Maybe darkness remember her,

& every tear she sheds begs for rebirth of another,

& I look at her cries, hopelessly searching for

signs of her fear.

*

Tonight we will ask her again, if truly the red

We saw on her skirt was flower—Sigh—she pointed to the moon,

& the mucus on her nose bloom,

& she touched her thigh to play a sibilant song of

pain

Then she stood and raises a finger,
 Mutter some curse and walk from epoch to
 epoch
 Like a geld without a memory,
 She gallops melancholy towards me,
 & seethe my soul with her fears,
 & my soul runs back to the river to ask the
 pebbles what it says to the water fall.
 My sister was raped.

*

KADARA

You've to listen to me,
 Maybe I didn't wail much when they
 put their knives on my throat,
 Before breaking a prince into a slave,
 Now my body is a fiesta:

There are prayers and Demons....

No No

Prayer send demons to me
 Each having a price on my head
 Only if I am somebody else,
 If only I am the boy running naked
 In my mother's eyes -yesterday-
 Yesterday I was young,
 Free like the wind
 Young as the morning,

But today my body is not mine,
Not my mother's either
All I become is filth like my dead father,
They will kill me for who I'll become
My Kadara is a game
They hunt me..

*

HOME INSIDE FLAME

Perhaps it was mayhem that teaches
the leg the sounds of sprint;
Last night,
We heard gunshot so loud that our legs aged into wheels,
(Clomp...clomp...) Jim Slyde lived in the leg of many African men
Maybe aging is our achilles heels,
And it's forbidden to talk about how our fathers took to their heels.

*

I assure you, the scar on my sister's head wasn't a gun shot,
It was my mother's flying heels.
Don't call our fathers cowards

They were born with a wooden hoe,

Boys grew up inside a mud bath,

That's how we say it

That our mothers are made of rainbows—colours that brighten the house—

While my sisters are the lamp in my father's eyes.

What is mouth without speech; the herdsman light their cigars & our village flamed to history

& our childhood was eaten up by the skies.

A child is not afraid to cry so we shed tears that will boil a village out of a flame,

Hope is a ghost; we lost everything except our fears

But our home has become tales to be told by the vultures.

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