

Instead of Silence

Kólá Túbòsún

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May I be the drum.

O, let the earth beat me with all its grief—
the drumsticks of gloom slapping my hide—
but may I still remain the origin of dance.

O, let me claim
what was sent to claim me.
Let the world beat me with all its woes
but let me not be brittle or broken.

Instead of silence, let there be rhythm.
O, let me melody through melancholy.

In the day that grief will arise with its army,
may grief not triumph over me.

May I be the drum
still breathing joy.

Kolawole Samuel Adebayo is a Nigerian poet with works published in *Button Poetry*, *Glass Poetry*, and elsewhere. His chapbook manuscript, *INVOCATIONS*, was recently selected by Chris Abani and Kwame Dawes for the APBF New-Generation African Poets Chapbook Box-set Series (Akashic Books, 2021). He currently lives in Akure, Ondo State.



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