

Torn from Home

Torn from home;
displaced from land;
ripped from all I've ever known -
the soil I walk
the air I breathe -
nothing left to call my own.

History shattered;
fragments fly
and lodge in every scattered land.
Tortured bodies;
tortured minds,
cry out a truth few understand.

Centuries moulded,
time would shape,
the 'us' we were supposed to be,
'til on a whim
as thin as air
you sought to wipe out history.

You couldn't see -
you wouldn't see -
that me and mine are human too.
You closed your hearts
and closed your minds -
'non-human', then, was you.

Ignored my tears;
denied my pain -
the horror etched into my face;
your blinded eyes,
they could not see
my tragedy was your disgrace.

I bore the pain
that none can bear,
in flesh, and deep within my soul;
raised my eyes
and sang my songs
while bestial madness took its toll.

How could it be -
how can it be -
that flesh to flesh can somehow use
such putrid hate
and ice cold wrath,
and never stand in other's shoes?

You thought you'd win,
but what the prize
you somehow thought that you could claim?
To blot me out
and make it seem
I'd never been; was that your aim?

If so, you failed.
You'll always fail!
For I am here; I'll always be;
I'll claim, reclaim,
my heritage,
and write your shame in history.

Not just survive -
I'll overcome,
and look you full-on in the eyes;
for from the ashes
of your hate
this phoenix bird will rise.

Generations
still to come
will feel the flame which burns inside -
reminding all
of who we are
and, in their turn, blaze forth our pride.

Bearers too
of all we've been -
what we have carried; what we've lost;
the journey yet
to make from 'here' -
but counting still the cost.

For torn from home
and scattered wide -
as far as wildest winds may blow -
from age to age,
hid deep inside,
souls weep
and yearn
what they don't know.

Karen Campbell, 2019