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Poems

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Poems

Abstract

Counter-coup and Liberation

Abena Busia

COUNTER-COUP

Harshly aware of the brightness of electric light
against the chill January sky,
in the ominous silence of the Harmattan night
we kept vigil for the final shots.
From guns to guns again: full circle.

LIBERATION

We are all mothers,
and we have that fire within us,
of powerful women
whose spirits are so angry
we can laugh beauty into life
and still make you taste
the salt tears of our knowledge —
For we are not tortured
anymore;
we have seen beyond your lies and disguises,
and *we* have mastered the language of words,
we have mastered speech.
And know
we have also seen ourselves.
We have stripped ourselves raw
and naked piece by piece until our flesh lies flayed
with blood on our *own* hands.
What terrible thing can you do us
which we have not done to ourselves?

What can you tell us
which we didn't deceive ourselves with
a long time ago?
You cannot know how long we cried
until we laughed
over the broken pieces of our dreams.
Ignorance
shattered us into such fragments
we had to unearth ourselves piece by piece,
to recover with our own hands such unexpected relics
even we wondered
how we could hold such treasure.
Yes, we have conceived
to forge our mutilated hopes
into the substance of visions
beyond your imaginings
to declare the pain of our deliverance:
So do not even ask,
do not ask what it is we are labouring with *this* time;
Dreamers remember their dreams
when they are disturbed —
And you shall not escape
what we *will* make
of the broken pieces of our lives.