

A NIGHT WITHOUT MOON

MY CHILDHOOD, MY FAMILY, MY HUT
I WAS BORN IN A VILLAGE
AJJATAY WAS MY NAME
I WAS PRINCESS OF PEACE
GLOWING WITH FREEDOM



EVERY MORNING MY FATHER WOULD HUNT
TRACKING THE SOUND OF THE GAZELLE
NAÏVE I DREAMT THEM WINGS
WHEN MY CROWNED MOTHER
UNDER THE FLAME, USED TO KISS ME

THEN CAME A MOONLESS NIGHT

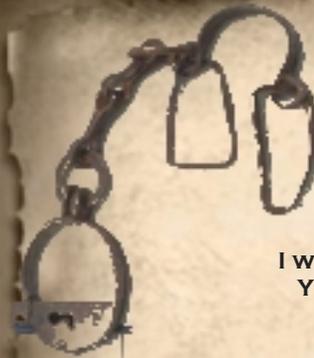
ROUGHLY TORN AWAY
KIDNAPPED, GAGGED, PANICKED
I'M STRUGGLING, MY WRISTS TIED UP
MY FLESH IS ONLY CARCASS
ON MY BODY, NUMEROUS MARKS

TO THE VILLAGE ON FIRE I SAY FAREWELL
TO CHILDHOOD, TO DINNER, TO DANCE
FOR DAYS AND DAYS IN THE BRUSH
THE SAME PACE, THE GREAT SUFFERING
OF CHARRED CULTURES, OF BROKEN HUMANS

ILL-TREATED, ILL-FED
BY OUR GUARDS, CONTINUOUSLY THREATENED
WE COUNT THE POWERFUL BLOWS OF THE WHIP
ON OUR BODIES WITHOUT WILL

ARRIVING ON THE SHORE, WE ARE LOCKED IN CAGES
WHERE NOTHING SETS US APART US FROM ANIMALS ANYMORE
AMONG OTHER PRISONERS, FOREIGNERS
FROM THIS BOARD, WE BOARD TOWARDS DEATH
THROWN, BAPTIZED, SHACKLED
LOCKED IN THE HOLD OF THE INFERNAL COLOSSUS
THE WIND THAT SLAMS THE WAVES WHO BURST
THE SHOUTS, THE TEARS AND THIS ATROCIOUS SMELL
WHERE THE SEA SPRAY MEETS THE MIXTURE OF OUR SWEATS

I WAS PART OF THE LIVING THAT TREAD THE EARTH
I HAD NO DOUBT ABOUT THE OUTCOME OF THIS HELL
THE CRIES FILL A MARKETPLACE
I AM BOUGHT, IT SEEMS, I PLEASE THEM



AND ON THE PLANTATION I BECOME A MACHINE
UNDER THE ORDERS OF THE MASTER I BENT MY SPINE
CANES AFTER CANES, UNDER A BLAZING SUN
HOURS, DAYS, YEARS OF HUMILIATION

IT IS SET TODAY I ESCAPE, I GO AWAY
I WILL NOT STAY TO SUFFER UNDER THE CRACKS OF THE WHIP
YEARS LATER AFTER DISEMBARKING, I FINALLY LEAVE THE
GALLEY
OF THE UNARMED, THE BEATEN, THE HANGED; ON THE
HORIZON, ONLY BARRIERS

NOW I RUN UNTIL I'M OUT OF BREATH
BEHIND ME I HEAR THESE WOLVES HOWLING THEIR HATRED
BITIN PÉ KÉ AY KON SA
(IT DOES NOT ADVANCE THINGS)

HOW TO RESIST THESE CHAINS STRONGER THAN OUR BONES
I LEAVE THIS PLANTATION, WHERE I SUFFOCATE UNDER THE
SUGAR
TREATED AS NAGS, I CAN STAND THESE INSULTS NO MORE
WANT TO LASH OUT LIKE A BEAST

NOW I HAVE A SCREW LOOSE BUT STILL HAVE ALL MY MIND
I'D RATHER DIE FREE THAN GO BACK TO THE SUFFERING
IT IS BETTER TO DIE STANDING THAN LIVE ON MY KNEES

I'M ON A SLIPPERY SLOPE BUT I LEARN TO LOVE THESE TUNES

I HOPE TO ONE DAY INSPIRE AN EDOUARD GLISSANT OR AN
AIMÉ CÉSAIRE.

