

The Demonisation of Set in 5 Parts

by Thokozani Mbwana

Set (also known as Seth, Sutekh) is the Egyptian god of war, disorder, violence, and foreign lands. Once a hero-god known as Protector of Ra, forever remembered as Killer of Osiris.

Prelude

resurrected
i roam the halls of temples
heart weeping at displays of
false tales-
distorted memories that live as truths
dismembered and stitched back together creating
a monster whose reflection is not my own
i, Set
eternally captured
no longer a hero-god
forever remembered as
killer

The Birth of a Monster

the wrath of Osiris lingered in the womb i occupied
willing death upon me
ever so subtly
the cord that attached me to Nut
often turned serpentine and
wrapped itself around my neck as
the seed of hatred grew stronger within Osiris
the dawn of my birth drew closer—
closer crept Osiris
until suffocated by poison
Nut spluttered
fearful
i tore my mother's belly apart and
crawled out
horrified
the gods named me a monster of violence and war
as if provoking Osiris from the womb
i, Set
eternally captured
no longer a hero-god
born a villain

The Betrayal of Nephthys
i buried my love deep in Nephthys
goddess of air who
filled my lungs with life
once more the seed of hatred
grew stronger within Osiris
unable to bear my happiness he
lured her into his chambers and
she emerged impregnated with
a son named Anubis —
my executioner

The Death of Osiris
the tongues of storytellers
sewn together
held lies that
played in their minds a prayer
the word of Osiris —
king of Egypt
inscribed on walls that bled out
any semblance of my legacy —
protector of Ra
my truth had been dismembered and so
too Osiris' body
dismembered
by my hand

Epilogue
buried
i cannot roam the halls of temples
my heart weeps at the thought of
false tales
distorted memories that live as truths
perhaps a prophecy fulfilled in which
Osiris conquers again for
i, Set have been
eternally captured
no longer a hero-god
forever remembered as
killer