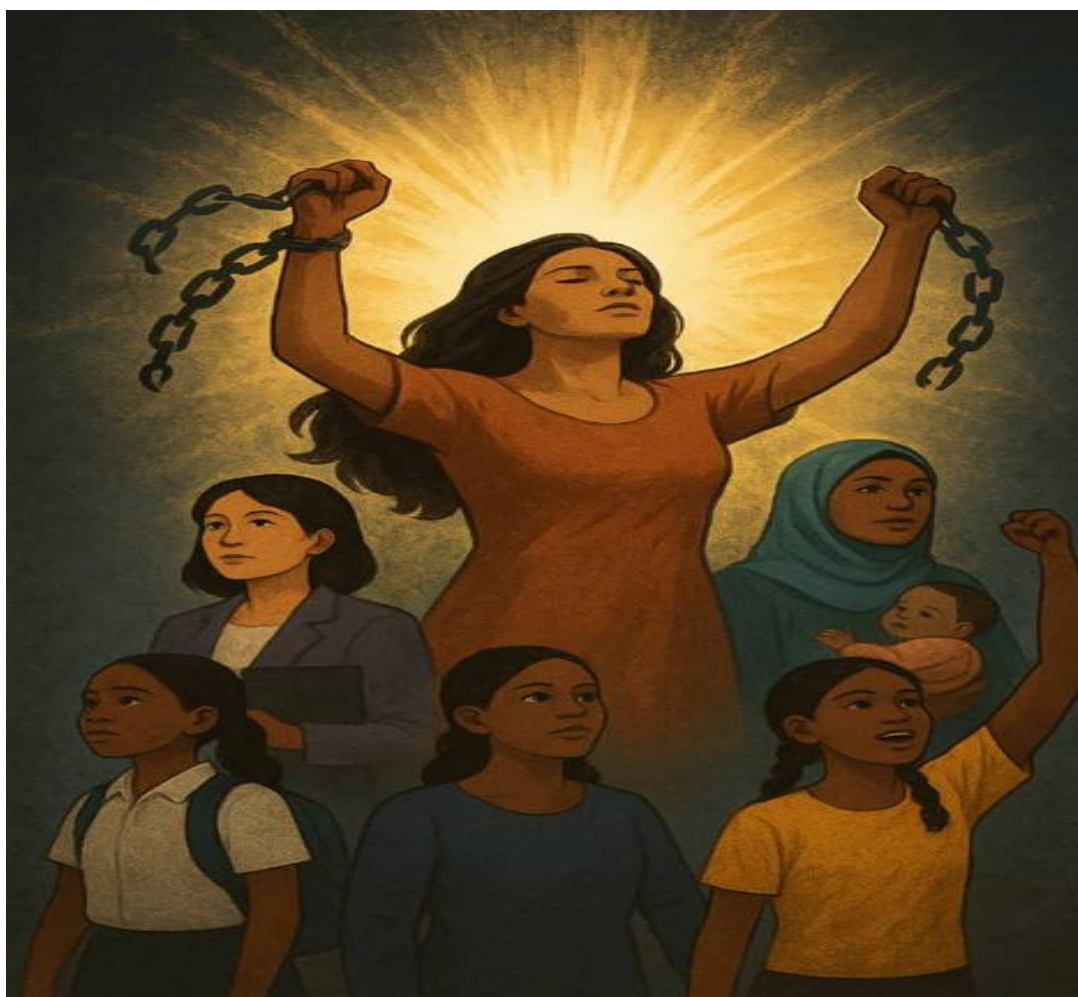


WHEN SILENCE BREAKS, SOCIETIES HEAL!

Deborah Taiwo



In every corner of the world, women and girls carry silent stories. Some are whispered in kitchens, hidden behind closed doors, or buried deep in Hearts that have grown tired of not being heard. These stories tell of violence endured, opportunities denied, and dreams deferred, not because of a lack of talent or will, but because the system around them was never built for their thriving.

Yet when silence breaks, something extraordinary happens. Voices that were once muted become instruments of change. We see this in young girls demanding education in communities that once thought schooling was a privilege reserved for boys. We see it in women who step into boardrooms, not only taking a seat at the table but reshaping the table itself. We see it in survivors of abuse who choose not to be defined by their pain but by the courage to transform it into power.

But to truly reimagine a freer and more just society, we must go beyond applauding resilience. Resilience should not be the price women and vulnerable persons must pay to simply exist. A just world does not glorify survival; it ensures that survival is never in question.

Take, for example, a young widow in a rural town who is stripped of her property and sent

back home to her parents' home because custom dictates that land ownership belongs to men only. She is left with children to raise, no shelter to call her own, and a society that praises her for "enduring". This is not justice. This is dispossession disguised as tradition. Justice would mean her ownership is unquestioned, her dignity unshaken, her children raised in security rather than scarcity.

Consider also the woman in an office who repeatedly passed over for promotions while less qualified male colleagues advance with ease. She works twice as hard, produces excellent results, and carries the weight of unacknowledged labor, yet her ambition is treated as arrogance. This, too, is not justice. Real justice would allow her merit to speak louder than bias and open doors that prejudice has kept shut for too long.

This is work of dismantling inequality: brick by brick, policy by policy, mindset by mindset. Education must be more than literacy; it must be liberation. A girl in a classroom should see her future not as a fragile hope, but as a promise. A woman in the workplace should not be measured by how well she endures prejudice, but by how boldly she can innovate and lead without fear.

Justice also means rewriting the narrative of vulnerability. Too often, society labels women and marginalized persons as weak, as if their existence is defined by fragility. But vulnerability is not weakness; it is humanity. Recognizing this reshapes how we share resources, how we write laws, and how we measure progress.

Progress is not when a few women rise against impossible odds; progress is when rising becomes ordinary, expected, and guaranteed.

Imagine a society where a widow is not disinherited, but empowered to pass wealth to her daughters as confidently as to her sons. Imagine a workplace where pay equity is no longer a battle cry but a Baseline. Imagine leaders who legislate not from a place of privilege, but from empathy born of listening to those long silenced.

This vision is not utopia. It is within reach, but only if we dare to confront uncomfortable truths. It means challenging cultures that normalize silence. It means demanding accountability from institutions that benefit from inequality. And it means each of us must unlearn the subtle ways we have accepted injustice as normal.

A freer, more just world is not a gift that will be handed down; it is a world we must build with our words, our actions, and our imagination. Writers, thinkers, and dreamers hold a unique responsibility here. Every article, every poem, every story that dares to envision something different becomes a brick in the foundation of that better world.

When silence breaks, societies heal.

When women rise, humanity rises with them. And when justice ceases to be selective, freedom ceases to be a dream; it becomes our shared reality.