



SANAA SIMMONS

Sanaa. The name that is rarely seen or even heard.

"Are you foreign?" they ask, constantly.

Eventually they learn how to pronounce it, but when they do, it isn't the same anymore. They say it in a sloppy manner, as if on purpose.

"Wow, I would never have guessed you were from the U.S., especially the South!" they add.

It sounds like a compliment, but doesn't feel like one.

Sanaa. That's my name. So what if it's foreign? So what if you don't like it? I accept that. Maybe one day you will, too.

FATHER

We sit and listen.

The rain is roughly
crashing against the
window pane. I can
tell it is dark out,
but we still listen.

He holds me,
Father.

My tiny fingers join together
in a tangling pattern.
He keeps glancing
at the fireplace as if
trying to avoid saying
something. I don't
speak on it,
I enjoy the silence,
the sitting and listening.

The rain stops,
I give a puzzled look.
He does, too.
We always do that.
The sun has come out.
His fingers join mine,
his eyes still focused
on the fireplace.
His pupils dance
with the flames.
He still holds me,
Father.