

## Rising Black Sea

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# Rising Black Sea

by Dáminí Awóyígà

We have seen so much  
We have seen hardships and overcome  
Risen from pitch-dark nights,  
Nights raging like never-ending wars  
That left the hope in our hearts, battered and  
torn Broken and bruised, left unattended to  
Silence, so deafening you could mistake it for calm

In this Black sea  
Let your baggage go  
And let them fall where they may  
Unload them  
The Black sea erodes them  
The Black sea heals us.  
Let the winds carry your pains away  
Feel redemption

In this Black sea  
We see a reflection  
Of our power  
Of our Unity  
And struggles

Justice grew on the tips of our tongues  
It fed a palette that craved freedom  
Craved liberation  
Free as the lines of free verse  
Praying liberation would cut us loose  
Praying that the chains that were eating us alive would be halted

We lifted our tongues,  
Each, a wave of our overlooked  
And untold histories  
Each pushing truths to the surface  
Our stories, and experiences that couldn't be erased

When darkness descended  
So did strength and resilience  
Only love, hope, and family could transcend  
The suffering we faced  
We have braved  
Stormy oceans and seas  
We still hope and believe  
there will be new horizons  
Like waves anew  
We will rise again

We stand here  
Our faces, shown in this Black sea  
The fire in our souls  
Giving Life to power.  
WE raise our voices collectively in song  
We, a song to be sang  
A story to be written  
We are the tides  
That will transform our communities

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**Dáminí Awóyíḡà** is a 16-year-old high school student. She is an activist, spoken word poet and Halifax's Youth Poet Laureate. Dáminí is the founder of Dáminí Creatives and the Afro-Indigenous Book Club, a book club created to encourage young people to read books written by Black and Indigenous authors and to share the realities and experiences of Black and Indigenous Canadians. She is a youth freelance journalist for CBC's Mainstreet and Vice-Chair of CPA High School's Black Student Association. Dáminí is a board member of the Nova Scotia Girls Institute for Resource and Learning (NS GIRL), she is also part of the HRM Youth Advisory Council. Dáminí has received multiple awards including the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal. As a spoken word poet for over five years, she enjoys writing, singing, and performing poems that bring attention to social justice issues.