

I hear your fear and your pain
I feel your shame and recognize your guilt
Most days rising from your bed with the best of intentions.
Love Country, Love Family, Love Others and of Course Love God.

Life for you is hard...not enough hours in the day
 Shuffling accounts to pay
 All smiles but no time to play
Striving for College for your children
 Working hard, saving, sacrificing,
Doing good in the public square minding your own business, seeing no color, or difference, ---
that's how you were taught to be.
You're a decent person who has enough tension with co-workers, spouse and siblings
Enough for a lifetime

You grew up in a nice Christian Community, teachers who instilled values, reinforcing the values
of your parents, reinforced by the values of your church

Values like quiet not loud
Values like orderly and busy
Values like what's
 Attractive
 Christ like
 And Good

There were few ---different from you--at home in your neighborhood
 Your church
 Your school

What you knew about others you learned from
 Home, on Tv and Newspapers
 School, in textbooks, teachers and fellow students
 Church, from Missionaries, and outreach efforts.

Avert your eyes when you see them
Be blind to color-in the public square
You learned it well

Love their children and their food, and occasionally their music

And fear---
 Fear her- her strength, candor, passion
 Fear him- he's superhuman, hypersexual, ultra violent
Fear for yourself-

Redline your community for the sake of your property value,
Protect your tradition for the sake of your children
Maintain your position because who know what's coming next

Fear for your son- who might be poisoned by them
 Or lose his job or scholarship because of them
Fear for your daughter
 Who might be swooned by their sons
 Who might defiantly see color
 Or admit she hates black

I see you, hear you, feel you

Cause fear is real
Black women ARE strong and loud (sometimes)
Black men do excel in sports and benefit from affirmative action (Often).
Mixed race marriages are on the rise making color truly hard to see(Truly)
And your values Are interrogated, demeaned and vilified on TV, social media and in the
public square

You Are called racist and privileged and unforgivable and you wonder if you “matter”

You fear that you'll never be forgiven
Shame mingles in the roots of ethnic pride
Pain stems from blame and knowledge that we will never be the same

I said I see you-----
behind this caramel color skin and almond eyes
draping locs and flat nose
I see you--
I don't hate you
I don't pray for your demise
I don't long for your fall
I don't want it to be this way
Between you and me---
When I see you
I see all the stuff, the feelings, and then I see-- the beloved of God--- that's who I see.

~Written by Denise Kingdom Grier