

The unmaking of a dream

*today I woke up in place that said to me be free
so long as I kept my mouth shut and made no
demands that my freedom actually be taken seriously*

*i woke up in a place that said be what you want to be
so long as what I wanted to be did not include
me being a woman who wears a kanga,
has a history of mental illness
loves other women
is prone to forgetting
or has in the past been sexually abused*

*I woke up to a dream, and I realised that I am stronger than I was yesterday
but this dream rapidly turned into a nightmare
right in front of my eyes as I began to see
that I had in fact... been rendered much weaker than I was,
just yesterday*

*I woke up in a place where it's the size of your heart that counts not your fists
and realised that no matter how big my heart was,
these fists would continue to find a landing pad on my face
and that if I am to survive, I needed to pack a punch in mine.*

*Because yesterday I was digging for gold, and today I am wearing it
across my heart, on my wrists, around my ankles,
it shackles my every step,
because now it is expected that I wear my chains with pride,
in line with the dictates of my culture*

*Yesterday I was burning with frustration; today I am growing big business
and this business of growing ever more sick and tired fuels my anxiety*

*I woke up and realised that I don't need a gun to make you listen
because the one that hangs from your crotch
is more potent and if that does not make me listen, what else will?*

*And even if I have nothing, this place can give me everything
on condition that I give it in return every inch of my entire being,
until I am left in the end with much less than what I had when I started.*

*All I need do is believe
in nothing, because nothing much is worth believing in anymore
not the comfort in the knowledge that my elders will not hurt me
not the comfort in the fact that if they do the law will protect me
just the ugly reality, that depending on how its spun
every sexual act I am forced to engage in,
no matter how many times I say no
will be construed as having being consensual*

*Today I woke up in a place whose cheering can be heard on the other side the
world
but whose screams land on deaf ears inside my home*

*A place where my brother is my brother no matter what
and my sister is someone who does not matter, no matter what*

*Today I woke up in a place that flows with courage
but drowns under showers of cowardice*

*That laughs,
at me often*

*that's cried
with me sometimes, (well only a handful)*

that says it's okay

go ahead do to her what you please

we will find something in her past

to make her allegations sound like a fairy tale

Today I woke up in a place that sings with hope to the rest of the world

but mutters despair to itself

And I smiled because

well because this morning left me a tad haggard,

and smile to stave off my tears is all I can do sometimes

when I'm feeling like this, besides I hear,

South Africans are creating a new dawn everyday

oh how I wish this dawn would cast its rays my direction too.

Today I woke up in South Africa

and so help me I am never ever going back to sleep

lest those who relish in plotting against me should

devise more schemes while I slumber

lest I miss in my sleep a chance to be part of a legion

that will create for myself, my sisters, my aunts, my mothers, my daughters

a solid string of incandescent dawns that are truly

Alive with possibility

Unlike the one I woke up to today

that seems to me to be languishing in a state of atrophy.