

WE WILL SEE

We said this for years,
shackled in cargo holds,
awash in cotton,
dying on fields of battle...
We said this on June 19, 1865 and on May 25, 2020.

We said this during peonage, Grand Wizards, and Jim Crow.
While statutes were erected to celebrate savagery, flags flown to intimidate citizenry, terrorists nurtured and grown,
we said this.
While Jesse, Joe, and Jackie were denied food and shelter,
as black boys hung from trees like strange fruit,
we said,
this is the land of the free for you,
not for me.

We stood with Tommie and John, transformed with Muhammad and Kareem, confronted with Mahmoud and Colin.
We gathered en masse with Martin and Malcolm, overflowed town halls for Bobby and Huey, chanted and sang,
preached and plead, with Jessie and Al.
We demanded justice, with Thurgood and Andrew...
though burnt with despair, chafed by frustration.

We said this for over 400 years,
and now you pledge allegiance to empathy and action?
Now you cry tears of consciousness?
Now you beg for restraint?

We said this.

We kneeled for Amadou, Trayvon, Eric, Philando;
for countless unpublicized souls for whom there is no video,
no affirmation of truth.
You were willfully immune to fairness and equity, lest self-evidence breach the sanctity of your prosperity,
your schools, your hospitals, your courts, your boardrooms, your arenas, your voting booths...
your privilege.

Time is up.

Rub away the shame of complicity.
Focus on the task at hand.
Do not remain muted and culpable.

You desire absolution for negligence,
forgiveness for delayed reckoning.

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