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## Three Poems by Margie Shaheed

Margie Shaheed

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## MARGIE SHAHEED

### *Son of Light*

(for John A. Williams 1925-2015)

1

it is the last day, you do a slow dance  
on the edge of a pitch-black room,  
the smell of lilacs at your bedside  
guide you to lost words and conversations  
known to great men and women

2

i remember  
the day  
you held me  
womb- like  
as you told me  
a freshman  
i was not yet  
ready to take  
your graduate  
level class  
but that  
one day  
i would  
become  
a serious  
writer

3

what you left behind sustains us  
the man who cried i am stands  
behind the walls of the academy  
remaking it and tearing it up

*Dreamcatcher*

(for Alicia)

*“don’t spend it all in one place”  
was all you said to me before you sped off on a green metallic bicycle...*

dreams fly away sometimes like birds when it gets too cold...i caught this one in my net...it was my sister who had been dead for years... having gone to sleep with the excitement of receiving one hundred dollars from a friend, must’ve left the door open...and i like a child waited anxiously for her visit as if she was the tooth fairy...

*i wasn’t there to watch you die...the others told me your eyes turned dark yellow from the absence of the bone marrow transplant you refused...i came at the end when the cancer had eaten your skin blacker than the night skies...*

i dreamt the other night that i was on top of a mountain running when suddenly the land under my feet disappeared and i started falling...i fought as i sailed thru air...punching...searching for land to grab on to... my thoughts became untangled in its knot when i gave up the idea of finding land in mid air...death was my destiny...free...i stretched my arms out and threw back my head... letting silent songs carry me the rest of the way.

*The Death of Dying*

1

Before mama turned into a church  
she plotted killing the six  
of us by poisoning our kool-aid

2

He kept himself alive by watching  
her from his bed room window  
exercise in the drive way  
his will to live so strong  
Hospice sent him back home twice

3

Rodney's 57 year old bull fighter's  
body pierced a hole in his river  
like an over ripened cantaloupe split  
wide open at the first breath of fresh air  
after yanking fire and smoke from the skies  
pronounced dead at the scene

4

Mama and uncle found me,  
eyes opened, arms folded,  
casket ready

5

Sexy table dancer  
magnolias and song birds  
churn star dust in this tin box  
cancer mutes morning's melody  
snuffs out its bloom

6

It didn't become final until I deleted  
your contact from my cell phone today  
It's been a month since you died  
I miss you dear friend, the grunt of your voice  
hammering a point on the other end of the phone