

POETRY

Adegoke Adeola

origin of nouns

Is any of the dead yours?
Or if tested, maybe bones,
maybe palates mixed in rubble
are identical by descent?

Each letter on Al Jazeera laments --
elegy for Wurma,* look at Gaza.
Death is a fictional character,
We are the ingredients of war,
tasteless broth for a mass funeral.

A man dented his forehead --
while finding God,
washes bullet casings every ablution
as if trying to bleach sin into virtue.

God forgives, humans forget.
But what of those who wrapped
their dead in papers and tears?
Do they forgive or sink into oblivion?

We maim and blame a common noun
Did God write this book of horror, too?
A chapter for Fatwa's jugular vein
and his shooter's stuck in a verse,
like rosaries can fix a torn vena cava.

Let's just pretend there's Hell,
another noun, another scapegoat.

*The community of Wurma was attacked by bandits, and despite brave resistance by locals, extensive farmlands were destroyed, creating later food shortages in the community.

Author's Note



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Adegoke is a multimedia journalist, political commentator, and poet whose work explores issues of gender identity, equality, race, and violence. He can be found journaling when he's not watching football. He has been published in several local and international journals/magazines, and is currently working on his debut full-length collection, set for publication in 2026. He can be found @iamchildprodigy on X and Instagram.