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Tooth Mouse and Lions

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Tooth Mouse and Lions

The house used to be surrounded with lion.
They roamed then, only in my imagination.
But, the green snake I met at the water fountain was real.
I screamed all the way back home.

I had my own bedroom, next to my parents'.
Bars at the windows scared me.
How would the tooth mouse be able to enter,
and what about the cat?

A long corridor had to be traveled
to get to the toilet. I asked my cat Minouche
and dog Mabrouk to go with me. How else
to risk such a voyage alone at night in the dark?

To attract my parents' attention.
I turned upside down in my bed.
My father came to help me get my world
back in the right direction again.

I would try to persuade Minouche and Mabrouk
to share this black bedroom space with me.
Thoughts of guilt erupted together with the pleasure
I had traveling slowly on my own body.

I remember ardently asking God to forgive me for it.
The inner decor remains blurry.
The feelings themselves are dark.
I was six then, in Nairobi.