

feel to drive his ship headlong into the nearest boiling sun. It was going to have to find the biggest, hottest sun around too because Dhamorans didn't go through life making small choices and certainly, in death, everything had to be the stuff of better-than-perfection.

It's scaly hand held on to the hatch handle and was about to squeeze it open when a much smaller, much warmer hand held on to his. He turned to look at the human immediately wondering where she had come from.

"se'ris hak sil'sa dhe hak se'ris" the human said.

The Dhamoran was stunned. She had just given the customary Dhamoran greetings that very few people of other species knew.

"hak se'ris bhhe dhe" it replied. It wanted to see how much of the language she understood.

She smiled and apologized for the poor service and invited him to come in for a free meal.

The Dhamoran peered closer at her head. She wasn't wearing a translator. He was talking to a normal human girl who spoke the Dhamoran dialect fluently. This was one thing he didn't get to see every day.

He followed her back to the restaurant and just before the motion sensors detected two approaching lifeforms (one, dumbfounded, the other, an enigma of sorts) and slid the doors open, the Dhamoran asked her in the best English it could conjure. Most of it came out as a hiss anyway.

"Whattttt hissss your name?"

She turned and flashed a bright smile again that lit her eyes up and added an extra radiance to her perfect dark skin.

"My name is Lawumi." The smooth voice said. "My mother owns the place." And she disappeared into the sweet-smelling atmosphere of Alamala to the Stars.

Unbelievable. The Dhamoran thought. In English.

And quickly followed her inside.

## PATIENT ON BED 3 WRITES A POEM TO THE NURSE'S STATION

Ogunkoya Samuel

When I say I am dancing  
With my sister again  
What I meant is,  
It is four a.m.  
And  
The car brakes are failing  
When you find this poem  
Know I have always wanted to  
Be like the moon  
Glistening. For me and my sister.  
Who lived in an asylum  
Till clozapine became a compass to death  
She carried sad songs in her belly  
For a season and half  
For reasons we didn't know  
Till she told us of what she missed most  
The light that was before the call.  
That night she moaned a lot about shadows.  
And when I said I am dancing with my sister again  
What I meant is, some don't die.  
They walk into burning cities  
As though that's the only place to be free.  
This dawn, I am walking out of fire  
And I can hear the songs, faintly.

"And after the accident.

One man would say to another

Don't move her, she might be bleeding internally"

what they didn't say /cause they didn't know /is that the lifeless body /was a long-distance runner /and it preferred coffee to tea /read poems over scrambled eggs /never danced cause it thought it couldn't /skipped meals cause it thought it was growing fatter /refused to join the choir /was afraid of making new friends /kept old ones at arms length /planted wildflowers /was proclaimed barren /stabbed twice /by the same man it refused to divorce /and was on its way to tell him/ it has a body growing inside it.

# THE TIME WE BECAME AN OASIS IN THE MIDDLE OF A PRAYER

**Adenle Iyanuoluwa**

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i.

Logan February wrote, “dearly beloved, I am not asking to be sanctified.  
Pray for a garden to bloom, for a path to become clear”

ii.

I dreamt I was the river terrified by her current.  
I woke up, I became the river  
& I wasn't terrified anymore.

iii.

The seer prophesied of a riverbank with an abundance of laughter littered across it.  
The gospel isn't always true.  
I was the river and you were that riverbank.

iv.

We were content with the cheer the rest of the world brought near us.  
Even when it was to bury their dead, we thought of it as people planting lights.

v.

There's joy in having wild daffodils spill from your chest unto mine.

vi.

Can any measure how far the warmth of the sun spreads?  
Can you choose whom to make home out of?