

POETRY

The Brother Moves On

by Sihle Ntuli



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Do you remember

when we were younger,
ugogo gathering pawpaw from her garden,
sitting patiently waiting
for us to finish indulging in the fruit,
knowing full well
that her grandsons
would only want more,
and with the very last one,

she plunged the knife deep inside
the pawpaw cutting it
in two,

The way she sat close by

and watched us
tasting rich textures
of a tropical delicacy,

and once we had our fill she imparted wisdom
on the necessity to share
with one another,

Reminding us,

that when we entered this world
we entered it together as twins
amawele

and that twins
was how God had intended it to be
that you and I were born this way for a reason.

Lest we forget

her lesson in the garden
much later in life, I would learn
that our late grandmother decided on our names
in much the same way,
after you entered this world first
it was ugogo who decided,
that my name

would be on the end of yours

As a reminder,

that even when we separate

we will remain together always.

brother,

I know

how life

can often

feel like

years

of accumulating

soil

burying us alive,

and on that day in the garden

I felt the words

of our grandmother,

as her bare hands

in brown soil

delicately

placed a seed

deep

within us,

in a place

where hope can live

her hope

that someday

a soaring tree with leaves protruding

from tender parts

of the chest,

a bond as strong

as the oak tree

that towers over

providing shade

from a harsh sun,

and so, brother
with this in mind
I must ask you once more,
Do you remember?