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## Genocide Without Manners Or Etiquette

To endure a genocidal siege, one must make peace with frustration, wild ruminations, untamed anger—the unreined desire for blood. One mustn't cede a condemnation. One mustn't retreat for the genocide has given unparalleled clarity—nothing equally illuminating than its pure brutality.

“My America fuels this and other wars,” a liberal friend tells me, “but I hope your family is surviving the war in Gaza.” A sincere hope, no doubt! My family and the war? We are the occupied. We have no armies, no aircraft carriers, no jet fighters, no guided missiles—only famished bodies undergoing a televised genocide.

My friend, your genocide has no manners. We are forced to witness hateful tanks run over kneeling bodies, praying bodies, mutilated bodies—bodies without bodies scattered like seed. We witness other famished bodies uncover hands clenching onto their unfinished last supper, hands clamping to come out, hands clawing at debris—hands embracing other hands. My friend, your genocide has no etiquette.

Frustrated, he asks, “why isn't there a Palestinian Gandhi or a King Jr?”

I reckon, a friendly intellectualization amidst the genocide! My friend, why should you have a monopoly on violence? Would Frantz Fanon have condemned the colonized?

“The argument the native chooses has been furnished by the settler, and by an ironic turning of the tables it is the native who now affirms that the colonialist understands nothing but force.”

—Frantz Fanon

Would Ho Chi Minh have used roses to free his besieged land?

“You can kill ten of our men for every one we kill of yours.  
But even at those odds, you will lose and we will win.”

—Ho Chi Minh

My friend, you have killed our Palestinian Gandhis. A King Jr, you ask? I thought you killed that one too. Don't you wish for a Malcolm X?

“If he's not ready to clean his house . . . it should catch on fire.”

—Malcolm X

We resist to exist.

“You are doubtless right that racism plays a role in this,” he writes back, “though it also must be said that Jews are also victims of racism here and elsewhere, regardless of the color of their skin.”

My friend, I am the people of your crucified God. I am the land of your second coming. I am the key to your salvation. I am the cure to your racial mutation. Yet, I am still your disowned Biblical child. I am the unseen.

“You're of course angry that your family and homeland are being subjected to such horrors,” my liberal friend writes back, “but on a related note, I've been reading some of Mahmoud Darwish, specifically, his ‘State of Siege...’ and I wonder...”

“Poetry changes nothing....

The only person it changes is the poet himself.”

—Mahmoud Darwish

Darwish's poetry in the time of genocide, you ask?

“Poetry is not an exercise in aesthetic pleasure.

It is an opportunity to name, diagnose, and draw

attention to actual violences that are occurring.”

—Solmaz Sharif

You have silenced the cadence of poetry, made it painful to weave,  
hopeless to dream, sacrilegious to marry sound to shape, blasphemous to  
bind content to form. And yet,

“Here after the poems of Job, we wait no more.

This siege will persist until we teach our enemies models of  
our finest poetry.”

—Mahmoud Darwish

My friend, your genocide has neither manners nor etiquette.

In my dreams, I see tanks retreat. In the rubble, I see a resting hand—  
wrinkled, sunbaked, half open as if awake or in supplication. The same  
hand grips a shooting seed and sprouts into a palm tree. The shooting hand  
sprouts into a palm tree—I see it in my dreams.

Silence.