

Poetry

The Brother Moves On

by Sihle Ntuli

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?

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