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we/stories

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**we/stories**

I wore this mask of white  
my ruptured body blurred into something safe  
(the easy way will not work for you)  
silence warped my body

mask of white, cracked pon the ground  
my skin burning from inside shame  
(the danger is forgetting)  
Gramma spirit was restless

singing hymns of our past, stories lost  
“chile, we guh make it some kinda way”

lost in between guilt and shame  
takin’ the easy way, passing, never pausing  
(listen to all that you miss)  
I grasped desperately for time and her memories

jumping into murky oceans of her story, talkin’ ole story  
Gramma voice did catch me, an’ take me up  
(dese stories make up we, keep us alive)  
I started dreaming in colors of black and hope

I let go of that self who could not see  
had to tear away years, unlearn colonial lies  
(to discover ways of hearing)  
truth in we blood, in dis we spirit

shedding this mask of white  
and silent otherness  
left me vulnerable  
to the cold white weather

the questions, the gaze, the stares  
my masquerade collapsed  
under the sound and weight of we story  
Black women’s stories, rekindling lives of fire

from Africa to Trinidad to Inagua to Bain Town Nassau,  
our survival heard, colorfully Black, shades of miracles

I rise up in tune with my ancestors to reclaim  
the Blackness and powers hidden underneath my skin