

# Cre•a•tive The•o•l•o•gy

defini•tion

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by Sonya Curtis-Tshuma

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## Al•le•go•ry

black gold,  
these words  
from blood  
burnt black  
from the heat  
of suffering,  
ink  
rested deep  
in the depth of flesh

dug deep  
these words  
trembling  
to break the surface  
prove the worth  
of the land,  
that it is more  
than dirt  
placed and misplaced  
by wind

prove that being  
stepped on  
did nothing  
to lessen its worth  
because the words, un hurt  
were left only  
with another story  
to tell

these words  
from the depth  
of earth,  
worth  
the digging,  
the pumping  
and glad to

be emptied  
because black gold  
is heavy

## Fall

Gen. 2:25 They were naked, yet they were not ashamed

now we are clothed, yet ashamed  
arrayed in garments  
that cannot heal our pain  
and our garments must  
cover everything  
so we wear smiles  
one conversation long  
one eye glance wide  
one “all they have to do is ask” deep  
any longer, any wider, any deeper  
our frown would betray  
our garment, our shame revealed

now we are clothed, yet exposed  
arrayed in garments  
that can't cover our pain  
as the thinness of our garments  
brings increased self-awareness  
we wear distance, wear space  
one “life that can't be mentioned” long  
one half-truth wide  
one “i have to see the bottom” deep  
any shorter, any thinner, any deeper  
our fear would betray our garment  
our terror revealed

now we are clothed, yet vulnerable  
arrayed in garments that  
can't prevent pain  
as the weakness of the garments  
make them penetrable,  
we wear strength  
that is “struggle for perfection” heavy  
one stance hard  
one offence thick

any lighter, any hollower, any thinner  
our weakness would betray  
our garment, our vulnerability exposed

now we are clothed, yet ashamed  
trying to change the garments  
instead of dealing with the shame

refusing to go back  
to remove our garments  
by valuing the genuine,  
the transparent,  
the vulnerable

refusing to go back  
to redefine strength  
to re-label our nakedness as glory  
not shame

I•ma•go De•i

shine streaks  
between ash  
on the dust of her face  
from undried tears  
racing to absorption

while she wonders  
if it is sin  
to question the beauty  
of God's creation

if it is,  
she is guilty  
awaiting grace or  
condemnation  
because she can't  
reconcile her face  
to beauty or her life  
to attractiveness

knowing she is God's  
creation buffers so much,  
only so long  
before the voices come again,  
the comparisons weigh heavy  
and her reflection  
is despised

so she prays  
God, clear my eyes  
correct my vision  
and if only for a moment  
can i see myself  
through your image,  
hear your thoughts  
as you created me  
while eternities passed



and see how meticulously  
you sketched the first draft

can i feel the joy  
in which you mixed the colors  
that shade me  
and hold the tools  
that measured  
the height of my stature  
and the curve of body

can i walk the circles  
you paced, patiently checking  
every detail, lovingly  
smoothing every  
rough spot  
again and again

can i trace the stencil  
that outlined my birthmark  
as you signed and marked  
your creativity

show me  
the ears and eyes you  
discarded that weren't  
good enough for me,  
the countenances  
that didn't fit  
my personality,  
and the faces i was  
never meant to make

and finally  
if you favor me,  
can i watch  
as you blew breath  
into your masterpiece

and hear the satisfaction  
in your voice as you finished  
and went back to Eve  
creating genes that  
would exactly make me  
as you imagined  
when you called me  
Beautiful

## In•car•na•tion

*John 1*

*1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. 14 And the Word became ...<sup>3</sup>*

creation

what we teach  
our begotten

that we are part  
of the genealogy  
of the incarnations  
of God

that once God  
would walk in the cool  
of our breeze  
before humans  
were ashamed  
and distanced themselves

before God  
chose to harden us  
on their account

of course you can't remember  
the introduction of evil,  
the thorns in our sides,  
the shame of having  
to make way for thistles,  
the pain of being

packed together,  
the dryness  
of moisture retreating

the shrinking  
of potential,  
the delaying of progress,  
the increased birth pains  
of breaking through earth,  
the death we felt

but we knew God  
would redeem us,  
would remember the  
the goodness spoken  
over us

and in due season  
he baptized us in air,  
he dressed himself in the wind  
traveling as we touched her  
and her presence  
spread the best of us

he manifested himself  
in thunder, relieving  
the pressure as she shook  
the ground

and as sightings of him  
birthing fire from earth  
spread, we knew  
she was birthing  
in us things we never  
thought were possible

clothed in clouds, she wept  
pouring herself out  
restoring

the moisture that had left  
and was resurrected  
into vegetation,  
into life  
for the sake of life

and on that day  
we called God  
curse-breaker,  
life giver,  
redeemer

## Lib•er•a•tion

black history is  
sneaking into graveyards  
armed with shovels  
branded with  
i am  
the resurrection and the life,  
standing over the graves  
of the dark and the mighty

breaking pass the grass  
that looks the same  
atop every grave  
as if this corpse  
had no claim to greatness

unearthing the roots  
grown from seeds of praise  
held in clenched fists  
opened by the comfort of death,  
spread as one praises  
and steps on the graves  
of the dead  
who they believe  
will remain there

black history is  
digging through the dirt  
of he said, she said,  
the fbi report,  
the historian uncovered  
digging through the faults  
and shames, the cover ups,  
opinions changed  
with time and circumstance,  
until i finally reach the casket  
and the dead are given  
the right to name themselves

with me standing over them  
saying even still,  
if you give me yours  
and take mine  
neither of us dies  
and so i take the lines  
of eli knight  
the hoops, the tongues  
of jarena lee,  
the intellect of douglass  
and the boldness  
of a people that wouldn't die  
telling them i have the secret  
to all of our survival

black history is  
laying them back  
to rest as if i  
was never there  
except for that patch  
of dirt i leave a little  
shuffled so when the  
others come  
they know to dig there  
first because the earth  
has already been disturbed,  
dig here

## Pas•sion

there are days  
the earth has wondered  
what God has found  
so engaging in humanity

aren't they themselves  
only one wind  
evolved from dirt

and as Christ died,  
creation wondered  
if humanity was  
even worth it

tombs  
in mourning  
not wanting to house  
a dead savior,  
they retired,  
chose rather to collapse  
upon themselves  
allowed the dead to walk  
from their graves

and the sun  
needing time to pray  
retreated farther  
into space  
refused to shine,  
refused to watch  
its savior die

and the earth  
thinking it could help  
tripped upon itself  
rushing to His side,  
trembled,



shook  
trying to dislodge  
the cross from its grasp,  
trying to wake  
Jesus to consciousness

and creation dismayed  
blamed all  
of humanity  
thinking what manner  
of creation are these  
that they  
consume gods

Thanks For  
Reading

