

## Sister Wives

last night I tasted you on him

thighs lathered in cinnamon oil  
to keep the flies away

the bitter of banana beer  
the chew of acacia gum

paint yourself with the red earth  
from the hills

show me your garden  
black is rich is wet is soft is yielding

beg the river its water

tilapia smoked with onions

but do not drink too long  
mosquitoes aren't the only beasts  
who like your taste  
who take your blood away

and if you leave the roots will thirst  
spread in all directions in the shade

remember, if you break I will cement you with my spit

or the fat of a shea nut  
and when he breathes on me

a mortar no pestle can pound  
a millet coarse and wild

is his mouth yours

its smell drenching the bush  
bleeding like sweet plums

are you the one who showed him  
how to plough a flowerbed with his tongue

saying – bitter soil grows nothing good

or how like yours the blood  
between my thighs

or if eyes see too much  
they lose their light

did you poke holes in our roof

through the world we were taught to carry  
on our heads

so that the rain could seep in and watch

so we would not get carried away  
we, warned not to drink the light  
that trickles between palms

remember, we have mothered many  
suckled more, but

we are most the same  
when loving the same man

no matter whose son catches the fowl  
the entire compound eats it