

Why is the Black Man Scared?

Why is the black man scared?

Why is the black man scared?

Because he knows his history

Because he knows that while he has a passport and an accent, he has never been welcomed in his country

Since he knows how his family got here

How they were ripped from their mothers, brothers, husbands, wives, sisters fathers, cousins and taken to a new land

A land with different colours

Different diseases

Different languages

And sold like property

In chains

So the white man could have money

So the white man could be loved

So the white man could wear nice clothes, and eat nice foods, and sleep on nice beds, and not know the pain

The heat

The exhaustion

The fear

Of the black man

How a white man fought for them

How a white man decided to try something new

How more white men said no

And started a war

With death

And blood

All because the white men did not see people, they saw colour

How a nation

Which claimed to be great

Was ripped apart

Because black men were not white men

How even after the war was won

Even after a law was passed

Even after the black men were free

They couldn't go home

Because this was their home

Because their ancestors who were taken had had children

Who had children

Who had children and those children only knew here

This place
This home
And the white men said no
They did not care that they had brought them here
They did not care that they had changed lives
They said no
This is not your home
This is my home
This is where we learn, where we eat, where we drink, where we walk, where we sit
on busses
And trains
And carts
And you will not join us

And the black men fought back
They wanted equality
They wanted peace
They wanted to be treated like people, not mud
And the white men said no
You cannot fight back
You cannot speak
Or we will kill you

Why is the black man scared
Because he has seen how his ancestors were killed
Hanged on trees
Shot in streets
By white men who didn't care about the law
Or the Constitution
Or equality
By white men who cared about themselves
Who cared about seniority
Who didn't pick cotton
Or watch family killed
Or never saw their children because they were taken

And still he wants peace
He has seen one man march across the nation
With white and black men
And stood on the steps of the monument to that white man who wanted peace
And speak of a dream
A dream of freedom
Of love
Of compassion
And the black man had hope

And he saw a black man run for President
And be told he was not American
Because he was black
But then he won
And there was a black man as an equal
A black man and woman on posters
On television
In newspapers
And only for good things
And there was peace

And then one black boy was shot
Because one man thought he was dangerous
And then another
And another
And another
By people the black man had trusted
To protect the black man from harm
To stop the hatred
And the hurt
To help the people
And not see colour
And the black men stopped calling for help
Because needing help got him killed
And fighting back put him in jail
And the black man was shocked
That even with a black President
People still saw colour
Not people

? is the black man scared
Because nigger is not just a word
Because African – Americans are respected and loved
But niggers are raped and beaten and killed
Because it's called the n-word for a reason
Because white men in supermarkets
At gas stations
In schools
Are calling people niggers
And its not a mistake
And it's a threat to his life
And is the blood in his veins
And his history
And the black man thinks of his ancestors
Who were also called nigger
And who died in pain, alone, and afraid

And thinks maybe its not history
And it's all because the white man could not see people
Only colour

Why is the gay man scared?
Because he knows his history
Because he knows how other gay people were hurt
He knows how gay people were charged with sodomy
And burned for heresy
Or hanged for treason
He knows how other gay people married to hide who they loved
And they could either live a lie
Or risk death
He knows that this country is not a country of religion
There is no American heresy
This is a safe country
A refuge

But its not
He knows that what people create don't matter
He knows that in other countries, people who invent don't matter
People who create computers don't matter
People who are scientists, artists, scholars don't matter
It's only who they love that matters
And other men take their ideas
Their creations
Their minds
And destroy their hearts
Destroy their lives
And tell them they have to change
But don't give them a choice
And tell them they will be changed
And it will hurt
But they deserve it
And will be happy afterwards
Because they will not be themselves
And they shock them into submission
Because the gay man wants to live
But not for long

Why is the gay man scared?
Because he has seen people like him hang themselves
And shoot themselves
And stab themselves
And throw themselves in front of cars
And trains

And busses
Because he cannot love
Because he does not have freedom
Because he cannot change
And because people don't love him

And the gay man was hiding
In weddings
In churches
In theatres
Because he was scared
Because he wanted love

And then people started loving
They started loving everyone
People realized that war and death are worse than love and sex
And the gay man was happy
And he was free

And then he was sick
He saw the world hate him because of some letters
Because of something he couldn't control
Because he was blamed for his brother's death
His friend's death
His friend's brother's suffering
And the gay man was scared again

Why is the gay man scared?
Because his family threw him into the street
Because he lost his family's love
Because he is not allowed to love who he wants
Only who they tell him to
Because he is different
Because what is in his mind is not in his body
Because he hates himself for causing people pain
Even though he feels so much
Because pretending is exhausting
Ignoring stares is exhausting
Fighting is exhausting
But happiness is not

And he saw a black man as President
A black man who understands what pain is
What hatred is
And the gay man had hope

And then the gay man was told he could marry who he wanted
Love who he wanted
That gender was a social construct
That people loved him
And he was happy

Why is the gay man scared?
Because faggot is not just a word
Because LGBTQAI is not just a series of letters
It is respect and love and support
But faggot is pain and loneliness and death
He knows a fag is something you smoke
Not someone
He knows that the f-word is not the same as when he was little
It is a promise of hatred, not love
And it is yelled to him at red lights
In the streets
In the bathroom
Because he can love who he wants

Why is the Jewish man scared?
Because he knows his history
Because his ancestors have been hunted since the beginning
Because Judaism is a religion of peace and community
And people like that
Because it posed a threat to other religions
And allowed people freedom in faith
Because the holy land is claimed by so many
And the Jews left to find new places
They went to Europe, where the church was
And were hunted
And burned
And forced to watch their families killed
Because they understand having a history of enslavement
And pain
And death
Because they are different
Because they have dark hair
But they escaped and survived
But they were still hated
Because they act differently
And light candles
And pray in a different language
And do not use a pope to speak to god

And they are called the nomadic religion

Because they could not return to their home
And even though they no longer knew it
It was still their home
Because the milk and honey runs through their veins
Because they ran from country to country
Because they were blamed for the black death
Because it is their religion to wash
And be clean
And they survived
And others did not
So they were hunted
And hid through pogroms and inquisitions
And ran all over the world

And still they had hope
Because still they survived
And even though their temples had been destroyed
And their books burned
And their rabbis killed
Still they hoped
And prayed
And trusted each other
As a community
As a family
All over the world

And they focused on work
They studied
And prayed
And learned business
And art
And science
And politics
And law
And vowed to be more than their religion
And they were successful

And then there were problems
A world war
A suppressed nation
A man looking for someone to blame
And a people who just wanted to live normal lives

Why is the Jewish man scared?
Because he knows his history
Because a Star of David in the wrong color means genocide

Because he sees the pain in his grandfather's eyes
A man with a series of numbers tattooed on his arm
That mean nothing
Nothing but 6000000
Nothing but gas chambers
And extermination
And experimentation
And slavery
Nothing but nightmares
And frozen bodies
And harsh words accompanied by even harsher guns
Nothing but digging his mother's grave while she watched
Nothing but seeing his sister dragged toward a smoking, stinking building
Where a pile of children's shoes sits vigil
Waiting for parents who will never return
Nothing but being chosen to survive on his appearance, or another's man's sexual
appetite
Nothing but pain and loss
Lost friends
Lost families
Lost homes
Lost hope
And still they survive
Because they never lost faith

Why is the Jewish man scared?
Because it wasn't long ago in a biblical desert
It was here
It was in this time
With witnesses and survivors and books and documents
And still people deny
Still people say that he is dramatic
A liar
Attention-seeking
A parasite
Because he swore NEVER AGAIN
Because he wanted his children and his children's children to never know the pain
and fear he knew
In his grandfather's eyes
Never to see his family killed
Because he wants to keep his word
He wants to protect the world from what happened
By teaching them to love

Why is the Jewish man scared?
Because "go back to the camps" is a death threat

Because extermination isn't funny
Because genocide spills more than blood
Because even though the man's grandfather did not believe in god, he was
persecuted
Because synagogues have symbols painted on them that promise that people did not
forget
That people believe it was right
That people believe this man does not deserve to live
Because of a book written in a language he doesn't read and speaks of events that
may not have happened
Because the first letter of Nazi stands for Nationalist
And people agree
That he cannot have a history and a culture and a nationality
That his life doesn't matter

Why is the woman scared?
Because she knows her history
Because she knows that her voice has never been respected
Because powerful women were the center of comedies
Because men have seen women as objects
To be played with and discarded
Empty shells good only for pleasure and procreation
To be dismissed or killed or banished for having a mind
A being
An emotion
A voice

Because she knows that leaders went through women faster than money
And that people let them
Fathers, brothers, husbands let them
Because they benefit
Because women are too feeble to understand what power is
What money is
What politics, or law, or religion is
That women are to do what they're told
And be seen, not heard

Why is the woman scared?
Because she knows that her ancestors have been branded as witches
For being smart
For being ambitious
For being in love
And burned at the stake
Without a blink of an eye
Not once, not twice, but hundreds of times all over the world
Because she has been told that her body is good for sons, not daughters

Because daughters are not worth anything
But a chance to marry rich
Because they are women
But not to learn
Not to understand religion
Or philosophy
Or the alphabet
Because that is the man's work
The man's business
And the woman must cook
And clean
And raise children
Because those are jobs for the weak
For the undeserving

Why is the woman scared?
Because men could be with who they wanted, but women committed adultery
Because women were sluts
And whores
And prostitutes
And wanton
But the men were carefree
And enthusiastic
And adventurous
And changeable

Because her ancestors had to fight to have a vote
In a modern nation
Where women can work alongside men
But not as equals
As secretaries
And maids
And waitresses
To be closer to look at
To do the easy work
That doesn't require any thought

Because the men in power think they know her body better than her
When they cringe at the word period
Or tampon
Or uterus
Never knowing the pain of cramps
Or labour
Never thinking that maybe the woman does not want a baby
Maybe the woman cannot support a baby
Maybe her world is dangerous for a baby

But the man doesn't care
Because he knows better

Even though he has never woken up to blood-stained sheets
Or sweated and screamed as unknown liquids poured out of his body
He does not care that giving birth is dangerous
That creating new life is not just uncomfortable
Not just painful
It is life threatening

And yet the religious countries of the world love women
Respect woman
They are Queens
And Chancellors
And Police Chiefs
And Prime Ministers
And yet her country is scared by a woman judge
A country with no religion is scared by a woman with as much power as a man
Having more powerful women than powerful men
So they will control them
With laws
And bills
And religion
When all she wants is freedom
And a choice

Because her right to have a child
Or not have a child
Could be taken away
By a man who doesn't know why or how
And because it won't stop
It won't disappear
Because her mother
And her mother's mother
And her ancestors know about outlawing
About Prohibition
About what will happen
About blood
And secrets
And death
And coathangers
And history

Why is the woman scared?
Because "make me a sandwich" is not a request
Its never a request

Because a slut is a woman with a man's appetite
Because a bitch is a woman who will speak her mind
No matter who thinks she should not
And will refuse him a slap on the ass
Or a squeeze of her tits
Or a kiss
Or a smile
Because she is not a vagina
She is not a pussy
She is not an hourglass shaped sexy mama with a fat ass
She is a person
And a mind
And a soul
And she deserves the same respect

Why is the native man scared?
Because he knows his history
Because he knows humility and acceptance and respect
He knows tolerance is not enough
But chooses his priorities
Chooses his ancestor's land over occupied government
Chooses honoring his family
His home
Over greed
And money
And power
Chooses to live in poverty
And crime
And drugs
Because the white man will not give him his land
The white man has claimed his land
Even though the white man is not from his land

Because the first white man decided he was different
So he was not worthy of respect
He did not have a civilization
So he came with guns
And swords
And rape
And invisible weapons
Diseases
Sicknesses he could not prevent
Sicknesses that killed his friend
His chief
His brother
His sister

After she had been raped by the white man

But he did not leave
He had nowhere to go
This was his home
Where his family was
Where his culture was
He would not abandon his tribe
And the white man called him names
Told him he was like everyone else
Told him he was the same as his enemies
The same as his neighbor
The same as his friend
And no one was different
But the native man knew better
He knew that not all white men were the same
Because not all the native men were the same

So when the new white men came he welcomed them
He saw them suffering
And dying
And crying
And new he could help
So he taught them how to grow food
And invited them to live in his land
And wanted to be friends
And the white man was thankful
And made it a holiday
For all of the white men of the land
To celebrate friendship
And kindness

But the white man forgot
Forgot the native man's friendship
And wanted more land
Wanted more resources
Wanted the native man to be a white man
So he took his land
Took his home
Took his money
His religion
His children
And taught them that the native man was bad
The native man was stupid
The native man did not speak the good language
And forced him to learn the white man language

And the white man religion
And the white man history
And hurt him when he wanted to be himself
A native man
And the native man lost his history
Lost his language
Lost his stories
Lost his culture
Because the white man made him

But the white man was not satisfied
Because the white man wanted more land
So he forced the native man to walk
To walk with his family
With his friends
With his neighbors
With his enemies
With his tribe
And he saw death
He saw violence
He did not see humanity
He did not see peace
And when he was allowed home
He was not allowed to his entire home
Only parts of his home
And the white man asked for thanks
Because he had reserved some of the native man's land
A piece of the native man's land
For all of the native man's tribe
But the native man was smart
He was angry
But he was smart
So he said thank you
And lived as a native man

And the world went to war
And the native man was not allowed to protect his land
Not allowed to fight
Because he was not a white man
He was a native man
But they did not call him native
Because now the white man was native
They called him Indian
A mistake from the first white man
But the native man protected his reserved land
Because it was still his

Because it was holy
Even though he was poor
And there was crime
And drugs
And alcohol
It was still his land
And he cared about his people

And then the world went to war again
And the white man needed the native man
So he lined up to help
Because he wanted to save his land
He wanted to save his people
He wanted to save humanity
And he fought with other people like him
Other people the white man did not like
Against people the white man did not like
But the native man travelled
And the native man won
He succeeded
He turned the war
He was famous
Until the white man decided the native man should not be famous
That the native man is a white man
So the white man succeeded
And the white man turned the war
And made a statue of the white man
Pretending to be a native man
Taking credit for the native man
And the statue became famous
And the native man's achievements were forgotten

Until the white man decided the Earth did not matter
Until the white man decided she had too much to offer
Too much money
Too much oil
Too much gold
And diamonds
And coal
And decided money was more important than people
Than the white man
The black man
The native man
Than any man

And they put people in the ground

Alive
To get the coal
So they could burn it for fuel
And make life easy
And make money
But they would not pay them much of the money
Because they wanted it for themselves
And the coal man did not matter

Why is the native man scared?
Because the Earth is alive
Because the Earth needs help
Because she gives water and food
And lets man live on her
And breathe her air
And still she is sick
And the white man does not want to help
He does not care that she is dying
That the oceans are dying
That animals are dying
That plants are dying
That people will soon die
Because she cannot live and give life when she is dead

And the white man says that it is true
That science says it is true
That the world is hot
That the world is scared
And the native man knows
The native man knows that there is no food to hunt
There are no berries to gather
Like his ancestors hunted and gathered
Because nature does not live in metal buildings
With control over light and dark
Nature lives in the wild
And people are also wild
And with no wild there are no people
And soon there will be more metal than wild
And there will be no stores to buy food from
No stores to buy water from
Nowhere to buy water from

Why is the native man scared?
Because still the white man does not care
Still the white man wants more money
Still the white man wants to build a pipe

Through the native man's reserved land
Through his holy land
Through his ancestor's bodies
To get more of the Earth to the white man

And the native man does not understand
Because the white man wants to hurt other white men
By building a pipe
That could poison his people
And the native man's people
And the people of this land
And still people like the white man
And will kill the native man
Even though he is peaceful
Even though he is praying
Even though he does not use metal to protect his land
But uses nature and words to protect his people
And the native man does not understand
How the white man could be so similar
Yet be so different

Why is the native man scared?
Because while he likes baseball and football
He is not an Indian or "red-skinned"
Because he is anything but a foreigner
Because he is a true native man
And he sacrificed his history
His culture
His language
His land
His rights
His recognition
To save his existence

Why is the white man scared?
Because he knows his history
Because he knows that his ancestors have written history
Because he has studied Rome
And England
And Russia
And Greece
And China
And Germany
And can see patterns
Can see that history is happening again
Can see that the pattern is starting over

And will end in destruction
And hatred
And will end with revolution
And burning effigies
And flags
And signs
And broken windows
And it starts with "don't worry"
And "this will pass"
And "don't be dramatic"
And "it happens to everyone"

Why is the white man scared?
Because he believes in his country
Because he believes that his is a nation of democracy
And of freedom
And of equality
And yet it has a Constitution that comes with footnotes
With asterisks
But only to certain people
Even though they are all like him

And the world does not see his nation as a beautiful country
It sees it as loud
As greedy
As oppressive
As selective
As unjust
And as powerful beyond measure
It sees it as tyrannical
And entitled
And self-motivated
And not concerned with the rest of the world
Even though the rest of the world is concerned with the nation

The white man wants to be proud of his flag
Of what it represents
Yet is uncomfortable with hanging his flag out of his window
Off of his car
On his shirt
Because his flag makes people assume
Assume things about him
His family
His friends
His neighborhood
And he is ashamed that there is reason to judge

There is reason to be ashamed

Why is the white man scared?

Because while slurs are thrown at passerbys in the street

And shouted at drivers at red lights

And written on walls

And windows

And sidewalks

And forced on children in schools

The worst thing you can call a white man

Is a white man

Why is the black man, gay man, Jewish man, woman, Native man, white man scared?

Why are you not scared?