Because My Body Was Never Mine

In wanting to be held,
I too – like a butterfly,
Dissolved into the hands
That had never held anything
Without breaking it.

Bathed in the sweatiness
Of unknown curses
Sticky as the muddy sperm
Before it turns to blood,
My voice deafens the earth –

Like a bra
That would not protect
The breasts when rusted,
Watery fingers arrived.
Oiled in the middle, I,

An adulterer voided
By that rapeseed;
Pilloried under the horrible sky
That promised to language me
Into immortality but failed.

I surrendered easy
To that famed urgency
Of my sterility, a smoke
Of steaming tears
Blinding my eyes. &

As to my body –
The muchness of which pours
Itself into other bodies
With different muchness
To make an elegy

Into a hip-hop –
This chaos, of course, is
What makes my skeleton
An impatient tourist
In its own grave.

They said – & I believed them:
My body is the vast sea
With wrecked ships,
Drowning folks that once owned it
Cried out for help but found

Only Deathlets carrying
Dark cudgels across
Their shoulders, licking
Their wishful prayers with
Their tongues, a folly fully sated

While Death, himself, lounges
At the shore – watching,
Waiting for when the basket
Of souls would be filled.
Of the sea & the drowning folks,

I see Death & his Deathlets

ascending – my body ruptured

in their hands, helpless in that rapture.

Bola Opaleke is a Pushcart Prize-nominated poet. His poems have appeared or forthcoming in a few Journals like Frontier Poetry, Poetry Quarterly, The Indianapolis Review, Poetry Pacific, Drunk Monkeys, Temz Review, St. Peters College(University of Saskatchewan) Anthology (Society 2013 Vol. 10), Pastiche Magazine, and others. He holds a degree in City Planning and lives in Winnipeg MB. Find him at www.bolaopaleke.com.