Creature Gretel

LAUREN K. ALLEYNE

Honest forest. Home forest. Here where no one seeks me forest. No lost or found or foundling forest. Forage foliage for food forest. Pray forest. Prey forest. Hiss and howl and hum forest. Whisper silent. Chirp and roar. Roam and run and rest forest. No day, no night, no light, no dream but forest. Marsh forest. Stream forest. Slip and trip and slide forest. Dirt forest. Dung forest. Skin becomes a furred forest. Body barking. Feet aflame. Breath rank as the wilding forest. No voice. No words. Head clogged with memory's thick and snarling forests. Forest tears. Fear's forest. Succumb and surrender to the dark forest. Heart pebbles, pounds and booms: Become forest. Be forest.
About the author

Lauren K. Alleyne serves as Executive Director of the Furious Flower Poetry Center and a Professor of English. She is author of two collections Honeyfish (2019), Difficult Fruit (2014), two chapbooks Dawn in the Kaatskills and (Un)Becoming Gretel, and co-editor of Furious Flower: Seeding the Future of African American Poetry. Her work has been widely published in journals and anthologies internationally, including venues such as The Atlantic, The New York Times, and Ms., among several others. Alleyne, who hails from the twin island Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, has been recognized with an NAACP Image Award nomination for Outstanding Poetry (2020), the Green Rose Prize from New Issues Press (2017) and has been shortlisted for the BOCAS Prize for Caribbean Literature and the Library of Virginia prize for poetry (2020). In 2022, Alleyne was awarded an Outstanding Faculty Award from the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia.