



I looked up from my floor and saw my eyes in her eyes I heard her voice lurch from my throat and  
knew history will begin and end right here in a bedroom in Virginia our together voice  
careening and crooning— will sing:

We were abandoned in this strange

Land and have long forgotten

who we are. We listened for god— but heard only our own howls  
echoing back. we've tried making peace with migration but we  
are a body in departure longing for return & there's grief in our blood  
-line and the blood it curdles where it is meant to flow. We've poemed  
every pain— mixed it in salt -water and gagged we've known suicide as longing for the  
cool kiss of river god— we know  
a body doesn't forget— we returned to water— begged the Atlantic to swallow

us whole but water confesses. We brought soil red harmattan dust  
caked to our feet. We tried to wash clean of Cameroon but the water confessed  
as red-sediments pooled at our feet. We hovered  
over Atlantic imagined  
what it would feel like to be an island embraced by the great expanse would we  
stand up and swim? What happens when an island washes up to shore?

HONORA ANKONG is a queer Cameroonian-American poet. She is currently a Virginia Tech MFA in poetry candidate. Her works exist in and explore the liminal space in which her identities intersect. She is concerned with complicating and expanding narratives of immigration, Blackness and queer identity. She has work forthcoming in *the Peregrine Journal*, *Lolwe*, *Glass*, *The Swamp*, *Mineral lit*, and *the Maine Review*. She can be found on Twitter @Honoora, and online at [honoraankong.com](http://honoraankong.com).

