

Two poems by Walidah Imarisha for *Capitalism Nature Socialism* •
walidahimarisha@gmail.com

Minefields

I slept in a minefield
Unexploded devices as my pillow
A blanket of napalm snuggled tight
My eyes scream faster than light
There is no REM beneath my lids
Just bombs and bombs and
Concrete cushions for my head
Urban decay the horizon
Two babies strapped to my back
Doze on the subway
One eye open
To ward off roaming hands
Chase the dreams away

One moment of reverie
Can cost you
Everything

I used to daydream on the El
Shadows dancing across
Scratched up plexiglass
My baby's wail a
Six part opera
The conductor's voice
 More scarred than the plexiglass
Angels
Reading heavenly forecasts

My mind was pinwheels
Starbursts galactic light shows
My head housed escape
My body lived
In the cracks of the sidewalk
My tongue
Coated with toxin
I carried a refuge
Inside me
I slept through the night
In peace

Stray bullets brushed my cheeks
I did not stir
C4 canisters rapped on my window
I stretched and rolled over

Zyklon gas
Slowly leaked under the door
Through my ears
Snuck up my nose
On a night
I was caught sleeping
On that long ride
 As Mikey said

Uptown
Downtown
Crosstown
I woke to
More pieces of me dead
Spiritual leprosy
Bandits marauding
Stole bits of my sunshine
The fog rolled in
 I learned to breath in
The fumes
Without chokingblinkingthinking
I dropped to earth
Landed in this flesh
My tomb

 Here
Without visions
To haunt my indecisions
My disappointments
Bombed out housing
And military patrols
And muffled pillow screams
And random checkpoints
And hungry eyes
Are the familiar

It is not pretty

And neither am I

After the Revolution

we will have many children
and no fear
as we watch them
drift off to sleep

our guns will become
fenceposts
our steel armor
planters for holy sacrament

love will be like water
will be like poetry
will be like air
without borders
or bullet holes

there will still
anger
loss
heart break
and we will know
without a doubt
we will heal
unscarred

we must build
after the revolution
before the revolution
or there will never be an
after the revolution.

