

Protect the Dolls Means Defend the Bricks Too

A Call-In to My Fellow Trans Sisters

Nsámbu Za Suékama

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This is a message from a doll-who-flies. Ancestral spirituality guides what it means for *me* to be a woman of trans experience. From a young age, I found myself being “rode” by inclinations towards the feminine, even before having the language for it. But I had to resist demonization of that about me which my Soul leaned towards. I am thankful that in the fires of rebellion and social unrest during my adolescence, knowledge about precolonial and indigenous lifeways came to me. Through these “hush harbors,” I was able to find the Divine within, and thereby embrace my most honest self. This is a journey I speak of in terms of “gender-as-marronage.” In the afterlife of slavery, the chains laid upon my flesh that ensnared me by a sex-dualism could not hold my consciousness captive any longer. I endeavored to define my name, my identity, my body on my own terms, and ultimately cement a place in the universe for myself.

But, this Mojo of self-transformation/evolution is one that negotiates forces internal to us and external to us. All of us who take mones know this. It’s also one that grapples with not only the dynamics internal to our community or cultures but those outside it (in technical terms, that is called “endogenous-exogenous interpenetration”). So, the sacred basis for my trans womanhood is not legible in Amerika, which is a colonial society, an Empire, a capitalist state, fueled by Christian religious bigotry. My identification cards, therefore, have to say “F.” My birth certificate, social security, school information, paperwork at my job—it must reflect my articulation legally as “female.” And, in public, I must conduct myself accordingly: so I’m not necessarily channelling the ways that, for me, in the words of the Amazons of Dahomey, my womanhood was “like iron that went through fire.” Ie, nobody knows me as Nsámbu Za Suékama, a “blessing in disguise” in my neighborhood, or my workplace, or in my civilian life. Even when I do speak as such, typically in certain spaces that are, in Solange’s words, “for us,” I am careful to articulate myself as a “womanist” rather than an ecofeminist, and will speak on transness/queerness from that perspective—not necessarily my anarchist, class-struggle, anticolonial grammars. This way I don’t shake up the table “in-house” when amongst my cisgender and heterosexual skinfolk, because I recognize that many of them do not act like kinfolk and thereby risk bringing on the eyes and ears from themfolks.

I do avoid the gym. I would not go because there's no way I would enter a men's locker room and I highly doubt at this point in my transition that fellas would even see me as a brotha. Plus, I'm scared of them niggas. Similarly, I wouldn't step into a women's locker room either, because I am afraid that certain sistas are not likely to recognize me as a lady, unfortunately. I wish it wasn't this way because as someone who used to row boats a lot, and who has a physical disability now, I miss being active and I would like to exercise again someday. I limit myself in other ways too: I try my best to stay out of public restrooms at all costs. If I go to use one, I'm gonna try to find a gender neutral restroom. If there are none, however, I'm going to the women's room, I don't care. I'll be rushing into an empty stall, doing my business, washing my hands, and then getting out as soon as possible. I'm grateful I haven't had problems in those instances (and the only time now I have used a men's room, it was simply because the line to the ladies room was too long—something I've seen cis women do too). I get scared of being near parks or schools on certain days, as well. I understand how transmisogyny works. There's no shortage of narratives about gurls trying to prey on or even impose "gender ideology" on kids. I do my best to be very "don't ask, don't tell" about it even around the youth in family—nieces, nephews, little cousins, siblings, etc for that same reason.

If I'm at a social function, say, a restaurant or party, I have to be relatively demure, even in queer spaces, because I recognize the "controlling images" (a la bell hooks, *ibaye*) working against me: to everyone, gurlz like us, as was said of Mary Jones (*ibaye*) in early 19th century NYC, are a "man-monster." To that point, though I am a sexually fluid woman, most people won't know this because, in recognizing that it is more socially acceptable for women to be into heterosexual and cis men, on the instances that I do make known anything about my dating life (and mind you, I keep this private too), I will speak about the men that I have dealt with and that's it. Or, I will trade stories and perspectives that resonate with the experience of dating men. I'm from the Bronx, so I have a very New York personality, which means I am direct, and when I'm interested in someone, no matter the gender, I don't mind being forward. Yet, because of bioessentialism coupled with how women's behavioral standards are supposed to be, I seldom feel comfortable "shooting my shot" anymore in dating. I wait to be pursued. My style of dress is typically feminine, but not too "festive," and even though I have somewhat avant-garde tastes, I don't dress too "alternative" as much any more; it is often said that I'm a bit "auntie-coded" in my aesthetic now. But I have found that dressing this way, in addition to the fact that I walk with a cane, takes a lot of eyes off of me. Men do not harass me as much and the tr*anny-chasers among them have stopped eyeing me down looking for the signs in my gait or mannerisms that they thirst after, and fish are not calling for the weak-links to attack me. This unfortunately means I can't show skin, I can't wear certain styles of nails, I don't use certain lingo, I don't wear certain kinds of wigs or earrings, I'm not doing my makeup in certain ways because I know that if I play into a certain "presentation" as a woman or nonbinary person—I could invite advances I'd like to avoid. Interestingly, it's the first time in my life I been at peace while outdoors.

I'm not sure what this means for me as far as the question of "passing" or "stealth," but I do know that I have only been misgendered in person or by phone a handful of times in the past year and a half. And mind you, I've been on mones for four years (started my journey eight years ago). Sure, wearing a mask helps, but even on days when I had no mask—like when I was at the office to get my ID stuff together, I be chilling 85% of the time. I pray that, by the mercy of Allah, in the name of Jesus, through the intercession of my blessed dead, I continue to have these wings that veil my face, veil my feet, veil my hands, veil my bones, veil my life, veil my home, veil my

name, veil my roads. Ase. Still, I would never suppose that confronting these “Jewel Crow” style experiences as I call them is just the way the world works. I refuse to act like these strictures are just the condition to which we are damned as Black people of trans experience. I will not allow someone to conviction me that the limitations set out for me should remain unchallenged or that to challenge them is simply a “white” thing. I spent my entire childhood allowing the Color Line to make me so dysconscious about gender that I believed the same lies as told by my parents: which was that queerness itself as unAfrican/not-black. I owe it to myself, my spiritual core, and to my sistas, siblings, and brothas who don’t get the peace I currently experience to fight for Gender Self-determination and Bodily Autonomy. Not assimilation. Like Assata (*ibaye*) said, it is our duty to fight for our freedom; it is our duty to win; we must love and support each other; we have nothing to lose but our chains.

My point is: to Protect the Dolls means also to Defend the Brick. Miss Major Griffin-Gracy (*ibaye*) said as much in her autobiography. Neither Zazu Nova (*ibaye*), nor Marsha (*ibaye*) and Sylvia (*ibaye*), were integrationists who perfectly aligned with genteel standards about women’s place in public life. First of all, the rebels at Stonewall understood they had two enemies (this can be gleaned from documents in the radical Gay Power movement): on one hand, there was the capitalist underground, who ran the bars that gender-diverse people congregated at in those days. The Gay Power movement understood that the Mafia, was an expression of these illegal patriarchies, and was taking advantage of the sex-segregated world that our community lived in at the time—to make a profit. The capitalist underground was doing this long before any fortune 500 companies and megacorporations had figured out they could gain from rainbow capitalism or a corporate pride.

In addition to this illicit bourgeois network, you have the aboveground capitalists. It was on their behalf that the police raided the Stonewall Inn because cops exist to protect not *people* but property interests and divisions of labor. In the eyes of the police, and their benefactors, the illegal commerce was already a problem—a source of class competition. Economies outside the law are always something the official ruling class is gonna regulate against or seek to control. But more importantly, the congregation of gender-outlaws whose presence was being profited off of, had to be put down. Because aboveground capitalism only has these domains for people who aren’t cishet men: the Home or Closet, and if not—it is the Prison or the Ward. There’s a long history of institutionalization/hospitalization and confinement/deportation for us if we don’t subordinate ourselves to the demands of what’s called “social reproduction” in the private sphere.

To that point: it is very important that *every* person who isn’t a cishet man understands that the “public” itself is merely an extension of private interests. Public property is held by municipal and other government entities, in concert with entrepreneurial and business interests. And the nuclear family is their “nexus” of *imbrication* (or overlap). What launched this is first the conversion of Native lands into “assets” for Massa’s house—and that has meant that navigating the “public” was always really about navigating the marketplace or auction block that funneled resources, labor, and bodies to the Big Man. Therefore, a woman could not be outdoors *unaccompanied* because the Public was only for either her husband or her father or an adult male relative who had rights to property and could negotiate with the Big Man. She needed the “protection” of the Lil Man, therefore, if she was to navigate civil society or commercial affairs alongside him.

And many women would steward their family's assets using this set-up, sometimes effecting a leg up for themselves, although still facing barriers of course.

Importantly, when such educated or upper class women worked, it was to be an extension of her place in domestic life only, and nothing further. So she had *very few* professions available to her. It wasn't always that way, though, not further back in time or in places that were much less industrial and much more feudal. And that's especially because of the poor women: peasants, servants, the proletariat, and the enslaved. Their labors reproduced the Massa's house too, and his regime of private accumulation, and in some instances, a few might become stewards of his assets, all while also managing alongside their family members whatever limited ownings the men (who society called Lil Boy) in their families were allotted. This way, they could sustain themselves, and more value could be gleaned from them because of said process of regeneration. Now, since these women were not among the Big Man's wives (or concubines), nor that of the Lil Man, they couldn't negotiate the Public or workplace to their own advantage; neither did the men in their family necessarily have rights of his own to property and legal representation from which to "protect" these women's interests (again, that's why he was called Lil Boy). The further and further you go down the chain to the literal status of chattel, or nonpersonhood, the more extreme these barriers were, such that even a freeborn or emancipated/manumitted Afrikan was ensnared by these conditions.

Now, capitalism is competitive, which meant the women of these poor, peasant, proletarian, and enslaved classes could be traded, trafficked, exploited by many changing hands: and not just in the aboveground. The regime of private accumulation makes the "public" into an *illicit* market as well. So even when slavecatching, slavetrading, and enslavement itself was illegal, that didn't mean the industry actually stopped (and it ultimately *kept feeding the legal economy*). By extension, criminal organizations of various sorts, whether smuggling of drugs, weapons, flora/fauna, other products—also expanded a trade in sex. The more aboveground capitalism outlawed or made taboo certain older/feudal patterns, be it concubinage or servanthood or brothels, the more workers fell into the underground economy, into commerce that was not only at the fringe of the market but in direct competition with aboveground (formal, legal) interests. Among these "lumpen" populations were prostituted women and gender-marginalized sex workers. Sex trades were the only available option if one could not find low-wage, indentured, or peon labor roles, or some other formal/legal economic position like sharecroppers or plantation-bound "apprentices" (it was easier for the Lil Boy to be funneled in these roles, although many of even them were damned to the Prison or Ward).

It was the educated, upper class professional women and their husbands who advocated for there to be "rights" for women (and gays) that would enable them better access to formal wage-labor in the aboveground economy and the capacity to engage in commerce or even acquire/steward assets more broadly. Part of this meant guaranteeing marriage, and especially that the men they married were enfranchised, were employed, etc—able to become the Lil Man. Although this may have seemed progressive, in reality, the labors and embodiment of the uneducated/lower class alongside the educated/upper class women were simply being consolidated into a new regime of private accumulation. Thus, all such women had to always signal that her place in the Public was in line with the social reproduction of the Home. And many times, upper class women simply stepped up as the bosses/exploiters of poor especially Black women, for example by making them into domestic househands.

This is the origin of sex-segregated bathrooms. The protection that was eventually being offered broadly was the same kind of paternalism that was originally enjoined in the elite household upon the (especially white) woman. The ruling class needed to make sure a now *broadened* stratum of emancipated workers was not getting too rebellious, a problem they had dealt with before. As bourgeois society matured, it dispossessed the masses from feudal/medieval and communal/traditional ownings; a central byproduct of this dispossession was that people providing for themselves was increasingly made difficult if it wasn't either through commodities bought with wages, or investments made/resources provided by bureaucratic institutions (welfare, the social safety net, etc) and religious institutions (including schools or healthcare services). Cycles of resistance against but also assimilation into these byproducts—these waxed and waned all through capitalism's history by that point, among the lower classes, including their women, their men, and their gender-expansive comrades.

In the end, sex-segregated bathrooms and other public spaces, alongside dress codes and codes for gender performance did double duty of helping surveil and enclose restive workers. It allowed women to be more closely watched as they gained a place in Public life while also clearly marking off who could be exploited by the underground economy. Importantly, for a long time, it wasn't just that a woman couldn't be outside alone, or couldn't be found in Public except in certain designated areas: she also couldn't wear certain things like pants. That stuff was for the whores, it was said (because the whores were often among the lower-class women that didn't dress like the "protected" or "kept" woman).

Every trans or nonbinary, queer or non-cis/non-het person must understand this point: considering how many in our community, especially trans women, are so gatekept out of Public life, formal work, rights, protection, education, housing, etc that sex trades become the only or main option. Would gender non-conformity have been associated with whores if there hadn't always been a presence of "crossdressers" in these women's labor struggles? From a material/power analysis, I don't think so! To this day, the panic around "sex-segregated spaces" ends up affecting mostly trans women, but also trans men and trans mascs, visibly genderqueer individuals of any experience too, including cis women who are studs, butch, lesbian, and even heterosexual cis women—especially intersex ones. All the rhetoric about "protection" used to justify this fear-mongering never seems to actually hold cis men accountable for their abuse, and indeed that is the point.

Abusive coworkers and bosses, day-to-day street harassers, violent boyfriends and husbands and fathers and male relatives, predatory pastors and politicians as well as police and doctors and teachers and other officials—all of them have Public sanction, regardless of what the law says or doesn't say, to take advantage of women and other gender-variant folks. They tell us dress how we want to be addressed because they understand that in the underground sphere, there's another crop of abusers who exists at the fringe of the market, but who are embedded in civil society nonetheless. And they collaborate with them, even while "publicly" condemning these organizations/networks. They'll make raids happen, seize their assets, claim to rescue us from them, but in reality it's about a changing of hands. That's why the ones talking about the safety of wives or children are the ones doing the molestations. That's why the ones passing the anti-trans laws are the ones using the gay hookup apps and purchasing nudes from the transsexual cam gurlz. That's why during seizures at Stonewall, the cops that accosted working gorls would often

coerce them into sexual favors. That's why in prisons today, the same carceral state which houses trans women in men's jails behind the guise of concern about assault or safety, will nevertheless mark incarcerated gurls as targets for harassment and rape by cis male inmates. The patriarchy is clear: the worker must be split between Wife and Whore. The Home or Closet is the venue of the former, the criminal trade is the venue of the latter. Those who mess with this order are to go to the Prison or the Ward. And, in order to trace who is to be relegated where, one's attire is necessary for the State and non-state headmen to make that delineation. A "real" woman is gonna have to look as soft, petite as possible—if she wants safety as a Wife and in the Public (workplace, commerce, politics). Anyone else is obviously not "real," and should suffer the consequences of the Whore, ie, be assaulted and super-exploited and worse.

"Quadruple Jeopardy" is the term I coined to describe how the Prison/Ward intersect with the Home/Closet, in the context of the Empire/color line, around the interests of the Market/profits—to specifically regulate the lives and bodies and minds and *spirits* of those of us who live the Experience. Quadruple Jeopardy primarily relegates us to the societal fringe—outside of rights-bearing subjecthood + commercial and property relations, and public life, including even social welfare/the safety net—and leaves us to the criminal underground for exploitation. Additionally, Quadruple Jeopardy disorganizes any remaining precapitalist and precolonial relations, traditions, roles, etc to reorganize them as a kind of "demonic ground" which the capitalist aboveground can exploit even if indirectly or circuitously or in a downstream manner (often via collaboration with the underground). Another facet of Quadruple Jeopardy is the way that *inclusion* within rights-bearing subjecthood + commercial and property relations, and public life, including social welfare/the safety net—these things foster a division within the community, in order to undermine our movements. That is where homonationalism, exclu/truscum, TERFism, LGB no TQ+ sentiments and other reactionary currents derives from. Some of us can get married, can access gender affirming hormonal therapy, can get degrees and even employment in respected professions/fields (Im an environmentalist), can actually sign a lease to rent a place to live or even buy a home, and can walk outside or into different venues relatively unaccosted. And even when there's discrimination and harassment, we're able to find some degree of legal recourse, or at least have community around who respects us and isn't encouraged to report us to authorities. Plus, if we "try" hard enough and "put the work in" as some of the dolls say, this signals to the world that we are "safe" enough to actually be respected or listened to should we get victimized. We therefore might call the cisgender population "biological" so as to not offend them, or we make some other compensatory gestures—including the emphasis on glam and being fab—in attempts to survive or escape "Jewel Crow."

By the time of Stonewall, there'd been gender/sexual minorities who were okay with this system as is, to get the Protection that had rotated out from household reproduction. Many Western "homophile," "eonist," "uranian," and "third sex" movements would often look to non-Western/non-white gender and sexual diversity only as a "proof" for why the Public should grant rights, access to formal wage labor and professional earnings, representation in government and media, etc—but never caring at all about "Jewel Crow" or Quadruple Jeopardy. Some were radical, like the Mattachine Society, but ultimately even these became focused on fitting in and not making too much of a ruckus. At the Mafia-run bars, many gay men frequented these venues, with no regard for the exploitation of non-cis and "crossdressing" maGes at work. This focus on assimilating into capitalism, whether underground or aboveground, was because there was a "lavender scare"—one which impacted even some of the upper class, professional queer/trans folks. Because

government started purging that subset of the community from federal or state-level positions around that time, fearing communist sympathies among them. Doesn't that sound familiar to this anti-woke/anti-DEI era? While the assimilationists distanced themselves from class struggle, the poorer, often Black and brown members of the community were deep in the civil rights movement, present in socialist organizations, pioneers in subversive subcultures too, going way back in time. And does this not sound familiar to what it was like in the 2010s, the zenith of the so-called "transgender tipping point," when we gained a voice in/through the anti-carceral struggle? Taking up space in arts, politics, and organizing?

But whereas Stonewall became a flashpoint for the progressive wing of the "grand"-style patriarchy (a la Sanyika Shakur, *ibaye*), the rebellions of 2020 have moreso become a flashpoint for the conservative wing thereof. Despite mass mobilizations like the Brooklyn-based Black Trans Liberation March, despite libations poured and vigils held for brothas like Tony McDade (*ibaye*) and sistas like Nina Pop (*ibaye*), despite the honor given to queer Oluwatoyin Salau (*ibaye*) and her solidarity with Black trans lives, despite the connections established between Black Lives Matter in the US and the Queer Lives Matter movement in the Nigerian anti-SARS struggles—we have seen a backward swing against gender euconsciousness, aka "wokeness." I see some Icons in the Ball scene, some elders and community leaders, some activists and spokespersons and advocates following in this tendency. It is understandable to an extent, because we as women of trans experience want safety, especially when so many of us are being murdered. What Im hoping to stress is that the protection we seek is *a dead end*, just like with the white cis gay/lesbian movement's race for inclusion into the Home. Although queer cis people won same-sex marriage under Obama in the US, and may be legal or decriminalized in other countries, far too many gays and lesbians are experiencing things like the "kito'ing" that happens in Nigeria for example (when someone is invited on a date only to be set up for a robbery or even murder). And there are ways that bisexuality is made a bogeyman, too, a the threat to women's safety and health , a danger to the stability of the Home or marriage or family—especially with the way DL panic interacted with Reagan era misinformation about AIDS/HIV (serophobia). Even for cis gays, therefore Public cemented first through inclusion of the working-Lady (as an extension of the Wife, protected in her professional and commercial and political dealings because of her role in reproduction of the Home) is severely restricted from a global lens. How much more, then, for us as trans people?

We have to think geographically-wide about the Public: ie, process by which the Big Man collaborates yet competes with the Lil Man in private ownership to wields domestic "protection" of the elite or bourgeois woman and make her into a Wife—a vessel of his inheritance and regeneration. The creation of markets, commerce, rights, and non-household labor roles for the educated/professional women only warrants investment from the government and firms as expression of that fundamental reproductive burden. Which is why, as the men who can neither be Big Man or Lil Man clamber yet collude around their limited personal ownings, the women who share servant, peasant, proletarian, enslaved status with them are unprotected—pushed underground, trafficked, abused and opened up to illicit trades, or informal economies, and criminal orgs. With any wages gained extremely low, and any investment offered by government or firms extremely paltry.

Gay assimilationists failed to understand that when they started to push for a new Public: municipal pride parades, or when they pushed for more gay-affirming churches, or when they advocated for homosexuality to be taken out of the DSM (ie, depathologized, not considered a mental illness), or even when they supported the women's movement in pursuit of abortion care, and helped with the spread of contraceptive care, sexual health/sexual education, and even transsexual care. This new Public meant these things would necessarily be concentrated in the First World, or in the Global North, in developed regions, urban centers and suburban utopias, the metropole, the imperial core. What assimilationists could not make sense of was the character of the creation of this new Public, with its broad base of "protected" categories beyond just the Wife.

There's a reason the United Nations Human Rights Framework only began to care about LGBT issues in the 90s, after the Soviet Union fell and after the AIDS epidemic + war on drugs cleared away so many of our community in the 80s. There's a reason that since then, the quintessence of our recognition then ended up being about commodities and consumerism. Movement was disrupted and in the new Public we're given the illusion of autonomy over one's body even as labor became put in more precarious positions under a regime of privatization. This regime ensured more pollutants filled our waterways, our air, our food, our soil, more populations were dispossessed from land and displaced from our neighborhoods and our traditions. Let us not be distracted about any longer. Yes, women can wear pants in the Public or dress however we want, party, wear makeup, travel freely etc; enter colleges and other trades/professions, engage in commercial and property interests without a husband or father or choose to do so while married without being forced, etc. And the gays and trans folks in this new Public can do these things too, alongside cis het women. But really, aboveground capitalism has recruited us. And that's part of why we are mystified when street harassment, workplace harassment, discrimination, and worse come knocking at our doorstep. We think we're immune.

As quasi-protecteds in the new Public, we done usurped the labors of those in the Global South, the Second and Third and Fourth Worlds, undeveloped regions, rural areas and the rez, the parts of urban and suburban areas that are actually just the ghetto/hood or barrio/favela, the (semi)periphery for too long. These are the "unprotected" zones, expanded beyond just the sex worker to a broad base of categories in the new Public. It's why these people in these places become objects of fetishization and sex tourism. Also why many transsexual medicines are synthesized by companies implicated in the occupation of Palestine. Also why, when NGOs, non-profits, philanthropy, military, or adoption, tourism, and other industries come to these zones—it becomes clear that these institutions take autonomy from the "unprotected." They dictate Western solutions to various social problems, whether FGM, or trafficking, or tribal warfare. They demonize the local cultures as unscientific, backwards, and ultimately *unsafe* for children and women, gays, disabled people, etc due to outdated superstitions. There's this hypocrisy about the existence of a "minor-style" patriarchy all while ignoring how the heads of Western military are committing SA in the "unprotected" zones, are leaving innocent women pregnant and as single mothers in the "unprotected" zones. Also, the heads of the Western or Western-financed (and sometimes even Arab-financed) NGOs are defrauding the people they advocate for in the "unprotected" zones. The foreign aid institutions are operating as vehicles of imperialist coercion in the "unprotected" zones, development projects are strongarming countries into neocolonial relations through debt, in the "unprotected" zones; even conservation industries are known to displace indigenous people and criminalize them on their own lands in the "unprotected" zones.

See now how the capitalist underground is working alongside the capitalist aboveground to extract wealth and discipline labor + impose values while harming people at an even more global level because if the new Public! And they still rely on claims of protection whilr threaded by sexual violence, and smuggling of weapons and bodies and resources out of the “unprotected” zones and into the “protected” zones. No wonder it’s been so easy for the far-right to slip through in a regime of privatization despite the last half century’s stated commitments to equality under the new Public.

The escalation that the fascists are bringing our way is not something we can take the blame for. Just like we could never say that “tricking” a man is what cost Islan Nettles (*ibaye*) or Gwen Araujo (*ibaye*) their lives. They looked the part, in an age where protected status and access was more available to them than their trans foremothers, but did this save them? Did looking the part save Tiffany Dior Harris (*ibaye*)? Or Layleen Polanco Xtravaganza (*ibaye*)? If it’s wrong to call the gurls who give it up well “deceptive” and justify their deaths, it should be wrong to call the gurls who “fail” to look the part “liars.” And thereby suggest they deserve harassment or death or political censure. Because “clockiness” did not privilege Marsha P Johnson from being retaliated against by the cops she was about to expose—who dumped her in a body of water. And “clockiness” did not privilege Sylvia Rivera into accessing the best medical care and help her outlive a fatal health condition. “Clockiness” is also not privileging the countless trans, nonbinary, gender-nonconforming women and other communities who can neither afford to look the part (or maybe don’t want to)—as they face down laws after laws and news article lies after news article lies and attacks after attacks. We are, in other words, damned if we do “pass,” and damned if we don’t “pass.” Our responsibility is to be in solidarity across protected and unprotected zones, spheres, domains, under this new Public, in a struggle against both the aboveground and underground capitalism-colonialism-patriarchy. Let’s protect the Dolls AND defend the bricks! Down with Quadruple Jeopardy. Down with Jewel Crow!

With love,
from a sister-in-flight,
Nsámbu Za Suékama (“a blessing in disguise”)
P.S.—

“Look for me in the whirlwind,
with the bow in the cloud
My light appearing
in ribbons all around
Im an angel of grace
Not greed nor guile
and, yeah, I come to bring life,
even as fire rains down.”

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