

**Postcolonial Ballads****My World**

If the world were a woman  
You'd rape her  
wonder why she hated you so.  
If she picked up a knife  
to end your life  
You'd shoot her,  
claim self defence,  
pay someone else  
to launder the blood from your clothes.

If the world were your child  
You'd school him  
to be exactly like you.  
And if he invoked  
the spirits of art  
with colour or word  
that in gold could not be heard  
You'd promptly reform him  
Probably uniform him  
in fatigues and a gun  
say run boy run...  
from your soul.

If the world were your book  
You'd erase  
all passages  
that did not speak  
flowers  
on the altar of your power;  
You'd blame all the victims  
and help them pity themselves  
Offer a buck or two  
Prostitute their spirits  
for another breath  
You'd ensure  
photographs of your symbols  
were plastered everywhere.

If the world were a river  
You'd deep-water bomb  
the fish would all die,  
bodies would rise,  
Big Brother feasts,  
Uncle Sam raises his glass  
to the beast,

bread is broken  
to a token.  
To hell with all others  
You have no sisters or brothers.

If the world were silent  
You'd hear...  
Ah, but you don't...  
The sound of your voice  
without pause for reflection  
on the infection  
You have spread for over 500 years.

Woman, child, book, river, silent;  
This is my world  
This is what you do  
to my strangers,  
those I've known,  
me  
to communities uncontained  
by lines upon a page.

500+ years of struggle  
against stupidity  
intolerance based on colour.  
Now you find  
a new victim  
repeated action  
repeated infractions  
decade  
after  
decade  
You declare yourself  
Self-righteous democratic renegade.

If the world were yours...  
but then...  
You already think that it is.

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