In this moving elegy to his infant daughter, Saddiq Dzukogi, reminds us of how complex grief can be. The body’s responses to grief offer a way for us to cope with its deep pain. Here, the poem, “So Much Memory”, is a tender performance in which the poet, beautifully and hopefully, seeks to capture the lingering song of his daughter’s memory.

So Much Memory

By Saddiq Dzukogi

Now he answers to everything that reminds him of her, a crib rocking, a circle of faces crowing at him. He can neither leave his eyes open nor shut them. Splits the night walking between two cornfields, striding like he’s going for the thing he’ll never find. See how he runs his hands over his body, how his skin peels. After a night of crying, he can feel her limbs in his palms, versified, nothing made of flesh; nothing made of bone. He opens his mind and lets the leaves be his skin and lets a song fall inside another song: it mimics his daughter’s voice.