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SUMMONING FLIGHT: NAVIGATING BLACK  
MYTHOLOGY, FLIGHT, AND ACTS OF REFUSAL,  
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# INVIOULATE SPACE- COWRIE SHELLS,

## Her Silence

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Far Away responds to the reality of black experiences of entrapment and what freedom might look like in different spaces and journeys.

Her Silence is a published poet that rose from the trauma of complacency. I chose Her Silence as my poet's name because her voice speaks from a need of catharsis in our unstable communities. I am a prolific artist, poet, singer, writer, and overall creative who centers healing and Sickle Cell advocacy within my differing creative mediums. My experiences as a Nigerian first-daughter fuel my art, which has been instrumental to my growth as a creative. Catharsis is my artist tag and my art business is Healing Through Artistic Mediums. Through my holistic mediums, my goal is to highlight the importance of intentional healing work through artistic expression for the advocacy and autonomy of adult mental health and individuals with Sickle Cell.

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## **Inviolate Space-Cowrie Shells**

*Her Silence*

Cowrie Shells

Staring at my reflection in the sea,  
hoping Yemoja rescues me

I remember when they took my Papa,  
the Chief

I was counting cowrie shells with Mama,  
she loved placing them in my hair while  
plaiting my beauty

Mama felt a strange presence in the air,  
as if the Orishas warned her about  
blood shed

They had no mercy on my village,  
I saw quickly how our warriors  
were pillaged and left with nothing  
but crumbs of shame

I saw a ghost kill my Papa,  
words the colors of blood and  
disgrace spilled from his lips  
as he begged me to find solace

There was no mourning,  
only fire

I lost count of the dead bodies,  
my once beautiful home has turned  
into a burial ground, we became  
the offered sacrifice

Mama told me to save my tears  
as cold metal shackles of defeat  
clasped my hands and feet



Mama never made it past the trees,  
I remember when her soul left  
her body to be with my Papa

I was left to carry her carcass past the  
sand, swallowing my tears to stay hydrated

Her empty chasm floated upon still waters,  
they swallowed her body to bring her peace

How my body begged to be still upon waters,  
I grew jealous of the dead with each passing current

I was stripped down to black flesh  
Black flesh  
Black flesh that they hated  
Black flesh turned commodity  
Black flesh turned meat for consumption

I would have traded all my cowrie shells to be free

I remember when a ghost stole my voice

He came into me like the storms of Oya  
as my body prepared for calamity

Every thrust of agony were shards  
of glass finding home in my womanhood

It's been days and I am still paralyzed  
on this cold, hard wooden floor

The ghosts visit me in my sleep,  
I pretend I am dead

Mama and Papa do not welcome me back  
home

I have found solace in my vomit and blood



The gods are listening,  
their tears have overtaken  
this floating prison

We are forced to bask  
in the storm of the sea

Here I am now, staring at my reflection  
in the tides waters

They rock back and forth upon wood  
and I taste the salt of the earth

Yemoja is calling me, she whispers in  
my ear a way to escape

She invites me to dine in her palace  
Where ghosts cannot feast on my  
black bones

I am cold  
and wet  
and unable  
to breathe

At least Mama  
and Papa  
are finally  
with me

