

Malawi poem

The silent battles in Malawi

By: Keviunna Mitchell

Malawi, poor with resources but rich in life and color

“Normal” Mothers being mistreated

Yet disabled mothers deal with problems that make their world feel smaller

Fathers being shamed for making the choice of building a life with them

Do you think that's fair?

I don't think so

They hear things like

“Why did he do that?”

“Will she even be capable of being a mother?”

“That child won't have a stable family”

The mothers abilities being doubted

Questioned by women and men who don't know her strength

The fathers being looked at as desperate and disgusting

Not understanding that these women need love too

Both judged by a world that never attempts to understand their story

They deserve happiness

They deserve normalness

They deserve love

They deserve a family

A woman slapped during labor for not being able to communicate

A man ganged up on and confronted

“How dare you impregnate a disabled woman?!”

Why is it seen as so bad to give a person love?

To give a person a family

They deserve better

A better hospital system

Better people, better doctors, better nurses

People that do not judge solely based on a person's health or condition

They deserve love too

We Count, We Matter

By Briseyda Tepole-Aguilar

In Malawi, inaccessible care,
I enter the waiting room, steps but no ramp, whispers fill
the air,
where eyes follow my body.

Nurses see me,
and they treat me like a special case, confusion
flowing in their minds,
questions of how, why, and who.

They point fingers,
blame placed upon my partner,
they judge and assume,
a system not built for those who look like me.

Promised accessibility,
but I don't see it being a possibility. for we are
ignored,
our cries left in the dark.

They must be aware,
for we need better healthcare,
we must stand up and demand
for our voices to be heard,
for we need better accessibility.

Surrounded by wrong,
but we remain strong.
Give us a sense of belonging, for we are
like any other mother. Hear my voice,
hear my cries,
we count, we matter.