

MARILYN KALLET

A Feast for Dogs and Birds

Tonight, a woman my age
is being raped in Darfur.
Gangs of men are taking turns with her.

Meanwhile the UN is discussing
“unspecified sanctions.”

*Don't cry, or they will kill me,
they'll cut off my ears
to mark me!*

*If I live, my family will not take me back.
I will be polluted, Abu Jangaer,
used. My body will bear shame.*

In the early morning, women your age
will be raped on their way to gather
firewood for their families.

Most of the tribal men are dead,
shot by the Janjaweed, devils on horseback.
Government helicopters are dropping bombs.

Janjaweed hunt the fleeing victims.
Burn villages,
poison the wells with corpses.

Let me show you.
Say my body is Africa.
Here, where my trunk is, my core,

the Sudan, here, where my heart
beats, Darfur.
Here children are dying of starvation.

Now two and half million go homeless,
400,000 killed.
Now the rains are coming,

hundreds of thousands more may die.
Why? Because the Bedouins hate
the dark-skinned farmers.

“We kill all slaves.
We even kill our cattle
if they birth black calves.”

The Holocaust Committee on Conscience
has deemed Sudan “a Holocaust emergency.”
But the UN and the U.S. hesitate.

If they name “genocide”
they might have to
stop it.

“Genocide”
would mean the Jews again.
Cambodia. Rwanda. Bosnia.

2,500,000 homeless.
The population
of Dallas / Fort Worth.

If two million Texans were displaced,
we would act.
But these are distant, homeless blacks.

The singers of Sudan,
wise women, have chosen
to study war no more.

Tonight, Fatima Mohamed Sanusi,
a traditional hakamah,
will chant only songs of love and mourning.

I stand with her.
“I ain’t gonna study war no more.
No more!”

They have not cut off our ears.
We hear the cries of our sisters
and brothers.

On July 16, Enas Abbakhu, 11 months old,
died of starvation in a camp outside Darfur.
In the news photo she’s still

clinging to her mother.
This is the moment to remember
Enas Abbakhu, and thousands

who are still clinging in Darfur,
remember the nameless dead,
and all the world’s discarded.



MARILYN KALLET is the author of 14 books, including *Circe, After Hours*, poetry from BkMk Press, and *Last Love Poems of Paul Eluard*, translations from Black Widow Press. She holds a Lindsay Young Professorship at the University of Tennessee, where she directed the creative writing program for seventeen years.