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**Haunted City**

**I**

why did you send me to the city, mother?  
didn't you know the men in blue will beat me  
and blind my eyes with *tear gas*, mother?

they beat me with *rungus*, mother  
they burnt down your store

there is a word when a boy kills himself, mother  
it is called *suicide*  
and there is a word when faulty fire burns down the  
gheto, mother  
it is called accident  
but there is no word when the police burn down  
property, mother!

why do you let them beat me, mother?  
why do you let them shoot me, mother?  
why do you let them arrest me, mother?

they came home yesterday, mother  
i covered you  
i protected you when they came to arrest you, mother

they knocked at the door, mother  
i did not open  
they broke into the house  
and asked my name, mother  
i said am called Kizito, mother  
but they asked for more names

they asked for your name  
they asked where to find you, mother  
they wanted to compare a photo they had, mother  
they forced me to tell them, mother  
and they set our house on fire!

**II**

bodies on the street keep dying and the demos are  
over, but the bodies aren't dead

the IG keeps saying the bodies were looting and the  
broken bodies speak silently, they walk slowly on a  
street across the city, into a *fire hanging over the city*,  
in the central business unit of a city full of tear gas

a city that eats her own children, a city where Os and  
Ws deems you criminal,

i don't know the name of the police officer who beats  
me, i don't know the *mkubwa* who orders the police  
to beat me, i don't know the name of the CS who  
ordered the police to shoot me, i don't know the name  
of the governor who distributes cocaine in the city

international observers say the demos were illegal,  
they tell me i had no right to express my freedom,  
they ask me if i know the 07-08 *PEV*, they ask me if i  
remember the Kiamba fire, they say we are protecting  
lives

i walk on the street and hear voices, i hear voices in  
the passing wind, i hear guilt and shame in the voice  
of the CS on radio

i have my body when others are missing, i have my  
legs and my hands when others have been broken, i  
hear the school children singing, *politicians are  
dancing on our graves!*

**III**

there were 18 of us in front of the *inspector's office*,  
asking questions about the baby who was shot 5  
times

there were 18 of us in front of the cabinet secretary's  
office, screaming about the video of the shooting that  
went viral, but it was silenced

for the politicians to be reelected

and the inspector said there was looting down there  
on the streets, so the police went after the looters

*you should be protesting the looting, that group of youths looted public property, why aren't you protesting the looting?*

*why are you only protesting this shooting?*

the inspector also wanted to know why we were protesting this shooting, when the previous day, there was a shooting in Dandora, where two criminals were shot and both died

we didn't answer; instead, we did a lie-in in front of the inspector's office, and journalists stood with cameras above us, as we lay stiff and motionless on the cold wet pavement

they pulled the video down after it went viral, they even said it was a faked propagandist narrative, meant to tarnish the name of the military

a police officer pulled one of us out, from the front of the banana republic, and asked us why we weren't protesting the other bodies, shot by bodies that were not police officers

it was a strange line of questioning, but it kept happening

the inspector general kept asking, why the body the police shot was more important to us, than the bodies shot by others

*because they took an oath to protect lives, not to kill them; because they are paid to protect people not to shoot them*

then they chased the journalists, and we appeared on prime bulletin that evening, lying-in on the cold wet pavements

and the CS called us anti-capitalists, not any different from terrorists chasing away city investors

then the country forgot about the baby they shot 5 times, but the echo of our voices kept hounding them

## **Po(tus)wer**

his former coming was a triumph  
every business in the capital halted,  
citizens cautioned off major roads,  
the awaited messiah was about to land,  
and the tumbocrats waited  
at the airport to receive him

see his second coming without power  
no one cautioned off the express way,  
mpigs have gone to russia to cheer France,  
the street urgins are busy begging, picking pockets,  
who will tell them the messiah is coming home?

jayden cares nomore,  
that the black son is visiting again,  
no shared pulpits erected,  
isn't he planning a national address with ally?  
maybe they share no class anymore

no media camped the airport,  
i wonder if they will cover him in K'ogelo,  
how will he feel this time?  
that he came home, an ordinary man,  
and was given a cold shoulder  
for lacking state power