

Menstrual Thobe

SUHAYLA HEPBURN

After 23 days of Ramadan,

I haven't touched the Quran,

I'm perpetually deducting
menstrual days,
I feel no shame

Yah Sheik, Oh Brother of

high esteem
knowledge
and visual molestation

Oh Great Gatekeeper,

Legging Police,
Fly Away Spotter,
Womanizing Critic,

Brother

when can I become your Brother?

When can I see you on
the other side
where the light

penetrated the partition

Oh Brothers,

when can I come to you?
to your side where
you herd tight

amongst yourselves
and build shields

for your kin

*Yah Akhi,
will you build a shield for me,
when you stone your brother,
for starting a sister
and staying a sissy*

*Yah Ahki,
you should know,*

*Allah keeps an audience
of faggots, angels
obeying without question,*

their queerness

sanctioned

their existence

sacred

I was born

Gabriel's
derivative

gendered and
genderless

edging
human
and holiness.

Suhayla Hepburn is a Muslim writer and artist currently based in The Bahamas. Suhayla uses their creative practice to subvert the expectations of their respective identities and interrogate what it means to live as an intersectional Bahamian through self-reflection. Outside of their creative endeavors, Suhayla is dedicated to researching and analyzing the aesthetics of gender and commercialization within Bahamian art and literature. Additionally, they graduated from the University of The Bahamas with a BA in English and is a Catapult Arts 2022 Awardee. Their poetry has been exhibited at Historic Nassau (2018) and the Central Bank Open Call Competition (2021) and has been published in Mistake House (2018), Seagrapes in the Time of Moons (2018), and Intersect Antigua (2022).