

NO EASTER SUNDAY FOR QUEERS

The Northern Suburb:

- Is an Old Testament
- A cage
- Church three times a week
- Twenty years of hiding who and how I love
- A family I cannot shame
- A sinking ship with Peters who believe they can walk on water
- I do not know if such powers are given to those who do not believe
- Or those who doubt
- Or those who hoard two lives in one body
- Bodies so heavy they could sink themselves
- With all these secrets they keep contained
- How ~~they~~ we tell no one
- And ask no one to help us carry a cross that crosses ~~us~~ out

In the Northern Suburb:

- I am a shadow
- A dream deferred
- A pastor's daughter loving a Muslim woman
- Dyslexic in this language I love in
- Am aroused in
- Am I even allowed to be aroused like this?
- The word is gospel
- The word is a prison
- Is a cell without bars
- Is a prayer mat that zips my mouth
- And wears out my knees
- I am always in this position
- Begging for something

In the Northern Suburb:

- I am the repentance

The Southern Suburb:

- Is a New Testament
- A degree
- A loan my mother made
- An expectation I must fulfil
- Things done in the dark now coming to the light
- Two womxn humping in the back of a cab ride from a club in Green Point to res
- A mouth without cellotape
- Sharing the loo with a man or womxn or they

- The South is a shock
- Is a different kind of church
- The usher is a bouncer
- Beyoncé and Rihanna are slaying bodies at the altar
- Eternity is the night
- Communion is R28 at the bar
- Hell is the possible statistic we become when we leave this place

The Southern Suburb:

- Is a march
- Is a club
- Is a new kind of paranoia
- A new kind of hiding
- Banners and theory replace the Bible
- I stay away from the march
- I also stay away from the church
- I do not want to be caught on any kind of media
- I do not want to be spotted in a selfie with a rainbow behind it
- I am wearing another kind of mask
- I have no language to talk about what I am discovering
- Or what I have been hiding
- Only scriptures that shame my body
- Only scriptures that shame who and how I love
- My mouth has been inside the Koran
- My faith is not the only thing that has been converted

In the North, my hands are raised in worship

In the South, my hands are raised in protest

Either way, I am always surrendering

The North says my body belongs in hell

The South says my body belongs in a dump

In both spaces, my body is at the mercy of men

Northern Suburbs:

- Leviticus 18:22: "Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination."
- Makes my salvation panic

Southern Suburbs:

- **LESBIAN MURDERED IN FRONT OF FAMILY, NYANGA CAPE TOWN**
- Makes my sexuality panic

Northern Suburbs:

- Leviticus 20:13: "Both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them."

Southern Suburbs:

- **LESBIAN STABBED AFTER LEAVING TAVERN, KHAYELITSHA CAPE TOWN**
- A friend's Whatsapp message is asking if I am going to Zero21 tonight
- My Mother's Whatsapp is asking if I have said my prayers tonight

Southern

- *See me up in the club with fifty-eleven girls, posted in the back, got my things in my grill*

Northern

- 1 Kings 14:24: "And there were also sodomites in the land cast out before the children of Israel."

~~Southern~~

~~Northern~~

~~Suburbs~~

*Drop the bass mane, base get lower/ radio say speed it up, I just go slower
 High like treble/ pumping on them mids/ 1 Kings 22:46
 And why ya think ya keep my name rollin' off your tongue?
 Cause when you wanna smash, I'll just Romans 1:26 another one
 I sneezed some chapter and the beat got sicker
 Yoncé ya'll 1 Timothy 1:9-10 like liquor.*

she was 24/ she was 19/ she was 25/ she was queer/ she was straight/ she was out too late/ out on the wrong night/ acting like a man that night/ jeans too tight, skirt too high, a sodomite/ a sin/ a sinner/ a sinful act/ a fact/ a figure/ a number/ a body/ dead body/ dead lesbian body/ premeditated fate/ a prayer too late/ hate/ hate/ all because of hate/ she was 24/ she was 19/ she was 25/ she was queer/ she was dead/ I could die.

In the

~~Southern Northern~~

~~Suburbs~~

I am holding up a banner/ a book of scriptures/ a book with sex positions for lesbians/ the upbringing/ the coming out/ the folding in/ the sins/ the salvation of womxn's bodies that have saved me from hiding.

I am holding onto my father/ our father/ my father/ our father who art in heaven, who art in my conditioning/ who art in my sheets/ who art stuck up so far in my ----- childhood/ 'Our Father' is a mantra/ a bridle/ a stutter in a playground with mean kids/ a prayer malfunctioning in my lesbian mouth/ our Father/ my father is a stranger on the pulpit.

He is preaching about our sins/ about the crucifixion/ how it can save us
I am bored/ and hungover/ and horny

I imagine him, my father,

- Telling the church about the South
- Preaching about gods who are crucified for being a sin
- Of a Calvary where the stone is not rolled away but rolled over our bodies
- He is preaching about a God whose hands were tied with underwear and her ankles with shoelaces
- Her head and collarbone nailed to a dump site with three bullets
- How she was not crucified with two thieves but a lover who could not pick a paradise
- He says: some will not remember the Calvary of queer bodies,
- How this crucifixion is a gospel that goes unpreached
- Goes unnamed
- Unrecorded (most times)
- What kind of paradise welcomes disembowelled bodies
- When the same Jesus who died for their sins
- When the same Jesus who died for *our* sins considers ~~them us~~ ~~them us~~, considers **them** a sin and disgrace
- Tell me if God can love ~~us~~ them unconditionally and be homophobic at the same time?
- Come Sunday, these gods will still remain in their tombs
- And Easter will still come around every year for this Jesus ~~you we~~ I speak of
- And why is it that there is there is no Easter Sunday for queer bodies
- When lesbians are crucified like Christ?

The choir is singing

What can wash away my sin, nothing but the blood of Jesus

- I am still imagining my father preach about the blood of queer bodies
- Lesbian bodies
- The last time I was in church was when I left home
- I cleanse last night's sin with grape juice
- I wish the church would serve crackers with cheese

- I am distracted
- I wonder where the offering money is going, if the aircon is still broken
- I raise my hands and jump really high
- Hoping that the womxn next to me won't smell Islam on me
- I doze off and hear my lover pray in Arabic
- I imagine the choir doing the Nae Nae at Beulah
- I wonder if the Holy Ghost would still come upon us if praise and worship were at the Sugarhut this morning
- I wonder if the Holy Ghost is picky about the bodies it comes upon
- I wonder about the Holy Ghost's sexuality
- I wonder why the Holy Ghost comes upon people without their consent
- I wonder if the church uses the Holy Ghost to rape us and keep us bound
- If a lesbian twerked on this pulpit last night
- Would my father still be standing there, caressing the pulpit as if it were the hem of Jesus' garment?
- I can't tell if the womxn my father is laying hands on is praying in tongues or being possessed by the devil
- (sometimes) the things of god sound and look so violent
- (sometimes) the womxn in the choir sound as if they are burning in hell, when all they are doing is asking for redemption
- I am trying to bring my Southern body to the North
- I am also trying to make it disappear
- I am baptising myself with a gospel I am trying to undo or
- Flee

I wonder,

- Should I be murdered tomorrow,
- Would he, my father, preach about me with the same passion he preaches about the death of a white man he has never ~~met~~ raised?
- Would he Google the other deaths?
- I want to ask him in the car after the service
- I wonder if he can tell how my body language has changed when we arrive in Rondebosch
- *You should come to Bellville more often*
- By Bellville, he means church
- *Ok, I will*
- I don't mean it
- What I really want to say
- or ask
- or talk about
- or ask is:

Daddy,

- If I were crucified
- And dumped in a tomb for three days
- And rose again as a headline
- Would you preach about me?
- Would you tell the congregation that it was my sin that made them do it?
- Would you call my murderers Pharisees or cowards or servants of God?
- Would you call yourself Judas?
- How would you roll my stone away?
- Would you preach about me?
- And what would you say?
- My daughter was murdered yesterday
- Or a lesbian was murdered yesterday?

Daddy,

- Would you even preach at all?