

Outside Borders

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Everytime I arrive here,
The leaves are in bloom, their wrinkled skins blown south, then east,
Until it lands bare.

I find it strange,
How my heart races with this place
Goosebumps crawl over me,
My mind falls with the brown rain of a tree
Ending itself.

I cannot find home.

Every arrival is a gong
Knocked hard.
Every fondness of time cropped short.

When a flash of laughter dances too far in my body,
It cannot be found.
This memory is a pinata,
I, the stick.
Two prisoners of the same war
Frolicking with grief.

I say I will not return,
But I will.

Star Zahra is a Nigerian poet and textile artist. She is the author of *Girls and the Silhouette of Form*, winner of the 2025 ANA/KMVL Prize for Poetry. Her work has appeared in *Isele Magazine*, *Brittle Paper*, *The Lagos Review*, and other publications.



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