

To Colored Boys Who Have Considered Suicide

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To colored boys who have considered suicide
on dark and cold winter days
in closets and rooms confined and strangled by their own
insecurity
searching for peace and acceptance
in a place far beyond their imposed social invisibility
where dark skin turns red then white then blue
fragile young men who have never climbed mountaintops
or marched on Washington
but have had a dream
and feel neglected and abandoned by communities and
environments
that practice and preach hypocrisy
from pulpits and podiums
justifying hate with biblical text and Quranic verse

To colored boys who have spent too many late nights
 in darkened clubs
 masquerading as uber-masculine contemporaries
 in fitted caps, wife-beaters and spankin' new Timbs
 seducing their senses and egos
 with colored alcoholic beverages and promises of sexual
 encounters
 and maybe the occasional fantasy of commitment
 and relationship
 but knowing all too well that the closet has only room for
 one
 and it is easier at times to love the many than to love the few
 or even to love one's self

To colored boys who have never been asked,
 never tell
 and spend lifetimes defining manhood and masculinity
 in terms of sexual roles and positions
 hiding preferences in shadows
 and becoming pop culture references
 sexualized, marginalized, objectified, crucified
 and then forgotten

To colored boys who spend countless hours
 In testosterone-scented gyms
 developing biceps but never finding salvation
 in the development of the soul.

To colored boys who die
 a thousand painful deaths of rejection
 long before the cold black barrel
 ever reaches the temple of self-doubt
 or the colored pills of racism are ingested
 Or the toxic, poisoned liquids of homophobia reach and
 destroy the liver

but die slow and lonely deaths
 filled with fear and insecurity,
 chasing dreams of acceptance
 slicing socially chained wrist with the flesh-ripping
 blades of self-hate
 and hang from the ropes of silence and shame
 suffocated by their false sense of invincibility

To colored boys trapped in the windowless isolated boxes
 of limited opportunity
 with restless souls and deferred dreams
 seeking love in unromantic late-night cyber encounters
 and journey unprotected through the wilderness of
 instant gratification
 finding peace in death but never in life

To colored boys who have never
 been offered a hand to hold
 or a shoulder to cry on
 who tell narratives that go unheard
 who have fears that go unspoken
 who have dreams that go unrealized
 and
 who give and rarely get anything in return
 for the poet
 the writer
 the part-time escort now turned "model"
 the photographer
 the dancer
 the dreamer
 for Jamal, Henry, Taylor and Byron
 and
 all the colored boys who have considered suicide
 This poem is for you.