

Miriam Sa'uda Perez



On A Journey to Discover Her Caribbean Ingredient

Sipping sorrel
in Uncle Ashton's shanty
munching Auntie Irene's sweet cassava-pone
watching a brown boy chop a pillar of cane
finally, she studies the land
that cradled her people
like a mother nursing an infant,
and blessed them with immense pride

a finger taps her from the daydream
and points to the black and white photograph
of a mahogany girl
— a frightened stare from dark eyes
— thick plaits adorned with light colored ribbons
— a large tattered suitcase clutched by a small fist

"Your grandmother was a good woman." Auntie Irene sings
in thick Bajan melody
about the sister she had not known
the one who had left for the mainland
and never returned
the one who had sent wrinkled U.S. dollars
to kin who remained

on the tiny Caribbean island.

