

Poems



Honeyfish

Lauren K. Alleyne

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by Lauren K. Alleyne

2018 Green Rose Prize

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“These poems love. Prophesize. Return us to our beginnings. To days that we want to remember. Or forget. But don’t. Thus in our sister’s memory, we survive in the luxury of dying. The courage of loving. The re-imagining of our souls for another generation. Thank you, my dear sister for your words saluting our living, our lives.”

—Sonia Sanchez, winner of the 2018 Lifetime Achievement Award from the Academy of American Poets

“In exquisitely crafted poems of heart-accelerating candor and clarity, Lauren K. Alleyne says to all the black bodies slain by hatred and militarized fear, ‘Nothing I say will save you, but how can I say nothing?’ *Honeyfish* is an elegy for all the countless lost, and a praise song for the many black lives that persist in their wish to give and receive love.”

— Tracy K. Smith, Poet Laureate of the United States of America

“Even in the places we think of as most beautiful, the endless gong of the body being broken and defiled will find us. How can we see the sun and the ocean and the clear blue sky as anything other than

a kind of cruel joke in the face of so much suffering? The extraordinary gift of Lauren K Alleyne’s, *Honeyfish* is that she shows the world in all its brutality and loss and somehow lets us mourn within the poems, which in turn allows us to begin some kind of healing. These are poems whose elegy is ongoing, whose elegy need never happened but for hatred. The waves go in and out and so many people keep being killed. And here is this extraordinary poet, making a heaven that is freedom, that is the dream of being welcomed and loved and tended to. This is a book for our times and for the day when these times are over and we can rejoice.”

— Gabrielle Calvacoressi, author of *Rocket Fantastic*

Lauren K. Alleyne is the author of *Difficult Fruit* (Peepal Tree Press, 2014) and *Honeyfish*, (2018 Green Rose Prize, New Issues 2019). Her work has been widely published in journals and anthologies such as *The Atlantic*, *Ms. Muse*, *Women’s Studies Quarterly*, *Guernica*, *The Caribbean Writer*, and *Crab Orchard Review*, among others. Her work has earned several honors and awards, most recently first place in the 2016 Split This Rock Poetry Contest and a 2017 Philip Freund Prize in Creative Writing for excellence in publication. Alleyne was born and raised in Trinidad and Tobago, and is currently Assistant Director of the Furious Flower Poetry Center and an Associate Professor of English at James Madison University.



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