

Away

It was at 10 o'clock that night

A night with clear skies

A night that was as dark as the events to follow.

When a police officer knocked on the door,

When he asked for my older brother

(And he spoke his name, the full Ayobami)

I began to cry, for, in my teenage mind,

I assumed he had come to take him

Away.

And in his black uniform, the officer

Resembled a thief in the night,

Come to take our things away.

And I cried at that assumption

That he was taking my oldest brother

Away.

James, my other half, my quiet twin

(though two years apart)

Took my little brother and I,

Who had began to cry

On the onset of mine.

He took us upstairs, away from what my

Sheltered young mind still

Continued to assume

That this protector of justice,

This thief in the night,

Had come to take my dear

Oldest brother away, for his own

Assumption that he was the cause

Of the accident involving my brother,

My mother's van, and

The four other ones.

This wasn't his first infraction

Oh no, this was the fifth, the sixth, the seventh time

He had hit something....

He hit all four of them at a red light, they said

Bounced between like a pinball machine

And the witnesses

All of them

Told the thief,

Clothed in the night,

His brake lights never came on....

And although the others came out unscathed

My brothers soul, did not

He had no injuries, but that night

Was the first time

I

Saw

My

Big

Brother

Cry.

And yes, even though no one

Was physically hurt, my brother

Was placed at fault

And I wondered,

Is it because he is black?

Is it because he is young?

Is it because he is male?

And though James took me away,
Still I sat at the stairs listening
And I could hear it in that officers voice.
He truly believed my brother
Was at fault and he wanted to take him
Away.