

## **'I Am You' by Dr Refaat Alareer**

Two steps: one, two.  
Look in the mirror:  
The horror, the horror!  
The butt of your M-16 on my cheekbone  
The yellow patch it left  
The bullet-shaped scar expanding  
Like a swastika,  
Snaking across my face,  
The heartache flowing  
Out of my eyes, dripping  
Out of my nostrils, piercing  
My ears, flooding  
The place.  
Like it did to you  
70 years ago  
Or so.

I am just you.  
I am your past haunting  
Your present and your future.  
I strive like you did.  
I fight like you did.  
I resist like you resisted  
And for a moment,  
I'd take your tenacity  
As a model,  
Were you not holding  
The barrel of the gun  
Between my bleeding Eyes.

One. Two.  
The very same gun  
The very same bullet  
That had killed your Mom  
And killed your Dad  
Is being used Against me, By you.

Mark this bullet and mark in your gun.  
If you sniff it, it has your and my blood  
It has my present and your past.  
It has my present.  
It has your future.

That's why we are twins,  
Same life track  
Same weapon  
Same suffering  
Same facial expressions drawn  
On the face of the killer,  
Same everything  
Except that in your case  
The victim has evolved, backward,  
Into a victimizer.  
I tell you.  
I am you.  
Except that I am not the you of now.

I do not hate you,  
I want to help you stop hating  
And killing me.  
I tell you:  
The noise of your machine gun  
Renders you deaf  
The smell of the powder  
Beats that of my blood.  
The sparks disfigure  
My facial expressions.  
Would you stop shooting?  
For a moment?  
Would you?

All you have to do  
Is close your eyes  
(Seeing these days blinds our hearts.)  
Close your eyes, tightly  
So that you can see  
In your mind's eye.  
Then look into the mirror.  
One. Two.  
I am you.  
I am your past.  
And killing me,  
You kill you.