



# GROWING PAINS

POEM BY *Devyn Barnes*

I have seen 17 years of war:  
War at home, war at school, war in the world,  
never a body but always a blood stain.  
I've found hate from every corner of the earth  
I've found fire in the hands of every person I've met.

From my mother, my father,  
it rests dormant behind my grandmother's gentle gaze  
It lays in the hands of my teacher behind his glasses  
And burns blisters into my shoulders as he passes  
Now I burn too.

This is the loss of innocence,  
the passing of the flame  
from a bonfire to a wood chip,  
the crackling of new wood,  
the sharp sting of growing pains.

The difference between humans and animals is not that we make fire  
but that we hold it.  
We all hold pain within ourselves, but it is only human to express it,  
to put down the fire and to tend to the burns.  
It is human to help.

ART BY *Rosemarie Nevland*