

Antipode

Stand Our Ground

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This poem is a rendering of concerns explored in Hilda's intervention, 'Trayvon Martin and the Dystopian Turn in US Self-defense Doctrine' Antipode 45(2)

Silent gauntlet all in black,
Side by side in silent witness.
Quiet youth with signs in hand,
Asking #Do we really look suspicious?

Holding vigil for Trayvon Martin,
Seeking justice for the young boy slain.
How can his murder go unanswered?
What the depths of this country's shame?

How can a man on neighborhood watch
Target a boy for wanton attack,
Follow, confront and finally kill him,
Just because the boy is black?

How can, god help us, the shooter walk free,
Claiming he acted in self-defense,
Citing state law that sanctions murder
As a rightful response to any menace?

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Meet force with force, says the State of Florida,
Blurring the line between real and perceived
Danger in home, or bar, or street,
Other than that in the mind of the aggrieved.

And so, inevitably, has come to pass,
This, any parents' darkest dread,
The thing so many fear the most,
To know their beloved child is dead.

A time for soul-searching, says the President.
Vigilantes run amok
Drag us into a dark dystopia
Which from child and civility the lifeblood suck.

Can this travesty be allowed?
NO! It's time to turn it around,
Defend civility, loud and clear
Make a stand, stand our ground.

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