

Tiwaladeoluwa Adekunle

Teeth

before sore
before heavy
before learning my alone

before names
before knives
before your tongue became a knife

before silence
before I became so fluent

I put myself in your open mouth, said
don't bite or
the shame will not stop bleeding

said please
said please
said stop

Tiwaladeoluwa Adekunle is a writer and Purdue University graduate student from southwestern Nigeria. Her fiction and poetry have been published in *Brittle Paper*, *Indiana Review* and the 2017 *Best "New" African Poets* anthology.