I still remember the days.

The days where I would wake only to realise my nightmares had not ended

They were just about to begin

Rude awakening.

I remember the days,

Where I did not care about the world ending, because it had already ended for me.

I still remember.

That day, instead of sleeping with a mother's lullaby, I had fallen asleep with the sound of gunshots and bombs.

If you can call that rest.

And the world had the nerve to call THIS progress

I still remember

My mother crying, my father's battered bloody and bruised face, the sound of my sister shivering in the cold, my brother's silent screams, my aunts piercing glare, my uncles last word

Who is left? No one.

Why?

And the world had the nerve to call this destruction - a country in turmoil.

I remember the day,

We were driven out our home

I still remember the fence, signposting my new home. The Camp.

History was reapeating itself. Could no one see? Could no one remember?

I remember in school, they would teach us about past massacres. The crimes. The despair. Crimes against humanity we were told.

Doesn't the world remember or did the world not want to see. Did it serve you to look the other way? To carry on as if we did not exist

Does my religion offend you? My race? My ethnicity? What? Is that even a reason?

I remember,
I was beaten and thrown to the ground
The ground I once played hopscotch on.
But now it was the ground i might have died on

I remember
I was freezing
Unable to move
The pain had settled through my thin skin and rested on my frail bones

I remember
I will always remember.
I can't help it.
If I force myself to forget their actions, I still remember the way it made me feel.

And the world had the nerve to take power over my life and others. Dictate how I die and when.

But I was lucky. Drained but alive. Alive to say this. To force you to listen. Hear me and hear what I say:

I will always remember Because YOU had the nerve to allow genocide

SABA AHMADZADEH-NOUGHANI 3RD PLACE, 2019

