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Ahiri No-Legs

A New Bahamian Folk Tale by Lisa Codella

Somewhere along the spiral of time, before there was a 'you' or a 'me', there was a world that a million million yesterdays have long forgotten. Stars have brightened and dimmed since then, but the sun that warms your face today recalls the time when the first Jellyfish was known by another name: Ahiri.

Ahiri walked the earth in a way not unlike the way you and I get from here to there. But for her, this was not enough. She never found satisfaction no matter where she went. When she was 'here' she was happy for a moment until the thought entered her head "But what if 'over there' is better?" and at that moment, no matter how delightful her beingness was at the time, her balance would evaporate from her heart like the last drop of water in the heat of the day. Ahiri would turn her back on it all and abandon her responsibilities and enjoyments to seek out something better. Something new.

This went on and on until one by one, every experience Earth Mother took the time to put in Ahiri's path was left untended and unappreciated.

Realizing that her child was living without direction, Earth Mother visited Ahiri as she lay dreaming one night and asked her "Child, what troubles you? All of the gifts of beauty I give you just so that you can learn and find pleasure, you abandon. Every weaker thing I assign to your care so that you both may find the gift of growth, you leave forgotten and alone. Why do you do this?"

Ahiri -- not realizing she was in the presence of Earth Mother -- said "I don't know, there is not enough in one place to keep my interest. I feel the need to move on, so I move on."

"You ignore the joy in your heart just in the hope you will find something better somewhere else?" Mother asked with great sadness.

"I suppose so," replied Ahiri with equal melancholy.

Too upset to see her child in such a state, Earth Mother touched her sleeping head with the gentlest of kisses and breathed into her ear, "Then to you, I give a new existence. From this day forward, you will live a life as you wish. A being who finds balance in movement. Who is happy to float wherever the oceans take you and be satisfied with what crosses your path. Ahiri, you will not miss your legs, because you will find love and joy without them and wherever you are will be home to you."

And with that, Ahiri awoke from her dream no longer walking the earth, but floating as a gossamer ocean angel, delighted to go wherever the tide took her.