

How do I sit with generations of privilege
of high society
of Christmas parties at the Jonathan Club
of boat rides and champagne glasses clinking at the exploitation of you
The saudi-woman fixing the bathroom so that we
The white women
May pee on our porcelain thrones in peace.

How do I rest
knowing you do not feel safe sleeping in your homes
The institution may hurt you
Your husband may hurt you
Your neighbor may hurt you
I may hurt you.

How do I eat
Knowing my green juices, my organic cereals, my gluten free toast
Came out of the subjugation of people like you.
You are not seen as people.
But thank you for my soy latte, my almond-flour biscotti,
Belly full of free-range fuckery.

How do I study
knowing the color of my skin allowed me the privilege to be in this class,
Generations of financial advantage that has led to this fact,
Enabling me to feel entitled to this education,
Raised in a neighborhood segregated for the same root reasons.

How do I dress,
knowing each layer worn over my pale complexion hides the uncertainty I feel
about my race, about my face, about the beginnings of my people in this place,
knowing the rights for people preparing this cloth,
are not the same as
the ones I am privileged to
in this United States.

How do I work as hard as you,
As hard as you are working for my mother,
Scrubbing her floors so that her white feet may never darken like yours.

How do I right these wrongs so that I can
feel safe again in my own skin,
A safety not compromised by physical danger,
But by self loathing.

I cannot separate myself from the others,
No matter the distinctions,
No matter the ignorance,
No matter the age,
No matter the structures I have been born to replace,

I am not comfortable here.
I am not in-place here.
And neither are you.

Excuse me for this,
The voice to be heard is yours not mine.

I choose to no longer be deaf, hard, or blind.