

Call it what it is: Femicide

So long we have fought and toiled through hard years of perseverance to only come and pay the price with our own blood. Our long cry for justice grew to be the mourning of our loved ones. All for what? Just a fair hearing when it comes to seek justice? By the river, the endless cries of mothers mourning their daughters being killed by their loved ones never stops. Their cries summon mercy upon the young sons of the nation to be a better generation than the monsters that the society created. One question lingers through all this, how will the society unlearn this and take time to heal from such brutal acts of man?

“Mama, do you hear the cries of the women in Goma? They say the torture has no comma. The better world they thought they would give their children doesn’t seem to exist that it was all but a dream. Mama, do you see the skies filled with pensive sadness? Other little towns are filled with clouds of smoke. Mama, one question bothers me why do men keep killing us? Do they hate us? Why does Baba slap you when you don’t cook early? Is he like the others? I fear him, Mama!”

“My dear sweet child don’t worry about me, I will be fine. That is just the way Baba is; it is the way he was brought up. I still love him because he works hard to provide for us, he pays your school fees and pays for grandma’s medicine. One day everything will be fine, buttercup. Don’t watch the news about Congo, you’ll think a lot. Just pray for them.”

“But what about our neighbor, Mama? She was killed by her boyfriend. Don’t you think it is unsafe for us girls?”

“I will be going for the peace walk against femicide; it may help us to get our voices heard. It is a start towards a better future for you and all the other little girls. Remember when grandma told you to be a strong girl? That one day you will inspire the world with your voice? That is because she saw something in you that touched her a light that transcends past the darkness of the world. So, when I go, be strong and know that your better tomorrow is coming through this revolution.”

“Okay Mama, I will pray for you that you come back home safe. I just hope for better days ahead; I want my kids to be happy and safe. I also hope I get a good husband, Mama. I am sure the girls of tomorrow don’t want to cry no more!”

I’ve seen lovers turn to enemies,
Enemies turn to lovers,

I’ve seen angels nurtured into devils,

I have seen men kill women...

She was just a woman

not a threat, not a storm,
not a sin in motion,
just breath and bone
and hope.

But in South Africa, a woman is killed every four hours
her name becomes another hashtag,
her story
another whisper in a room too tired to listen.

And in Congo,
they call it war,
but what do you call it when wombs are turned into battlegrounds?

When bodies are broken
not by bombs
but by men?

And in rural Kenya,
where red dust kisses her ankles
and silence hangs in the air like smoke
women disappear quietly.

Killed by husbands,
raped by uncles,
blamed by mothers,
buried by systems too corrupt to care.

In 2023 alone,

Kenya recorded over 500 cases of femicide
but that's only what was reported.

How many more are buried beneath shame?

Hidden behind the phrase:

“Alijiletea.”

She brought it on herself.

Then come the comments

cold as steel,

sharper than the knife that silenced her.

“She was drunk.”

“Why was she out so late?”

“She should’ve picked better.”

They dissect her like a crime scene,

forgetting she was a heartbeat,

a sister,

a daughter.

Not a case study in morality.

Not a cautionary tale.

And him

they say he’s “not that kind of man.”

That he was “provoked.”

“Good men snap too,” they say,

as if blood belongs in marriage.

As if bruises bloom from love.

They say, “Not all men.”

But somehow,

always

a man.

The comments multiply like flies on fresh grief,
each one a nail on her coffin made of pixels.

They turn her pain into punchlines,
her death into debate.

A girl becomes a ghost
and the world scrolls on.

She was just a woman.

Not perfect.

Not pure.

But trying
to live, to dance, to make something of herself
outside kitchens,
beyond bedrooms.

But every bush path,
every boda ride,
holds a question:

Will she make it home tonight?

She was taught silence like it was survival,
to smile in the face of pain,
to carry children on her back
and shame in her chest.

She was told to shrink,
to stay soft,
to “understand” when hands turned fists
and love grew teeth.

The statistics scream louder than we do.

The soil has soaked up more of us than the sun has kissed.

And still

she rises,

tired but unbroken,

dragging generations of women with her,

wiping blood

off dreams,

braiding strength into daughters' hair.

She was just a woman

but isn't that enough?

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