

## ***Reflection of an African household***

*Is there beauty in the midst of pain? When control becomes a weapon to mould an obedient daughter,  
a silent wife,  
a fearful son.*

*Without submission,  
you are unprotected,  
disciplined by fear  
for not listening  
as commanded.*

*It is either you bow down to me, or else...*

*But Father, what happened to you? How did you become so wounded, so broken,  
so hollow of conscience?*

*You brought this darkness into our home. We walk on eggshells,  
guarding your fragile ego.*

*When threatened,  
you reach for a white man's gun, a machete  
to harm one who never wronged you.*

*This house is no longer a home. Joy and peace have long departed.*

*Is there respect in the midst of this art? When I look into your eyes,  
I wonder what creature dwells there and what spirit you've set loose.*

*Do you see yourself as Creator's image, that you find no fault  
in how you treat another soul?*

*Or is it self-admiration  
twisted with delusion?*

*Fear versus respect*

*Where do you stand?*

*How do you find pleasure  
in being feared?*

*Your fragmented thoughts,  
your fabricated deeds,  
strip away my respect  
piece by piece.*

*No wonder this "submission" you call culture*

*is a garment I cannot wear.*

*Is there love in the midst of all this? For decades,*

*Mama has stood*

*on the receiving end of your rage bruised,*

*wounded,*

*tired,*

*and yet hopeful.*

*She whispers that all will be well, even when her dignity*

*is taken by the man she loves.*

*They say a man is the head*

*of the African household.*

*You do not question him*

*To oppose is to threaten*

*his manhood,*

*his pride,*

*his culture.*

*Tradition affirms him.*

*Society defends him.*

*And childhood trauma shapes him.*

*But where is joy*

*in this inheritance of pain?*

*Escape does not heal*

*it only hides the wounds.*

*This was never a home.*

*It was a battlefield,*

*painted in the name*

*of culture and tradition.*

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