

A Dirt Folklore

by Kassion Lewis-Little

Listen to my music from sunsets, sunrises and moonlit nights

It is I, Dirt

Listen to my music from sunsets, sunrises and moonlit nights

It is I, Dirt, from the motherland

Between your toes and under your fingers

Listen,

Just listen while I speak

My story, is our story

My people

My beloved people – toiled at me in peace

I saw beautiful faces and complexions

Exquisite patterns

Heard so many tongues, it still surprised

Kettle drums and bell rattles that awoke me and put me to sleep

Feet that stepped with pride and pivoted in joy and self-admiration

Kings and Queens that have used me to mark their princes and princesses

Soft hands that have caressed me and laid me back down out of respect

My story, is our story

I have seen us

I have felt us

So, let me speak

It is I, Dirt

I remember it all...

The first set of unfamiliar feet

How they pranced on me with entitlement

How they squeezed me between their fingers

Threw me down out of scorn from callous hands

Spat on me

Then used their feet to mix it in out of disgust

I trembled for my people

So, listen I speak

Foreign objects dragged across me

Tongues that I did not understand but knew meant no good

Ordinary men that were greedy

An echoing sound and vibration
Not like the one that usually wakes me
I became frantic

I made sandstorms to intercept
Rigid roads as obstructions
Expansive lands that looked the same for confusion

But still, they came
And from every angle

My favorite feet scattered
Tongues begged for mercy
Blood spilt on me
Laughs that came from smirks that turned our heaven into hell
Children grasping for their parents
Life leaving eyes that once held worlds within them

I-
Against the land's permission
The fighting sea
The music that seized from sunsets, sunrises and moonlit nights
I too was taken with my beloved people
I too was forced on a journey that still continues
So, let me speak

I wailed and wept

It is I, Dirt from the motherland
Between your toes and under your fingers

Clenched between my people's hand
I felt their heartbeats
The feelings of courage that they tried to hold onto about the unknown

Upon our arrival
My people scattered me in a secret ritual

Whispering prayers
That I, the dirt would sustain and eventually strengthen them again

Between toes and under fingers

Shackled to land they had no interest in
They carried this nation on their backs

So, listen when I speak

As they whipped men
Their tears, fell on me
Clumping me up
Prior blood spilling made me stronger
So, each whip a little of me went into their wounds
Aiding with healing

As women birthed children
On dirt floors in makeshift houses
Purity and innocence were added to me
As they snatched children from their mothers
Women scraped up me up
And repeated secret chants

Children that sneaked and hid me in the corner of great hell houses
I began to learn their tongue
Agility and intuitiveness were added to me

I was coming back for my beloved people

The breadth and depth of pain and suffering that have not been explored much less
acknowledged is what I bring to you

My people were taken
Beat beat down
Put out to dry
Considered 3/5 of a person
Hung from trees like rotten fruits that would eventually fall back into the earth
Scorned more than the prospect of hell

So, excuse me
If now I, dirt between your toes and under your fingers bother you
PERSONAL problem for you
PERSONAL achievement for my people

They have earned the uncomfortableness
They have earned the attention

And still-
They are beaten
Shot
Lynched
Murdered and

Silenced

They are planning though
They acknowledge the rise of them does not mean the fall of others
But if you do fall, ask yourself why
If your face ever touches mines, really ask yourself why

Systematic changes
An equitable society
Respect
Inclusiveness

That is what they are coming for
Bare feet and fresh hands
So, I, Dirt will be between their toes and under their fingers

I too was forced on a journey that still continues
So, let me speak