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The Writer's Escape

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i

trekking in the woods
time of day
wiped clean
we circled
around the same tree
four times
before recognition
the crunch of bramble
underfoot
called to us
like our parents’
voices we
pretended not to hear
i smelled him
tamarind
i smelled myself
cassava
were we
friends

ii

at home
hidden behind the
empty stereo box
on top of the closet
i did not own
my name
i did not
claim myself
a track-meet of images
inside my head
i was my own
friend

iii

escaped prisoners
were spotted in the cane-fields
that lined the main road
women were warned
not to walk alone
no telling
what those wicked men
may do

in some private
i would-never-dear-to-speak
space i wanted to know
what they would do

i lingered at the edge of the cane-fields
hoping to hold
one of those escapee’s face
in my small hands
and have him tell me
first-hand account
how it felt when
the cat-o-nine-tail
was brought down
on his bare behind