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This was a Forest Once

Angela Dockrey

anj.dockrey@gmail.com

ORCID: 0009-0003-7950-5844

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This was a Forest Once

by Angela Dockrey



About the Author

Angela Dockrey is an educator and author of poetry and fiction. She has recently completed her Master of Arts in Literature and Creative Writing at the University of Texas at Dallas. Her creative work has appeared in *The YA Review*, *New Myths*, and *The Writers and Illustrators of the Future*.

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and the land remembers, its bitterness distilled in the snap of a sage leaf: sap fusing to skin, pungent, tacky blood that sticks in the vein. Did you know sage leaves grow silvered hair? To deflect, blur—the sun that feeds also burns, so violet. That's why the desert cannot be green. It's easy to lose one's way in this economy of sameness, one plant, copy pasted. Then the playa, of cracked mud, salt, white-glare memory of water. It bites the eyes. What here still endures? Tools, shells, bodies, Mesozoic wood turned to stone. Stone worn down to sand. A twisted bristlecone, five-thousand years old, bleached like bone; its roots drink from a deep place we cannot know. All endures, albeit changed. Even you, even me. As I walked in that bright and desiccated place, I thought I dreamt of water, but. It was just another pool of Light: trickling, rippling, Light without

*shadow. I reached for
you, but—there are no hands there,
wherever you've gone.*