

## POETRY

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## THE ODYSSEY OF LUPUS

It begins with a blush,  
the kind that doesn't vanish,  
even with sadness  
or the hush of immune calmers.

then, it upscales  
into a flash of lightning,  
stabbing the skies with bolts  
of redness and irritation,  
making the body a slow, feral  
poison unto its own beauty

until all the cells,  
all the pillars that hold the fort  
all zones and hopes are fried  
and the bored earth is forced  
out of pity and derision  
to eat cold dinner at breakfast.

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**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Dr. Patrick Ashinze, MBBS, graduated from the College of Health Sciences, University of Ilorin, Nigeria (2021) where he won the Inaugural Students Union Poetry Prize (2019) and The Best Writer's Award (2018). His writing has appeared in literary outlets such as *Hektoen International*, *Ann Arbor Review*, *Eunoia Review*, *Terse Journal*, *Chicago Lit*, *Corvus Review*, *Astar Lit*, and *Kalahari Review*, among others. He won the 2021 Wingless Dreamer International Midnight Poetry Prize, was first runner-up for the 2021 Mandela Institute for Development Studies (MINDS) COVID-19 In My City, was a finalist for the 2023 African Writers Poetry Prize, and was a finalist for both the 2021 Stephen A. DiBiase International Poetry Prize and the 2021 World Neglected Tropical Diseases Storytelling Competition. As an early-career clinician and researcher, he currently leads The LIND LEAGUE, a small eclectic researcher's hub. He has been an author, coauthor, or peer reviewer for a number of research projects focused on surgery, public health, oncology, art, cardiovascular health, artificial intelligence, humanities, and pharmacology and has been

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published in journals such as *The Lancet*, *Therapeutic Advances in Endocrinology and Metabolism*, *Current Problems in Cardiology*, and *Medicine (Baltimore)*, among others. He currently resides in Eastern Nigeria and is on the Faculty of Clinical Sciences, University of Ilorin in Ilorin, Nigeria.

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**FOOTNOTES**

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