

# Poetry Porch: Poetry

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## **My Sadness is Private Property**

By Jonathan Chibuiké Ukah

I slip into my mourning robe  
as though I must dress up for the night,  
but morning is hovering by the corner,  
and the night is far from me.  
When summer comes, I twist into the dark;  
Winter doesn't see me crack up like an oil bean.  
Whoever says that I move front and back?  
When I smile, it's neither sunny nor raining,  
yet, some say it's the way I was born.  
If anything has to do with my curse,  
does it have to mean my blessing,  
if neither laughter nor pain drowns me  
into the river of tears and joy?  
I have tried to find a cure for my state,  
but it's like finding a solution for my existence,  
if my body is attuned to sadness and suffering,  
while happiness seems to be a distant country.  
The weight of my pain is lighter than my smiles,  
and I feel that I'm a spark in the wheel  
of the bicycle galloping towards fulfilment.  
It does not matter what I desire,  
since I do not decide how my life speeds away,  
and my palm is ready to receive a spark,  
of what destiny has dropped into it.  
I'm trying not to tempt my fate,  
after I realised that each time I smile,  
darkness disowns the night to visit the day.  
Such complexity is not my lot to disregard,  
but affirm that truth requires no makeup and hues  
but the shifting of the veil from side to side.

Please note, I'm home to grief and joy;  
both visit me at their will, serial manipulators  
of all the things that make me bitter,  
all the things that make me happy,  
being the hands that twist my valves,  
and I let their cruelty and kindness take hold of me.