

1.)

“While you sat  
there...  
The world lost  
another  
And someone blamed  
me.  
Then everyone went  
crazy  
And we were all  
rounded up,  
And taken away.”

While you sat  
there..”

2.)

He's a good  
man.

He's a husband  
and a father.

He works, he  
studies and he  
prays.

But he is a  
Muslim,  
And he has a  
beard..  
So you judge him  
otherwise."

3.)

"When all seems  
dire  
He grasps the wire  
Until his knuckles  
turn white..."

4.)

"I am inspired by  
the awareness  
That a boy before me  
Conquered a giant  
With a mere Stone."

5)

"They want me to  
be quiet,  
I want to scream.  
They want me to give  
up,  
I want to dream.

They want me to  
believe them,  
I know they lie.

I want to live  
free,  
They'd rather I  
die."

6)

"We stood outside in the  
cold and watched  
as they knocked our house  
down.

My mother cried and my  
father paced up and down,  
screaming.

But we couldn't do  
anything.

My little brothers were  
crying too but I just kept  
thinking about my school  
books that were still in  
the house.

The next morning, I went to  
dig for them."

7.)

"Mr. Man upon your  
mound,  
What is that that you wave?  
Whose attention do you hope  
to gain?  
Who do you intend to save?

Mr. Man upon your mound,

I fear your efforts are in  
vain,  
No one cares if you stand  
your ground,  
For it's you that they  
blame."

8.)

"Them bones could be mine  
tomorrow..."

9.)

I don't have to send her to  
the corner anymore.

She goes there on her own  
now

To contemplate the  
situation of her people.

10.)

There are scenes you  
can re-visit,  
There are moments you can  
re-enact,  
Then, there is an instant  
that can only be captured..  
Once."

11.)

"The shadows of the  
cabana,  
The crisp morning air,  
Her presence completed the  
perfection."

12.)



“Like my heart on a  
limb of thorns...”

13.)

“When the sun was going  
down  
They knocked at the door  
for Mohammad.  
They said it would only  
take four minutes--  
They only had a few  
questions.

They kept him for two  
years!”

14.)

“By the light of the  
moon,  
By the glare of the sun:  
I will strive...  
For Freedom!”

15.)

For one brief second he  
thought about Mohammad--  
They shot him yesterday.  
His eyes blurred with tears  
and his throat grew tight,  
So he clasped the rock  
And threw it with all his  
might --  
For Mohammad."

16.)

"I have become a stigma,  
I have become a threat,  
I have become a scope's  
target,  
Although I don't know that  
yet."

17.)

“War and Peace  
Life and Death  
Flesh and Bones  
Walls and Stones.”

18.)

“I want to tell him that  
everything is going to be  
ok,  
But he'd know I was lying.  
`Cause everyday,  
In his world,  
People are dying.”

20.)

"Out of the dusk they come,  
Little Knights of Freedom.  
Weapons of defence,  
Sprung from the Earth.  
Desperate to succeed,  
Abhorring surrender.  
Into the battle  
they run,  
Hearts beating  
loudly  
To Freedom's  
drum."

My dearest daughter,  
21.)

At some point in your life, you will undoubtedly be told that you are being oppressed.

First, they will insist that it is not necessary for you to cover yourself "like that." Then, they will try to persuade you that you're being "extreme" but this is only a ploy.

In reality, they want to use you to sell their products and satisfy their desires. They want to judge you by your looks and not by your intellect.

Eventually, they'll try to convince you that your beliefs are all wrong and they will insist until you worship other than the One True God, Allah, your Creator.

So my dearest daughter, regardless of what you are told, be wary, and know that you are on the right path.

Love,  
Ummi

22.)

“Get against the wall!”

“But I didn't do anything!”

“Shut up and get your hands up!”

“Ok, ok!”

“What were you going to do with these rocks?”

(Silence)

“Take him in!”

(Shuffling feet) “A little time locked up will help you remember.”

“I won't do it again!” I promise, I promise!”

“You bet you won’t! You won’t get the chance!”  
(Sobbing)

23.)

Maliha: “Why are they fighting in Palestine,  
Mummy?”

“It’s complicated, Maliha.”

Maliha: “I wish it would just stop.”

“It’s not that simple, Maliha.”

Maliha: “Then...may Allah help the  
Muslims!”

“Ameen!”

25.)

“I’m a captive of your  
ignorance,  
And your programmed  
fears.  
I’m referred to as a  
rebel,

And regarding  
resistance -  
No one cares."

"I'm a victim of  
Occupation,  
And I merely seek  
relief.  
But you choose to  
believe them  
And regarding the  
truth—  
No one cares the  
least."



# Cry My Beloved Land

Cry my beloved land,  
As warm sea breezes brush across  
your pristine beaches and white  
sands.

As calm waves lap against your  
spectacular shores, you lament  
For that stirring sound so  
bitterly absent.

Your magnificent scenes confer  
illusions of Paradise, absolute  
tranquillity.

Yet, your heart soil throbs with  
profound misery.

That awesome call bellowed forth  
is what you so desperately  
desire,

Your quiet grief hangs heavy in the  
air, and floats on your seas like  
oil afire.

You weep for your people,  
unwittingly deceived by time, by  
past, by misinformation.

For them, you long for that  
bidding, that poignant proposal,  
that grand invitation.  
So it is your pitiful sobs that  
moan through the tropical  
coconut trees,  
And your teardrops - not dew,  
that clings to the hibiscus  
leaves.  
Still, you linger; you await  
that touching summons, that  
glorious reverberation - the  
majestic call of the Adthan.  
And you cry, you cry,  
Cry my beloved land.

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## **Muslim Woman**

You stood next to me in the  
aisles at one of those stores.  
I was dressed in black and you couldn't  
see my face.  
You snickered to your friend that I  
must be hot "in all that clothe",

And she made some remark about me  
looking like a ninja.  
I heard you but I chose to ignore what  
you said.  
And no. I am not from the Middle East.  
So you can't tell me to go back there.  
You glance back at me as you pass  
through the sliding doors,  
And both of you collapse into laughter.

But I'm not angry.  
I just feel sorry for you - in your  
ignorance and in your incredibly tight,  
jeans shorts.  
You're a commodity.  
You're only as good as you look.  
Your pictures lace every product.  
You're a pitch that they use.  
In turn, you sell your modesty and your  
soul.

Your "equality" enables you to work the  
same job as any man.  
Yet, you are not equally paid.  
You're tired, but you keep hearing that  
you're "liberated".  
Yet, sometimes when the last program is  
over and the national anthem has faded  
you sit there with the TV fuzz  
illuminating your worn face,  
And you wonder if this is really the  
purpose of life.

So, deep inside you are stirred by my  
image.

You can't fathom what great belief has  
empowered me to brave your stares, your  
mocking, your laughter.

Now, as I pass through the sliding  
doors you glimpse me in your rear-view  
mirror:

My abayah flutters gracefully in the  
warm breeze.

We are so different.

You are nearly naked,  
Stripped of your modesty and pride -  
like a tree without leaves.

And I am covered, hidden - like  
treasure.

You are exposed in all elements - to  
all elements.

And I am protected, sheltered - like a  
pearl in an oyster.

You do not know.  
And I know the **TRUTH**.

## From Whence We Came

O'er dark seas the sails did yield us,  
 Unpeople, hostage within their chests.  
 Rent from Motherland belonging,  
 Our bonded fate nigh upon each waves' crest.

Yea, the tears were but pointless jewels--  
 Sorrow but consumes.  
 Lips moved silently in damp darkness,  
 'Twas remembrance that quelled the doom.

Alas! The sliding blot, the blinding light, the sudden breath of air,  
 The shouts, "Move Nigger!"  
 The clank of shackles:  
 All but compounded the fear.

O'er the bleached sea sands earmarked with footprints,  
 "Savages" far from home, in a "civilized" foreign land,  
 Thatch brooms erased trails of existence,  
 Fists and knuckles subdued hopes of rebellion.

Yea, she was a pristine prison:  
 Gingerbread cottages, *slave huts*, white picket fences, *slave wall*.  
 O the labour due those fields of ivory cotton,  
 'Twas the namesake, sweat, and blood of all.

My, how her deep blue sea did beckon,  
 A seductive solution for the damned.  
 She was but an evil partition,  
 An impervious reminder of Motherland.

O'er the smouldering evening embers,  
 We, the Invisible, whispers did say.  
 Dare we raise voices in languages forbidden,  
 Dare we prostrate to the East that way.

Forced to submit to thy master's instruction,  
 'Twas the preacher man's foremost goal,  
 Salvation through a god the image of master,  
 Acceptance a redemption for savage souls.

Yea, we did but whisper softly,  
 Desperate prayers of our captive state,  
 Cupped hands raised in foreign voices,  
 "Grant us death before we assimilate."

O but time does pass too hastily,  
 Deeds abandoned but unexplained.  
 Thou truly art the "Isles of time forgotten"  
 Verily, we forgot from whence we came.

# ONE

Perplexed by twinkling, star-littered skies,  
 A nocturnal ritual for searching eyes.  
*One who was never born, never dies--*  
 An inner certainty undaunted by lies.  
 The persistent whispers of a child's mind,  
 She stalks the night, the truth to find.

Amazed by the strength of tiny working ants,  
 A daily observance where clarity is enhanced.  
*One who has no comparison, does not create perchance--*  
 A burning resolve maintains a stance.  
 The constant interruption of childish play,  
 She studies her subjects by night and by day.

Intrigued by questions of the End and the First,  
 A passionate rite to quench a mind's thirst.  
*One, unlike His creation, He does not give birth--*  
 Affirmed by the magnificence of Heavens and Earth.  
 Profound issues to bewilder an ordinary child,  
 Her rarity emanates from every wonderful smile.

A quest that disturbs the hypocrite and evades the blind,  
 In unison with creation, she names her belief in time.  
 Guidance is an absolute mercy from the **Most Kind**,  
 A soothing arrival for the probing mind.  
*The One that all of creation is dependent upon,*  
 She surrenders to Him,

***He is Allah, One.***

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### **THE VEILED QUEEN**

“I hate this crap!” she said, pointing to a book on the shelf.  
 “Why do Muslim women do this to themselves?”  
 I looked down at the book of a woman obscured by a meshed hood.  
 “You know what? Some of us like being veiled and we won’ t take it off, even though we could!”  
 She whispered these words with harsh resentment in her voice,  
 And before me she stood:  
 Black veil,  
 No face,  
 A Muslim by choice.

“This is what they publish,” she said, pointing to the book again.  
 “This is how they *want* people to perceive Muslim women.  
 We must’ve been forced, or enticed, into this Belief,  
 You know, like I’m the little Indian squaw and my husband’s the chief.  
 They think we’re all uneducated, submissive, ‘Stepford wives’,  
 Trapped under our shapeless garbs; pitiful beings with pathetic lives.”  
 She sighed and plopped into a chair then - an action that emphasized the disgust in her voice.  
 Now, she sat before me:  
 All eyes,  
 Black veil,  
 A Muslim by choice.



“But do you want to know something?” she asked, leaning over towards me.  
“What?” I said as I look into her dark eyes – the only part of her I could see.  
“The one’s who don’t realize the truth and the ones who are confused,  
These are the ones who really lose.  
You see, underneath all this cloth I can truly be who I want to be.  
In fact, I’m a Muslim Queen and this cloth? -- This is my robe you see.  
And this hijab? It’s not a mask or a trap,” she said.  
“Actually, it feels like a crown on my head!”  
Indeed, she did embody the majestic pride in her voice,  
As she leaned back:  
Eyes closed,  
Black veil,  
A Muslim by choice.