



# blood orange

an experimental poetry tarot

## *the rage, the loving, the fucking, the desire*

by samantha rose johnson

my love for you is a whisper at dawn  
same as the palm's whispers to me under a merciless sun  
    they know our collective secrets  
    they watch the noise & wonder how we let it get this way

if only the planet reflected our love:  
nurtured & eternal, blossoming & flush  
unlike the weight of the apocalyptic  
yellowing of the air

    the palms,  
    they've seen it all:  
    the rage, the loving,  
    the fucking, the desire  
    they rustle our secrets to each other  
    timbres that hook my buzzing existence  
        wondering what else may live atop those trees  
        like all things that live atop my mind  
    everything concealed, longing to escape  
    like my breasts      flowers of flesh pining for effulgence

privacy is vacant in this LA sun  
on a balcony overlooking one of hundreds  
of permeated streets in the Valley  
dressed in succulents & humans, unconcerned,  
oblivious to our sensitive cacti comrades  
thriving ubiquitously

i look up: see mountains i'd like to escape to  
i would fly to the tops of them  
fast as the hummingbird that said hello earlier  
though she prefers the trees  
& maybe so do i

i absorb the warmth on this balcony best i can  
my petals bloom      & i want to top you

*the rage, the loving, the fucking, the desire*

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you're at the base of those mountains  
but as i write these words i imagine you here  
walking up behind me  
    hips in hands  
        before i feel you  
            pressed to my ass

i'd let you top me  
right on this balcony  
under the unforgiving sun of Los Angeles

    who's paying attention anyway  
    besides the palm trees, succulents, & mountains

the sun is still close  
but animals are vanishing:  
    the squirrels aren't eating in the bushes,  
    spiders aren't stalking & building in the trees  
    the quarter-sized beetles aren't buzzing in the tepid breeze

& that's how i know winter is coming to crusade  
for its cause     though it may not win  
    (palms & people have witnessed its gradual compromise)  
so winter will join us  
even if the cold does not

i'll be a new woman  
by next spring  
    but i'll still be whispering  
    my love to you: sensuous  
    like our soft skin sweeping —  
    then, & every jewel-dripped night  
    until the sun decides to forget us all

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**samantha rose johnson** (she/her) is a Bay Area-born writer. Her poetry chapbook *L'ACQUA* was published by Tiny Divine Press in 2017. She is the founder and editor of the cult feminist magazine, *Pussy Magic*. Her writing has appeared in *ILY Mag*, *Occulum*, *Tiny Flames Press*, and more. She is a graduate of University of California, Riverside with a B.A. in English, and is currently a student at the UCLA Extension Writer's Program. She lives in Los Angeles where she manages events at the legendary Sunset Strip bookstore, Book Soup.