

Once a Rebel, Now Settled

Seeing the stark contrast in realities from distant worlds
A foot in both and not knowing how to settle them
A voice in the wilderness rebelling against inequality
A soul torn apart

Settling in the midst of intellectuals
Who discuss minute points about things that don't matter to most of the world
We want to show how smart we are
Critique works we cannot do
Break down ideas to the point that they make no sense
Scheme to get ahead
How do I position myself for a Ph.D., for tenure, for full, to be an administrator?

At some point we forget the reason we came here
We came to be a voice for the voiceless, speaking our truth
To help those lost in words and theories see the reality of what they study
Who are the people we speak of and why is world categorized?
We generalize and ask meaningless questions that we cannot answer
With words only but no action

How do we move from the rut of our jobs?
The monotony of endless email and meaningless committee assignments
To remember the passion that brought us here
We are here for more than busy work
And the careerism that Black Studies creators warned us about
We are here with a platform to inform, reform, and revolutionize
To create global citizens with the potential to transform the world

In the midst of strengthening racism and xenophobia
We fight an uphill battle
But no harder than our ancestors have fought so many times before

Who are we?
Blessed with knowledge
Pondering the irrelevant
Working to death but building nothing
In awe of insignificant things
Burdened down by meaningless tasks
Lost from purpose
Hanging on a string on the verge of collapse
Wondering how we got here

It's time to be unsettled and do the work which brings meaning
Not as a rebel with no cause
Or a follower of someone else's lead
But as one who sees a path set before her
And walks it with the grace of a person possessed with a mission
To move beyond her career
To do what transforms the important spaces around her
Unsettle the rebel.