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I am Not that Corpse:
A Working Praxis for Black Lives Matter

Demetrius Noble

I AM NOT

Michael Brown

I wasn't shot down and left in the street like trash

Police aren't stomping over my dried blood while bombing my
hood with teargas

My momma's face ain't drowning in putrid tears and thick globs of
snot

My daddy's soul ain't on fire crying why his baby boy shot

My niggas ain't weeping

as they reminisce on laughs we shared last weekend

My black flesh aint pieced by white cop bullet

My blood ain't leaking

I ain't Eric Garner

I ain't got cops on my neck just squeezing and squeezing and
squeezing and squeezing

Till they choke me lifeless and my black ass stop breathing

I ain't John Crawford

Police didn't murdered me in Walmart for holding a toy weapon
on sale in the toy section

My baby mom ain't have to hear the police chief say the cops
made the right decision

While she tries to explain why I'm never coming home to our
small children

I'm not Tamir Rice

Trigger happy cops didn't snatch my innocent 12-year old life in a
park in broad daylight

I'm not Akai Gurley

I wasn't gunned down in a housing project stairwell

Crawling with armed cops trained to believe that's where criminals
dwell

Dispatched on vertical patrols like rabid rats that harass and troll

Those dark denizens forced to inhabit capital's hellholes

I'm not Johnathan Ferrell
 Not Ezell Ford
 I'm not Shereese Francis
 Not Rekia Boyd

I'm not Renisha McBride
 My nigga I'm still alive
 So the question remains
 HOW CAN I NOT RIDE???

There are NO excuses
 But the truth is we'd rather be dead
 That's why we march holding signs of "I am Trayvon" above our
 heads
 That's the wishful thinking of the already defeated
 An empty slogan for those who have already conceded
 That this world can't be radically changed

Thus there's no incentive to organize and strategize to redirect our
 lives
 Towards revolution
 We'd rather be walking bullseyes wondering if we're next when
 they're shooting
 We scream we bout that life
 But our lack
 Of action says
 We bout that slow death
 We bout heavy sobs in between stolen breaths
 We bout pictures on t-shirts, candlelight vigils, funerals, hashtag
 memorials
 Our lives are rushed dress rehearsals for death

Long prayers with Jesus help us feel alive when we just
 lambs for the slaughter
 Sitting ducks waiting to be plucked out of broke levee's water
 And while we play possum
 They get mo' ruthless
 Notice the pigs' pistols have replaced the klan's nooses
 They institutionalized the terror and we pay taxes to the institutions

We lay prostrate for the state
 Hold silent vigils at the courthouse gates
 Instead of dragging out the cops, jurors and judges with their
 heads on stakes

We place foolish faith in their district attorneys
Meanwhile they place our kids on gurneys
We chant no justice no peace
But suffer injustice in peace
We scared to scream fuck the police
Let alone buck at the beast
We think we Big Meech
But they running the streets
Armed to the teeth with a license to kill
And all the black bodies they leave behind are proof that they will
They yell "DON'T MOVE!"
Then shoot when we still

But I aint shot yet
I am not Oscar Grant
I am not Aiyana Jones: a 7 year old girl shot by the police while
sleep in her own home

I AM ALIVE
Which means there is no excuse
To not struggle for revolution
Study for revolution
Organize for revolution

I AM ALIVE
I must revolt
WE MUST WIN

A Martyr Without a Cause or Much Ado About Trayvon

Demetrius Noble

Another young black body becomes a stage
 Upon which corporate media manufactures outrage
 Front page headlines highlight passive gatherings in streets
 Where multitudes perform resistance with candied sweets

We tweet our disbelief
 Pray that Jesus eases the Martin family's grief
 And while police restock with more pepper spray and more heat
 We like photos of hooded politicians and the Miami Heat

We demand the conviction of a pig-influenced Zimmerman
 but feign ignorance to the fact that 70% of the world lives on less
 than \$2 a day
 they can't afford the stamp much less the skittles you plan to mail
 away
 to the Sanford police while you play like you NWA
 besides isn't there a better way to say fuck the 5.0
 other than eat my candy and taste the rainbow

maybe we'll never know cuz we spend too much energy reimagining
 Trayvon as Emmett Till and painting Zimmerman as the KKK
 without questioning if anti-black racism still functions that way
 ain't it ironic how the commodified iconography of yesterday
 can sabotage our ability to properly theorize today

Dominant discourses distorting viable voices from the left
 Until reactionary rhetoric wrapped in respectability politics is all
 that's left
 This vicious class system remains unaddressed
 While sanctioned conversations converge on Rachel Jeantel's diction
 and Trayvon's dress

What is/Who is Trayvon within the global cartography of black
 death?

Is he

1 nigga memorialized by hoodies and candy
 Or the contradictions of capital come *home*?

If Barack had a son would he look like Trayvon
 Or one of the thousands of Africans that he bombed?

Why do we/ how should we mourn him?
Should not the dead bury their dead
While the living endeavor for their freedom instead?

Somewhere in between his murder and the performed purchase of
Arizona tea
Arizona is still being terrorized by tea party decrees

You might not see the link but allow me to bring it home
In each scenario white tyranny polices where colored bodies can
roam
When in Rome, many do as the Romans
They eat skittles, drink tea, wear hoodies, go voting
They celebrate four more years and applaud a murderous
commander in chief
Who smiles under drones with black blood dripping from his
pearly white teeth
While he belches and speaks of which foreign conquest is next on
his list to eat
No doubt we hear a wolf but pretend he's a sheep
And the silence of the lambs ensures the flock stays sleep

And while they snooze and watch the news for the next cues on
when and how to act
Trayvon increasingly fades to black
A vanishing memory like Kathryn Johnston in fact
Now what you talking about poet, who in the hell is that?



Homecoming

Demetrius Noble

homecoming
 a paradoxical idea
 for those clothed in despair dodging obstacles of fear
 with blank eyes
 they stare
 at strangers in mirror
 whose cares have been cannibalized by their very own tears

12 cells to one tier
 24 souls damned here 8 minds lost
 16 hearts cut off
 as their bodies pay rising costs on principles/ principals untouched
 interest never accrues
 thus we remain out of touch

homecoming
 a nightmarish idea
 when world out there resembles hell in here
 from the minotaur's labyrinth to the dragon's layer
 got furloughed on parole and released
 from warden to mayor from cold cot to hot street
 from C.O.'s block to cop's beat
 from crips and bloods dripping blood to bloods and crips unloading
 clips
 I slipped
 and fell into bottomless pit
 and landed where I never left
 inhaled putrid breath
 repulsed by the smell of my own death
 but my nostrils failed to flinch
 as they are familiar with the stench

homecoming
 what a laughable idea
 to prey swallowed whole wading through state's diarrhea
 home is a fiction
 a violent contradiction
 for those forced to bear the afflictions
 of such horrific conditions

home is a deadly ideology
mystifying symbol of oppressive philosophies
satanic curse cloaked in sentimental appeal
haunted house of horrors where proletariats are killed

homecoming is
the inevitable act
for the revolutionary armed with gas and lit match



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