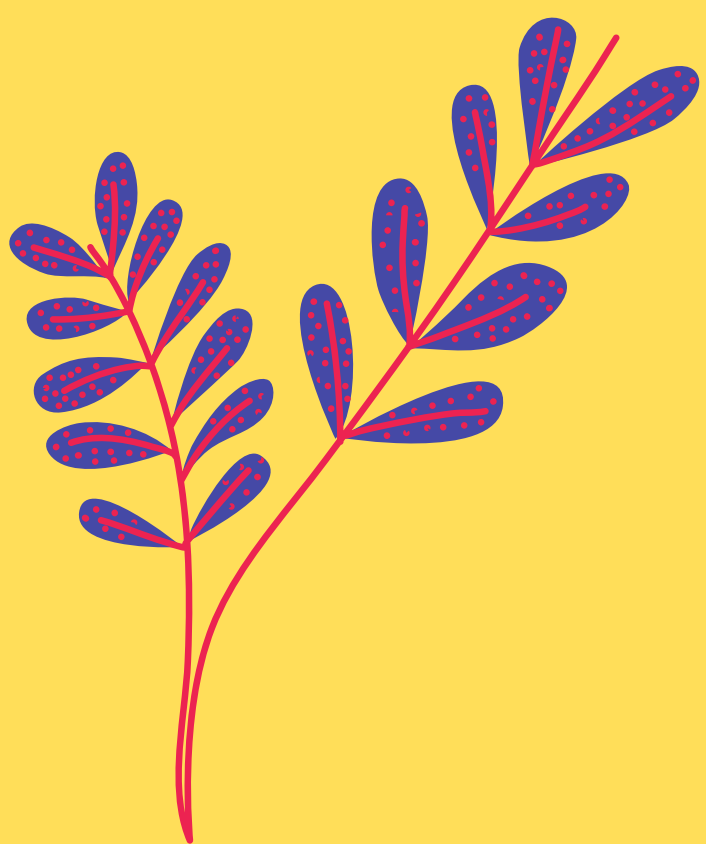


# Dear Me,



Loving me scares me. I run  
up a mountain, running out of words,  
I vomit lava, burning my path home. How  
can I walk on scorched rocks? If  
this is a love poem, where are the violets  
& the roses? I live in the desert, I  
only have aloe vera, perfect for soothing  
scalded feet. I survive. Survive

hiding my arms from the sun, asking  
why can't I be milky white? My melanin  
didn't flee, my flesh stayed brown. I close  
my eyes, listen to the ocean in the moon, croon  
I love me. I walk home bearing scars  
on my feet, proud of my color & shape.



*Karo Ska*