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Silence, Can You See Me ?

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Edice

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I have always loved silence.

Not the kind that traps or weighs you down, but the kind where nothing else matters—just imagination, thoughts, and dreams. Not the forced kind, the silence that binds you, where emotions stay unspoken, waiting for a voice that never comes.

In an African household, laughter fills the air, intelligence, strength, and courage surround. Siblings play, waiting for parents to return. But what remains is the wait, a silence that takes its place before the laughter, before the words.

Silence greets you, waiting for love, for recognition, but instead, it lingers, waiting for the right time to speak. But silence feels safer, a choice that becomes habit, even when the heart longs to break free. You were taught silence before you were taught to express. It crept in, a quiet companion before you even knew your own voice. Now, it's a defense, a shield, a way to survive, to hold the pieces together. But I wonder—how much of me has been lost in the silence I never chose?

In the past, it was a shield, a cloak worn by those too young for its weight. The expectation was to be “seen”—children were to behave, to fill the space with presence but not with their voices. The world listened only for their silence, not for their hearts.

In African homes, in many communities, it was never the thoughts nor the emotions that truly mattered. What mattered was being still, being quiet. Silence came first, before expression, before a voice could form.

They never raised their hands, but I can still feel the heaviness of their silence. The words that were never spoken still echo in my chest. But it's not their fault, nor mine—it is the weight they carried, the cycle of wounds passed down, unhealed, burdened with the scars of a history too heavy to mend without the tools.

History taught us silence—to bury our anger, our grief, our humanity. In the face of oppression, there were no words allowed, only quiet, only endurance.

To speak was to invite punishment, to question was to risk retaliation. So, we

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became experts in silence. We became silent to protect ourselves. But in that silence, we buried our voices, our truth, our hearts.

And now, they call it resilience. A word so full of strength, yet forged in the fires of silence, in the flames of oppression. It is the gift we were given, the poison in our veins, passed down like a sacred curse.

To endure, to survive, to stay strong—these are the expectations. To feel is weakness, to express is a luxury we were never taught to afford.

Today, I choose silence differently. Not as a shield, but as an act of worship. I choose to worship myself, to honor the silence that has carried me, and to transform it. I will use the silence that was forced upon me to rebuild, to heal, to rise

Silence, I can see you.