A NOTE TO MY SISTERS OF THE DIASPORA

by

Fassil Demissie

I thought of writing
A note, a letter, a book
400 years ago
Before the swirling diaspora

Since you left
That day
Snatched from our land
our people
raped
Uprooted and humiliated
By Europe, to be made slaves
In the fields and factories
In the mines and as domestics
Scattered over continents
in the United States
in the Caribbean
in South America

And now
After 400 years of exploitation
colonialism
slavemasters and factory bosses
sweat
tears
Jim Crow laws
Lynching and murdering
Reduced to poverty and destitution
For the profit of others
To fuel their system of accumulation
With your blood
Your childrens labour

You have survived

Who can understand your plight
Your pain and suffering in
Sharpeville
Soweto
Jim Crow Country
Have others felt the texture of your oppression?
The scourge of the colonizer
The juggernaut of apartheid
The interrogation of the secret police
torture
detention
disappearance
"accidental" death

Have your friends from Europe tasted these?
No, No, my sisters of the diaspora
my beloved
long separated sisters
on three continents

We have each faced
ostrogoths
visigoths
conquistadores
settlers
pilgrims
boers/afrikaners
gangsters
plunderers
cowboys
and Rambos

They still stalk this world
Making it unsafe for everybody
Inch by inch
Day by day
They devour everything in their way
and the people
the land and the resources
and now the heavens

As I write this note to you
In the shadow of the bomb
the bomb
the bomb
the ultimate negation of life
I am reassured by the resilience of your life force
your strength and courage
the capacity of your determination
In the struggle
My sisters of the diaspora
Let us come together and sit
   in our family compound
   to sort things out
   to share a moment
   to map out the road to freedom

When Africa and the world is truly free
From the grips of the West and the East
From the illusion of their promised lands
From the nightmare of their ideologies
And their sphere of influence
There will be time for me
Time for you
Time for us
All of us
To celebrate
To rejoice
The universe of our humanity

Your Brother
From the Continent