

Stand up. The court goes. Here and now judge the rapper.

Witness your word.

by Iolina Gribkova

I live in Krasnodar
I can talk
My country is big
I want to walk

My language is rich
There are a lot of words
But freedom of speech
Boaded up with boards

Rapper Digga sang
On the streets of my city
He was taken by the police
Their actions were dirty

He sang about corruption,
About theft in the state
And they gave him an obstruction,
But he sad not too late.

We should be together
And stop this violence
Otherwise a great country
Will only silence,silence,silence

Defendant, what do you have to say for yourself?

By Iolina Gribkova

Draw like Banksy on the wall
Or as the sea drew Aivazovsky
In every movement your soul
And every has the gift of sky

You must use your gift to the people
Don't be afraid to show it all
And even if your talent is litle
You show to people your big soul.

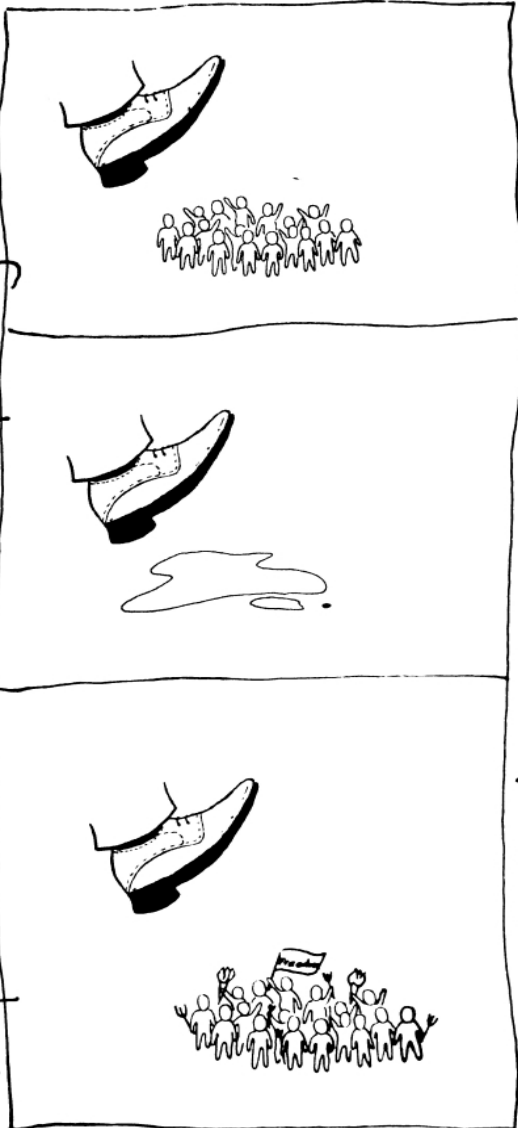
The court decided.

You broke the law,
You wanted people to be free,
But it deserves respect.
Take care of you soul
You'll now be looked at differently
White crows are not the best expect.

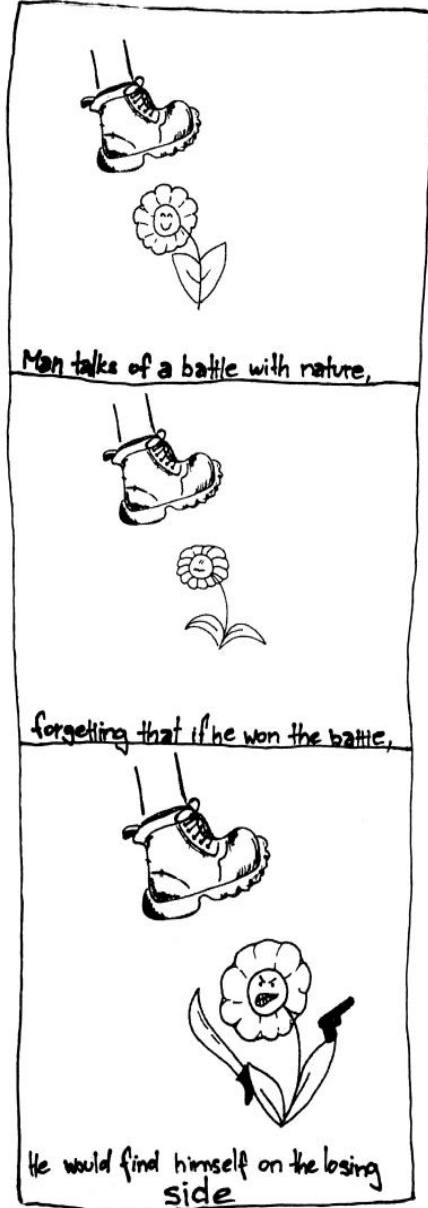
The rapper is sentenced to condemnations by society and creative torments.

Go outside and carry your cross.

People shouldn't be afraid of their governments



governments should respect, value and support their people.



Man talks of a battle with nature,

forgetting that if he won the battle,

He would find himself on the losing side



The Journey is the Destination: Very Short Short Stories on Human Rights and the Everyday
By Astrid Juckenack

Epic words argue their central points in hundreds of thousands of words. Very short short fiction aims to be as minimalist as possible, communicating its core messages or a central story in as few words as possible.

They murdered the murderer in the end.

Playground ToS
 50 cents/worm
 Family dinner: US\$ 7.50

My child, my decision.

Tied up and bleeding in somebody's basement, she had nothing left.
 She had her rights.
 Nothing happened.

Homosexuals Are Not Cowards
Dutch Resistance and the Holocaust
By Astrid Juckenack

Willem Arondeus was born in 1894 as the youngest of seven brothers. He grew up and studied art in Amsterdam, and parted with his family when he came out as homosexual at the age of 17, after which contact was never re-established. After a somewhat unstable but perpetually evolving career as an artist, he moved to the Dutch countryside where he lived in a relationship with the son of a Dutch vegetable merchant, and worked as an author rather than an artist starting in 1935.

Soon after the onset of the German occupation, Arondeus joined the resistance movement *Persoonsbewijzencentrale* (PBC). On Saturday, the 27th of March 1943, the group carried out an attack against the public records office in Amsterdam in an effort to undermine the identification of Dutch Jews, Sinti and Roma, and forced laborers, and stop their round-up and deportation to the Westerbork camp. Registration had been mandatory since 1940, and rendered Dutch minorities and marginalized groups extremely vulnerable to Nazi-persecution.

The group was betrayed. Arondeus was arrested on the 1st of April

1943, sentenced before a druehead court-martial, and shot on the 1st of July 1943 alongside 12 other resistance fighters. Having been vocal about his homosexuality and life in a homophobic society for most of his life, his last words have reportedly been to “let it be known that homosexuals are not cowards.” Yad Vashem, the largest Israeli Holocaust memorial, included Willem Arondeus among the *righteous among the nations*.

A friend and fellow resistance fighter of Willem’s, Frieda Belinfante, did not die then. Born in 1904 in Amsterdam to a Jewish father and a non-Jewish mother, Frieda grew up in a musical household, started to learn to play the cello during childhood, subsequently studied music as an adult, and became a professional cellist, playing in various orchestras and ensembles. One such ensemble was dissolved as the Nazis occupied the Netherlands. As a half-Jewish, openly gay woman, Frieda could no longer practice her profession. Her brother and his wife committed suicide shortly after the occupation, and Frieda eventually joined the resistance movement. Alongside Willem Arondeus, she provided Dutch victims of NS-persecution with forged documents. She was involved in the planning of the attack on the public records office, but excluded from executing the attack because of prevailing gender biases within the group.

Following the attack, Frieda went into hiding, disguised as a man, for several months before finally fleeing to Switzerland. Following the end of the Second World War, she briefly returned to the Netherlands but preferred the US for her next destination, where she successfully continued her musical career.

Wallpaper Women

By Astrid Juckenack

I am not wallpaper.
I am not thing and flat
and not as fragile
and nobody's to stick to their walls.

I am not a couch,
not freshly stuffed
and clad in satin
or anybody's to sink into along their way.

And I am also not a floor
to be walked all over.

So
You can tell me now that women are
emotional but not rational,
pretty but not smart,
nice to have but not to listen to,
and that defiance is destined to fail.

And you can tell me also that
women should not marry women,
and mothers shouldnot have a child together,
and sick women should not adopt,
and who am I to defy these assertions?

But I am not wallpaper
and I do not tear.
I am a woman.

South Africa is a country where some people still believe in witchcraft. It is said witches use black cats, bats and owls to do their dirty work.

The Owl
By Thabo Ngoxo

He, who is an Owl.
The wisest of the animal kingdom.
He floats above to watch us all at night.
Yet he is not appreciated.
He flies to where he wants without borders to stop him.
You hear villagers scream, Witch! Witch! Witch! He must burn.
He is not appreciated.
Yet he insists upon watching us all.
“I am destined to keep peace in the animal kingdom and will not stop until I part this world,”
he cries.

A Story About Privilege
By Thabo Ngoxo

A lot of times, in the presence of some white people, I have found myself in a position that no black person should find themselves in. I have been accused of being a racist myself, having to explain my existence as a black person and why the system does not favour a person of colour. I have lost my patience with explaining what it means to be privileged to a white person and why black pain is valid. Black people can't be racist; we have never had the tools or power to institutionalize racial oppression. Black people do not have the resources to impose oppressive structures that enforce their superiority over others. White people, on the other hand, do have those resources, and they have imposed such structures on blacks for over four centuries of slavery and colonialism. Black people can be prejudiced, but not racist.

When black people voice out their pain, that is not the time or platform for whites to voice their opinions. A lot of people need to learn the importance of respecting context and what is appropriate and when. When someone is abused, people comfort them, and people try to find justice for that person; no one tells them, “oh, let's not deny the fact that you are also capable of abusing someone.” I find the white arrogance disgusting.

The colour of my skin does not prevent me from being racist, but the society that we as blacks find ourselves in does. In this society, we are automatically inferior due to the continuous systematic support of white privilege. Because we find ourselves in this inferior position, it is impossible for us to be racist.

For a black person who for 500 years has known nothing but imperialism, colonialism and apartheid, it is only logical that such a man would hate the system. And logically, a man cannot hate the belt that has been whipping his body for centuries but love the person who has been doing this. When such a black person, lying bleeding and helpless on the floor, starts to hate the white man that whipped him, it is only reasonable. The only time that such a man can be accused of being racist is when he has his own belt, equal in length and quality to the one held by the white man. It is when the bleeding person is equal to his tormentor that he has the capability to exert power over him and to be racist.

She thinks her shit doesn't stink

By Thabo Ngoxo

My grandmother worked for a white family for many years. When me and my twin brother were born, she had to take care of us and work at the same time. Our parents were very young when we were born, and so they had to continue with school. My grandmother would take us to daycare in the morning, then go to work. This always made her late for work, so eventually, her boss asked us to move in with them.

After we moved in with this family, life was all sweet and butterflies. One day, Ouma, who is the mother of my grandmother's boss, had just walked out of the toilet, and I went in right after her. I was shocked that her shit actually smelled. I ran to my brother and told him about this, and he also went in the toilet and was as shocked as I was. When all of this happened, I was about 6 years old.

A lot of people I know in South Africa still see white people as superior, and this makes me very sad. Black people are colonized up to a level that they think white people's shit doesn't stink. I always say that I am lucky to have had this experience, because after that day, I saw white people differently. My dream is to decolonize black people's minds, because we are enslaved in them.

Banned from Tinder

By Ann Yanich

I used to use Tinder just to date other women. I mean, to be more accurate, I used it to try to date women. Most people I talked to on the app just dropped our conversations on the ground eventually.

With one person, we had planned to go out for coffee one afternoon, but she canceled on me the morning of, and she never got back to me to suggest another time we could meet up. My only successful Tinder date to date was a friend-date with a friend of mine who I already knew before we matched on Tinder.

I found that I quickly exhausted the population of Tinder-using queer women in my town. I'd check the app just about once a week, and there would only be one or two more cards for me to swipe left or right on, and I wasn't getting many more matches. I decided to cast a wider net: I told Tinder to show my profile to men as well as women.

Within 24 hours, I received more "likes" than in the whole several months that I had used the app. It said "999+ likes." Everyone I swiped right on was a match. It was really different from what I had experienced before.

There was a lot of chaff to separate from the wheat. A lot of really boring or stupid or outright repulsive profiles. I think I am attracted

to men a lot less than women, but I soldiered on, I guess out of a weird kind of faith in my not-just-gayness. I really have issues with a lot of men, I find that in general, I just get along a lot better with women or non-binary people, and looking at these profiles, it was just seeming to me like a confirmation of all of the reasons me and men do not click. To encourage myself to put in the work to sort through all these guys' profiles, I kept myself that I do like men; I have some male friends who I get along really well with, and I really am attracted to some male people sometimes, in my dreams 😊😊😊 as well as in my waking thoughts.

Still, even in the face of this seemingly irrefutable evidence, my belief that I am attracted to men as well as women – that I am bi or pan or however you would like to call it – is still somehow a tenuous thing. When I think, "I am attracted to women," it feels like a bedrock, unshakable truth. I haven't ever doubted it over the course of my thirteen-plus years of pubescence, including my past eight months of hormone therapy. It fits the society's expectations for me, and it's really true, so there was never a reason to doubt it. On the other hand, when I think the words "I am attracted to men," I'm reluctant, even now, to say that that is a fact about me.

Starting from the start of puberty, in middle school, I repressed it. I went all the way through high school completely unaware of it and

unable to perceive it; I even asked myself sometimes if I was bisexual, since I knew something was not exactly straight about me – for an even longer time before that, I was also repressing the knowledge that I was transgender – but I couldn't think of a single boy who I was attracted to. A year after I graduated, I was actually having dreams where I would be making out with the same guys I went to school with. When I was in school, I never had these dreams. I had suppressed this aspect of myself so thoroughly that I couldn't even dream of it.

This brings me back to where I was. Despite all of the forces working against me, I put in the work that night, and I found some “male” profiles that I was willing to swipe right on and send some messages to. I started a couple of conversations. One guy asked to read one of my blog posts about the cafeteria at the university, and I sent it to him. I was feeling pretty good, actually! I felt like this was going somewhere.

The next evening, I opened Tinder on my laptop. It said my account had been placed under review. I couldn't log in, and I couldn't look at anyone's profile or view or reply to my messages.

In order to “keep Tinder safe”, they automatically disable accounts after they have received a certain number of reports from other users. These reports can be of the following: “Inappropriate

photos,” “appears to be spam”, or another reason that a user types in. The reports are anonymous, so you don't know who reported you or why. But because I used Tinder for months before this and never had any problems, I think it is pretty obvious that straight men reported me who were threatened somehow by my presence in the app.

In a previous draft, I started this story with the line “I hate men.” I think this thought a lot in my head. I don't really hate all men – like I said, I know some men who I find quite agreeable – but I have had a lot of difficult experiences stemming from men's policing of gender, and their behavior related to homophobia and their fears of not fitting into the expectations that society expects them to fulfill.

I guess Tinder replicates for me a lot of the prejudices and biases that are present in the society at large. It has no tools to protect marginalized minorities from the majorities who oppress them. The tools that are intended to keep the community safe, like the “report” functionality, are just as easily used as tools of oppression. Similar problems are present on platforms like Twitter.

I think that part of the solution to this kind of issue is for marginalized groups to create their own communities where they are in the majority. For example, there are physical spaces, like the small café space at my university that's only open to and operated by

women and transgender and intersex people. And there are online spaces like Mastodon, a decentralized replacement for Twitter which allows people to operate their own servers and choose their administrators and moderators, rather than being subject to the whims of automated algorithms and the opaque processes of a large corporation's customer support department.

I'm not sure if Mastodon's model or similar ones will, in the end, scale endlessly. Once there are enough users of Mastodon, mass harassment could also prove to be a problem there. I think that in the end, it may prove to be the case that small, invite-only online spaces are the only online spaces that can be really safe from the problems that large platforms tend to have. Maybe, once a group grows beyond a certain size, it's just not good anymore for a lot of the kinds of interaction that humans want to have with one another. I'm not using any online dating sites right now any more. I'm just trying to meet people in person.