

Joanne C. Hillhouse

THE ARRIVAL

(for Gisele)



The thing she loved most about coming home
was putting down the weight of inferiority
otherness
the stain that was her blackness

As home jumped up to greet her
like a child into daddy's arms
she took off the thick coat of winter
and felt the Atlantic breeze greet her skin
as it should
and felt the sun boldly offer kisses
that tingled
As Bob Marley's
"coming in-a...
"coming in-a...
"coming in-a..."
kept time with her heartbeat
and the colours made a joke of everything she'd gazed on
in that land of her exile

It was mango season
and she longed to tear at it's flesh with her teeth
and suck its juices with her lips and tongue
feel free
and whole
Be
Belong
her toes buried in pink sand
as she drank in the Blue

in which she'd washed the stain
of the shame that did not belong in this place
she simply called
home.