

*I Have Grown Up Enough*

To be glad that my grandfather  
who I love the way foam kisses the ocean shore  
is dead

I am sad every day he is gone  
yet riddled with joy that he—  
WWII veteran  
sat at the back of the bus  
drank and ate and shit where signs told him he deserved to  
elected a Black man as President—  
is not here to see what became  
of the America he left behind 10 years ago

he left us with an Obama inauguration hat on his head  
hope plastered across his heart  
like a change poster on a bedroom wall  
his eyes deep and ready  
like a pot of coffee brewing on Sunday morning

I've stopped wishing for more time  
because forever is still not long enough  
so I try to be grateful instead

there are no visits  
through the glass of a nursing home  
mask stealing my smile  
6 feet away from his love

he does not see my eyes  
weighed down by dark circles  
I wish were Louis Vuitton or Gucci or Prada  
blue at birth, now hazel  
Golden  
like the honey that sweetens my tea,  
colors my skin,  
drips from my tongue

and now

I watch them storm the capitol  
my friend texts me updates on her father  
“sheltered in his office, ready to fight back”  
what would Grandpa have thought  
to see the flag of spiders  
spinning their web of hate again?  
how do we clear the cobwebs  
from the ceiling  
and our minds?

I have grown up enough  
to know it is  
enough

from the beaches of Normandy  
to the water beneath Fort Rosecrans  
hate is a tempest  
and he sailed on  
I was passenger on his voyage  
he held death in the same palms  
that swaddled me as a baby  
and taught me to steer the ship towards freedom  
before I was old enough to know any other direction

the grass licks my knees and marble hugs my palms  
when I visit and pray and cry  
I have grown up enough to know that  
cemeteries are gardens of all we've loved  
and I have enough in me to grow Eden.

-Jordan Marie Finley  
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