

*Opal Palmer Adisa*

## **BOTH SIDES**



I don't know when it was that I realized, nor do I  
suppose that it matters.

truly it matters  
everything having  
to do with the heart  
matters

Only a woman bent on suicide would fall in love. The  
very description – fall in—signals a fatal act.

i have known  
the tragedy  
of love

Not predisposed to suffering, I am not a woman in need  
of or even desirous of love. It is no more than the  
car I drive. I handle it, directing it where I am  
heading. Who would relinquish a finger for an  
ice-cream bar?

tears bathed my face  
i prayed that death  
should seek me  
when he abandoned me  
for another

I am not swayed by the opinion of others whose views  
are often mitigated by their own selfish need to

bolster their fledging ego or assuage their own  
feelings of being unloved.

i didn't know  
what need was  
until i met him

I seek the wick that burns clean the din that says  
every woman should love herself secondary to the one  
who loves her.

i would gladly  
forego who i am  
to his custody

and yet it is said  
there is no joy  
in the cup of life  
if there is no love