

ash in eden

a boy with a slingshot draws on a baobab's breast,
laughs ricochet off dying leaves — *we used to call them shelter.*
a goat chews sachets, plastic gods in a marketplace lit by fumes.
in the canal, a woman baptizes clothes in oil-slick water,
sings a lullaby that once made mangoes blush.

the wind moans.
a spirit sits in my room — barefoot, green-eyed, dripping smoke.

"i was forest, once," she says, plaiting harmattan into her hair.
"they burnt my womb for sachet-fame and generator ease.
but you... you saw me breathe during lockdown — remember?
when the air was tender, like song, and sky forgot to frown?"

i remember.

uncle silenced the gen once.
birds argued in yoruba outside our window.
we watched the sun rediscover her skin.

"you are not small," she says.
"your hands sprout roots if you let them.
dig. sow. shout. make memory green again."

then she fades.
leaves a note carved on my chest:

generation restoration.

now, i teach mama compost with pepper seeds.
we build gardens from gutters.
i tell my street: *hope is a revolution planted in dirt.*

and the baobab,
it bows.