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RECIPE FOR A MASSACRE: TULSA 1921

Quraysh Ali Lansana*

I.

ingredients:

one economically and culturally thriving black community, the
most vibrant of its kind in the world. before harlem renaissanced.
where at sunrise a dollar journeyed from greenwood & archer to
pine & back at sunset through thirty-six blocks of black hands,
black labor, black love on the black side of town.

one fourteen-year-old state that was point of origin & repository
for the nation's earliest & largest ethnic cleansing actions that
named jim crow attorney general (in defiance of the president) &
the ku klux klan its supreme court.

a racism that suspends all rational judgment.

a stumble in an elevator. a scream of rape from sarah page. a jail,
dick rowland, for your protection. a lynch mob. a defense mob. a
gunshot. hate. a gunshot. hate. a deputizing of hundreds. a
machine gun on standpipe hill. a dropping of bombs from
chartered planes. a burning. little africa on fire. a marching at
gunpoint. three internment camps. three-hundred dead in the
ruins of their own prosperity.

II.

and we can't find the sun
six thousand limping from mcnulty
park, convention hall & fairgrounds
pray on just a little while longer
past our smoldering dreamland
past madame cj's & tulsa star
past doctor jackson's & vernon a.m.e.

* Thank you *Pine Hill Review* for permitting *Tulsa Law Review* to republish Quraysh Ali Lansana's poem.

toward the ghosts of our homes
front stairs to nowhere but tarred sky

III.

add a terrance crutcher. a trayvon martin. a philando castile. A
bullet for your protection. a columbine. a sandy hook. a
stoneman-douglass. an ar-15 for your protection. a dude in las
vegas with an arsenal larger than the armory in enid. a nra for
your protection. a nobel prize winning scientist. a bell curve. an
iowa senator's lips. a dodge challenger on fourth street in
charlottesville. a unite the right rally for your protection. a dylan
storm roof at prayer service. a prayer. a prayer. a prayer.

*he who passively accepts evil is as much involved in it as he who helps to
perpetrate it. he who accepts evil without protesting against it is
really cooperating with it, king said.*

IV.

stir.