

# reincarnation

*Ameera Karraa*

my mind has been poisoned by  
the words others pressed into my wrist.

my veins are on fire, my throat clogged  
by wispy ash-gray smoke. an alarm

clock is ringing in the distance. a siren  
joins with its sorrowful wail. i do not

know where this is coming from. i do not  
know how to stop it. i can only

curl into myself, diminishing my space,  
my gaze, my breath. is this all

that is left of me?

\* \* \*

i awaken one morning in a bed

carved out of Mother's stomach.

the fire is gone, the ink of someone  
else's hatred recedes from my skin.

my ears have stopped ringing, now tilting  
in the direction of the sun. this quilt of

grass that embraces me was gifted to me by  
my friends. i hear their singing, clear as day.

on legs lighter than air, wearing infectious  
smiles only, they dance, a celebration

of my awakening. as they put me on their  
shoulders, we become as tall as trees.

my cheeks tint rose red. i'll find my  
home by remembering their smiles.