

Open Confession

by Shukri Abu Baker

November 24 marks my 14th anniversary in enforced disappearance.

I am, therefore, declaring November, Injustice Awareness Month: IAM.

Critical that I remained strewn between
ceiling and floor. Contained, dismembered,
disowned, "public safety threats" like me
get to regret, rethink, and I submit,
I am now in deep rethinking mode.

Malpractice was to enter a broken
heart and mend it despair-proof. Indecent
to wrap life-loving flesh around some bare
brittle bones. Wicked to think every child
deserved all limbs intact, head to toe.

My choices, my unforgivable crimes.

And I could have buried my face inside
a soldier's boot and become key to fair
and lasting peace, but I did not.

I could have convinced myself hate was
holier than love, but I did not.

I should have kept my door shut, turned
the music thunder, and let the broken
little souls knock and knock and knock until
their broken little dreams had fallen apart;
innocence on a frozen winter heart.

But I could not.

And I will not.

11-22-2022