

Unlit

Inspired by photographs taken in Ferguson, Missouri.

Italicized quotes from Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" and "How Long, Not Long."

Unlit candles trail perimeters of sidewalks on Negro roads like guardrails
like blood left behind on my mother's doorstep when she clicks the dead-
bolt and prays for night to end
the "black on black" crime.

It's black, alright, when the Negro hits pavement
leaving white holding red claiming "love" and "we meant peace."

The child is gone but his gift still remains:

a valentine, a confession of love—

love to keep ignoring the fact it's been "one hundred years" since 1963

but it's the same shit, just a different day.

One hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity.

One hundred years later, the Negro is still languished in the corners of American society and finds himself in exile in his own land.

One hundred years later, the Negro photographs her child, her son, her partner
still banished from the "white side" of the road, the right side, the light side,
the light side where only the scents of fallen rose petals and unlit candles can reach,
the place where our brothers' fallen limbs reassemble—
the place where we all should reassemble.

This place is not here, not yet—but it will be.

"truth crushed to earth will rise again"



—Armarlie Grier


BROADSIDE

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