

modern day slavery
a spoken word by Kimberly Douglas©

the system is one of the many lethal killers of my people along with false accusations and driving while black. white supremacy encourages us daily to give in, submit, and crack. in a system created against us, we were never set up to stand tall. and I can't believe I have to say this but "evil" is not synonymous for "presidential". you see, the slavery never ended, the manipulation just became mental. but my people, do not fall victim to such tricks. they will place a frog in your throat in attempts to silence you and claim that you swallowed it. they will try and convince you that it was the cat that got your tongue when it was really the cap-ital-ism, and they talk about "looting" but seem to go hush when we mention that they live on stolen land. my ancestors did not build these countries for free, for you to kill me where I stand. you complain about your precious target but fail to recognize that for centuries the real target has been on our backs. and our heads, and our chests, and our legs, and our necks.

there are people who can't see the systemic racism right in front of us. able to forgive murder, but draw the line at some haircuts. it didn't take me 18 years to realize that you can't have access to human rights if they don't view you as human. and there are others whose silence is as loud as cries. it feels like a knife in the spine when the same ones we constantly show up for are silent when it's our time. we need allies. you want our culture, our music, our athletes, our style, you want our fashion, our hair, some of you even want our child, but you don't love us. you don't value us. you suck our communities dry, kill us, and even place a price on our lives, and that price is a "forged" check, some skittles, cigarettes, a toy gun, the right to bear arms, a broken tail light, or just being a black citizen. I'd let you know when I'm done but the list is just far too long on this one. how do you scream "all lives" then easily take a black one? my ancestors felt the same hate. but when history is set on loop, how do you pause the tape? and it really makes you wonder, how do these countries sit on the skulls and bones of slaves but continue to call themselves "great"?

to Canada, the country in which I took my first breath, congratulations. you win the award for best country to mask their racial injustice in attempts to fool an entire nation. it's amazing how you can compare yourselves to avoid the conversation. as if the lesser of two evils isn't still evil. you claim "the true north strong and free", you claim that you "stand on guard for thee" but "Oh, Canada", please tell me, would you really stand on guard, for me? do not forget that "looters" stole this country. do not ignore the fact that what was once turtle island now houses your local Tim Horton's. cut the impunity. I wasn't aware that a medium double-double was the monetary equivalent of indigenous communities. this land has felt the affects of slavery too, and you had your prison, you just called it "school". you wouldn't know the blood on your hands from the red on your own flag, I'm extremely disappointed in you.

but unfortunately, not surprised. for I'm not a stranger to the disregard of black lives. we say black lives matter and power to the people. I should not have to die at the hands of cops with itchy trigger fingers and fragile egos. my life should be considered equal. yet, you have a rebuttal. you seem to disagree. you say all lives matter, stop making it about race, just remain peaceful, I'm simply asking you to not kill me. spot the difference. even peace has an expiration

date but apparently not ignorance. I need you to realize it's not us vs them, but us versus, the problem.

and when all is said and done, when you've stabbed me and twisted the knife, how do you expect me to not get angry when I've carried 400 years of trauma, within 18 years of life? I am sick and tired of being sick and tired. but I will always have more fight left because if there's one thing my people do, we get. back. up. you see, racism has nothing on me. because I'm an educated young black woman in the 21st century. my motivation is my yearn for justice and my inability to sleep peacefully. my ancestor's prayers still surround me. my voice is my most powerful weapon. much stronger than these fists, or any AR-15, I will never have to worry about not being able to breathe, because my community breathes THROUGH me. so, I will speak even if I choke on these words, and when my tongue feels heavy and my breath is sparse, my whimper will still be heard. so, I only have one thing left to say before I'm through, black lives matter. we know this,

do you?