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Pregnancy

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his broad head and shuffles along the branch to meet you. To my amazement, you hold up your hand and the bird takes a fluttering step down, lacing his claws around your fingers.

"John, there's something I must tell you." Your eyes start to swell and your jaw rocks from side to side.

"What is it Leah?"

You hesitate, and the bird climbs to your shoulder, spreading his wings, parading its multicolored feathers underneath.

Pregnancy

Talmeez Burney

Once a dream
had dinner with us
and it

stayed overnight.

Like goose bumps
it managed to insert itself
between us.

When we were done love making
panting in each other's arms,
it split.

You got the dream;
I got the flesh and blood.

Unequal
division
of our first vision.

Your eyes become windows, opening slightly to reveal the hidden torment inside. I see you sitting cross legged in a robe at the end of a narrow hall. The walls are barren. You rock back and forth, biting your nails. The lights flicker and you cover your face, rocking faster and faster. My throat tightens, my stomach churns...

"John..."

You reach for my hand and pull me out of my daze. I follow you as we wade through a field of poppies toward a wall of dark trees. A thick fog swirls along the forest edge masking its depths as we approach. You press ahead, while the bird swivels his head back and forth, watching me carefully from your shoulder.

The periphery begins to fade as we pass through the trees. The chirping birds become muffled and the earth crunches beneath our feet with every step. We follow along the path in complete silence, until the faint sound of laughter begins to resonate within the fog.

"It's all my fault, John. This whole thing's my fault," you say as we continue down the widening trail. I want to empathize with you, but I don't understand what is happening.

Ahead, the path turns to sand and a pier stretches out into the foggy abyss. I look over at you and stop, astonished. The bird towers over you with his claws straddling both of your shoulders. It has doubled in size and its feathers are smooth and vibrant. I reach for your arm and pull you closer. Your face is smooth and tight, a younger face that I had only seen in photos.

"I was pregnant before. Before I met you, John. I never should have done it." Your innocent young voice takes me by surprise. Your lower lip trembles.