

Addressed to: Dr Kate Tranchel, co-adviser to STOP!

Title: Little Bird

The right in the UDHR that is addressed: Article 4

Description: No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

Little Bird

Captured. They might have killed the other one. I could not tell. The girl laid in the corner, her clothes ripped, her face covered in her own blood. Not once did she scream. Maybe her balled up fists held onto every cry.

"Take off your clothes," the man said again, this time looking at me. His request sounded normal, as if he was ordering a meal at a restaurant.

Enslaved. I started to lift the hem of my shirt. The vultures stared. Their eyes licked over my exposed flesh, they were just waiting for me to die one more time.

Then a whisper of what I had once known, long ago, broke through the silence.

From the window came the smallest amount of sunlight. It was across the room and I could not tell how high up we were. The orange air did tell me that it must be late afternoon. The last rays of the day. I realized, in that moment, that after they have gone, it would probably be dark forever.

*God, please give me wings.*

My prayer echoed inside my mind.

*Give me wings, please, God.*

I dropped my shirt. A heartbeat later my bare feet ran towards that bit of light. It called me, pulled me, welcomed me.

The faceless men, baffled, struggled to their feet. Their claws reached. But missed.

The glass exploded like fireworks. Confetti at a celebration.

Freedom. Time slowed inside that moment. With my arms spread wide, as if I could take flight, I embraced the freedom that now belonged to me, Jane.

I, Jane, was my own.