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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