

Last March they looked at us again

— RAFAEL WEISS BRANDT —

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Rafael Weiss Brandt

There was commotion when the Chief of Police announced that the case was being reopened. As a preacher of old she looked impassively as if justice itself gave the sentencing: we must look at the case again.

That was for us a cynical jest.

We are flesh no more.

Once rotting black bodies afloat in the waters of Atlanta, now we sink. Years passed and we wrinkled as used clothing, the smell of our deaths imperceptible under the mist of industry.

Buildings were built, and the glory of Capitalism erased pains with hysterical lust.

We remained as all the dead shall remain: sailing as forgotten shapes, the geometry of the dead forever adrift in this Styx.

No lines or corners or beginnings or endings in us — shapeless corpses together a mass of orgiastic rage. All unknown and uncanny and unfeasible. Frontiers and borders twisted into themselves, mingled, folded.

We are forgotten to any gods and devils.

Forgotten to anyone.

Forgotten even to the dark. We are no more. We are not. This is our afterlife.

Thus, enraged, is that we came to know that the Atlanta's Child Murders case was remembered. The case. Not us, but the case: the stain in the good past of the City, which is a determinant of income fields in spreadsheets.

We remained secondary — the negro little kids, killed in the negro city, by negro hands, on the country that swallowed the negroes and blamed them for it.

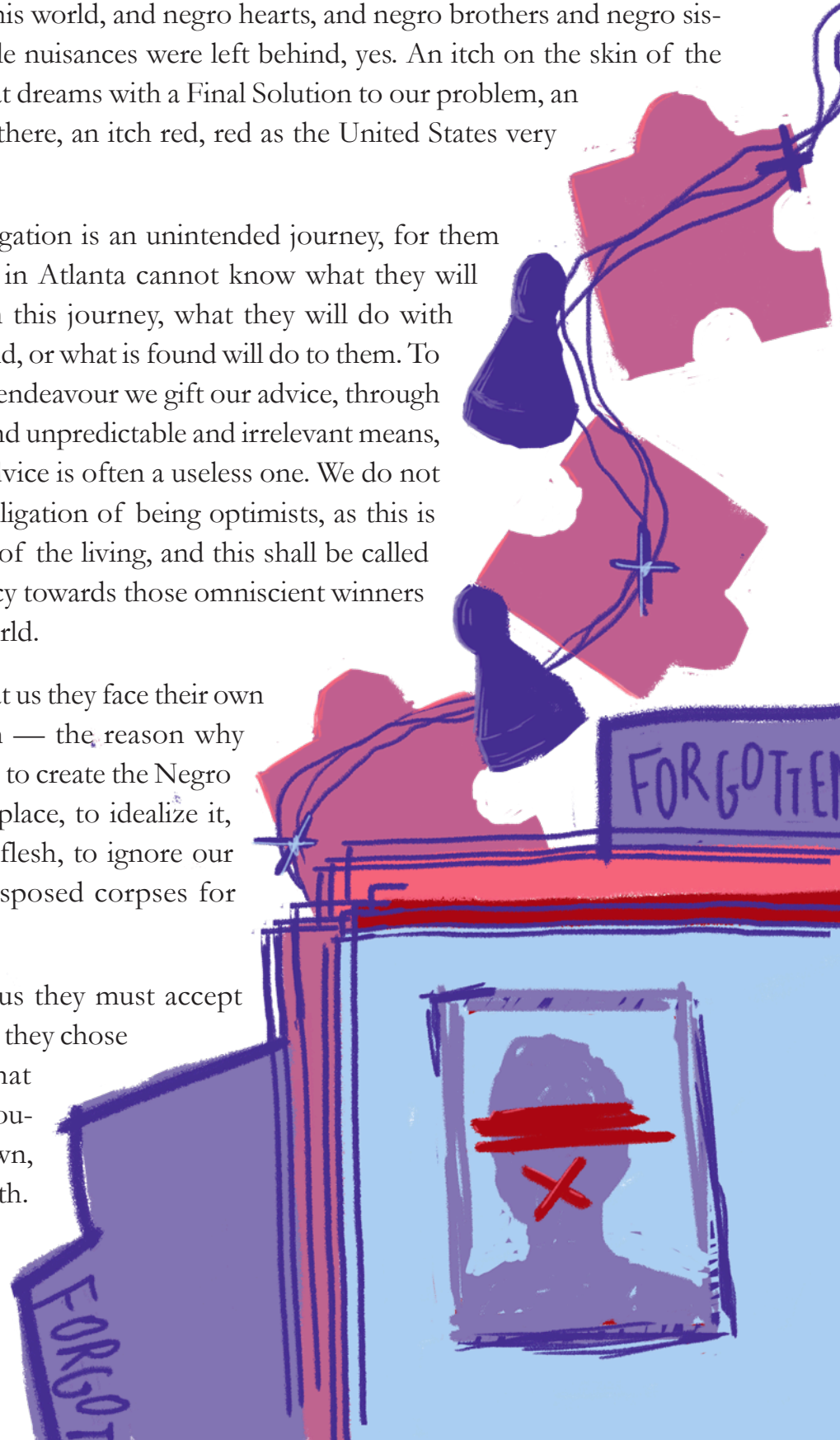
Pointless to worry about that, for we are Negro no more, nor Niggers, nor victims, no nothing. Death saves us from ghastly pale hands. That old, stale, tired tale is no more. Can be no more. Who would dare preach democracy and equality to the dead? Rotting flesh cannot be called 3/5 human no more. That, no Police Officer, pedophile or businessman can do.

Yet, in our freedom they decided to look at us again, for we left negro wombs in this world, and negro hearts, and negro brothers and negro sisters. Multiple nuisances were left behind, yes. An itch on the skin of the Country that dreams with a Final Solution to our problem, an itch always there, an itch red, red as the United States very own Apple.

This investigation is an unintended journey, for them white folks in Atlanta cannot know what they will discover on this journey, what they will do with what is found, or what is found will do to them. To help in this endeavour we gift our advice, through unknown and unpredictable and irrelevant means, for a free advice is often a useless one. We do not have the obligation of being optimists, as this is the burden of the living, and this shall be called mercy. Mercy towards those omniscient winners over the world.

By looking at us they face their own conundrum — the reason why they needed to create the Negro in the first place, to idealize it, to mow its flesh, to ignore our wickedly disposed corpses for so long.

To look at us they must accept the fact that they chose to blame that black lad, young and brown, ripe for death.



That deranged, perhaps guilty, youngling. As any other goat taken to the desert, this man was intended to expiate the sins of History — they made him a Messiah, condemned to carry all that was done to us.

As an addition to this Cain's sacrifice, they offered the smoke of a small fire — that of an investigation on themselves, dressed in white pointy hoods instead of uniforms.

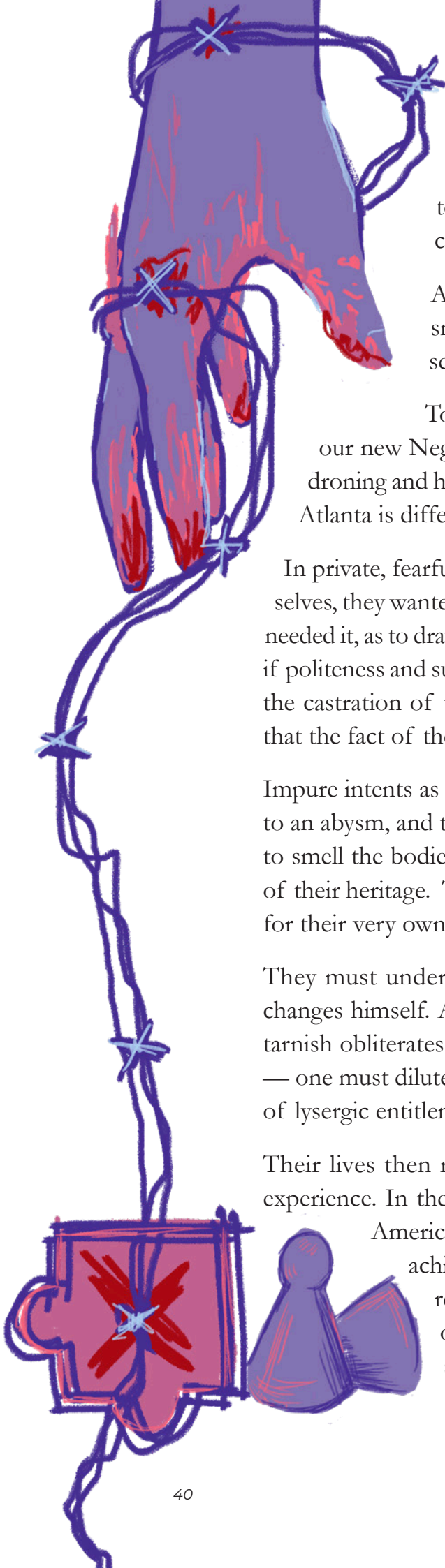
To the public they said in one voice “A new era — look at our new Negro leader, so white in his mannerisms. So lovely in his droning and his drones, so highly educated, so comfortable, so tamed. Atlanta is different, our United States is now different”.

In private, fearful of being mistaken by that radical caricature of themselves, they wanted the world to think they were looking at us again. They needed it, as to draw the line between deranged madness and themselves, as if politeness and subtleness were excuses — a tactic of old, to differentiate the castration of the North from the castration of the South, ignoring that the fact of the maiming is an American fact.

Impure intents as they are with these people, their choices brought them to an abyss, and they now have to look. They have no choice other than to smell the bodies, impervious that they were before to the sweet odor of their heritage. They must clean our flesh from their teeth, spitting sins for their very own eyes to see.

They must understand that he who so abhorrently victimizes others changes himself. Atrocities disform and ossify moral compasses. Such a tarnish obliterates the very capacity for art, for joy, for true connections — one must dilute any self-criticism into a sea of morose entertainment, of lysergic entitlement, to exist in a place so contradictory.

Their lives then remain so ugly, so tamed, an empty shell of human experience. In their angst, they need the self-perpetuating myth of the American way, savored by the few, idealized by the many, never achievable to most. If they do not see this, Americans will remain forever trapped between their childish expectation of themselves and the evidence produced by their own society, never becoming what they wish they were.





The evidence of this painful and scary reality is us, these bodies deprived of form, having solely the voice of history as their advocate. That is the story of us, of our flesh and bone and kin. The story of the Atlanta Child Murders is the history of the United States.

If they do not truly gaze upon us, their future is far direr than ours ever was. Our hands had calluses from years of servitude, while they cannot make without this privilege, as the indulgence of the wicked made them weak. Above all, they cannot fathom the price paid in blood, and lives, and dreams, and languages, for their sloth. Revolt becomes therefore illogical to them.

Last march they decided to look at us again. Yet what they see is themselves — their heritage, their offspring, their trophies. Our fate is their fate, and either doom or salvation depends solely on the end of this journey, and its effects.

Nevertheless, heed our prophecy, as we spill it from our shapeless lips and our toothless mouths: shall we remain invisible, nothing of you, your ideas, your dreams shall remain. From our dark, empty and shapeless death, with voices of old, we moan our warning: your precious flag will not stand the test of time, as it did not resist the test of morality. It will lay in mud, a bloody mud with stars and stripes. And no one will look back at you.

Sobre o autor

Rafael Weiss Brandt é escritor e pesquisador expatriado. Tem contos e poemas publicados em diversas revistas.