**Asma Elbadawi**

Don't let them strip you of your masculinity

Their absent fathers said

As if your masculinity could be shaken

Torn up and given back to you in pieces

Society teaches boys from a young age to mask their fragility with toughness

shames them whenever they display emotional weakness

He said

look me my eyes and tell me what is a man without his pride

The same eyes that have been dry for so long

I can feel the knots in his chest

That tie him

And choke him

And cause his mind to race with endless thoughts deep into the night

A man without his pride is courageous

Knows that he is a Man no matter what

It takes the man in man to open up

Forgive those who tried to destroy him

Even before he has created his own path

From boyhood to manhood

He must act and react like a gentlemen should

He has to break the cycle

Search for the vulnerability within himself and

Let those tears flow

For how long will we force men to feel foreign in their own bodies

Restricting their self expression to anger

While they haemorrhage on the inside and

Reach for their fists

To remind others they have the upper hand

The upper hand

That knows no mercy only demands

Hurts

Abuses

Rapes

Destroys

And once the damage is done

We put the blame and shame on women

And claim boys will be boys