

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

A Rumpus Poetry Book Club Selection, Reviewed by *Publishers Weekly*

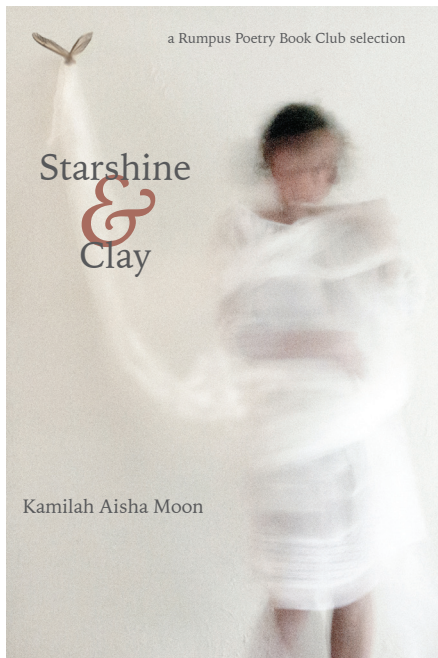
### *Starshine & Clay / Kamilah Aisha Moon*

Publication Date: October 2017 | 978-1-935536-95-6 | Poetry | \$15.95 | Paper, 128 pgs | 6 x 9  
Orders: UPNE 1-800-421-1561 | www.upne.com | Please send tear sheets/links of any reviews to:  
Four Way Books, PO Box 535, Village Station, New York, NY 10014, publicity@fourwaybooks.com

Ribbons of skin pile at our feet;  
we count wet orbs like heads.  
Beneath the blades, white meat.

Their kitchens are not kosher, or neat.  
The knives engrave our dread.  
Ribbons of skin pile at our feet.

—from “Peeling Potatoes at Terezin Concentration Camp”



“Breath caught in her throat,” Kamilah Aisha Moon writes of a mother waiting for a son to come home, “when your trachea snapped” (“To Jesse Washington”). *Starshine & Clay* is a history of injustice and oppression in America grounded in the lives, loves, and despair of individual men and women whose spirits fight on earth and dream of the heavens: “I think of / Joy, Théma, Kerry, Anthony, Phebus. Sandra & those / lynched by cops, satellite spirits who didn’t reach this orbit alive” (“Still Life as Rocket: 42”).

*Starshine & Clay*, which derives its title from Lucille Clifton’s collection *Book of Light*, weaves together iconic images of the U.S. such as the statue of Jefferson Davis, Confederate flag in hand, that withstood Hurricane Katrina (“Jefferson won’t be moved—/a bold, living relic of stone”) with the lives of those too often left unnoticed: “Oh broken bewildered girl I wasn’t born to be, break / yesterday under heel” (“Eternal Stand,” “These Are the Breaks”). Yet amid the tragic events on which Moon’s poems look, these lines offer, if not solace, then a reason for hope: “only spirit lasts out here, yet nineteen shacks / stubborn against the horizon. Some of us need / to build anyway—not just visit but live out closest / to the ominous, beautiful truth of it all” (“Day At the Dunes”).

Moon’s astonishing follow-up to award-nominated *She Has a Name* brings us solemn villanelle and freewheeling rhyme, sculpted minimalism and sprawling lines. It takes such range to see and hear America today, and Moon is a poet whose voice we need, whose tenderness and determination can help us look beyond as “We are left to imagine the day / it won’t require imagination / to care about all of the others.” (“Imagine.”)

“... Throughout, Moon explores the body and the many traumas it must absorb, confronting death, survival, and the space in between with grace and radiance.”

—*Publishers Weekly*

“... This heroic writing is in the spirit of Nina Simone’s ‘Mississippi Goddamn!’”

—*Washington Independent Review of Books*

“... Release this ghost in your home, let Kamilah Aisha Moon’s words haunt you, let them pry open your heart so you can know it better.”

—*Fork & Page*

“Grief and sorrow cannot prevail where there exists such sympathetic and empathetic forces as those summoned in the poems of Kamilah Aisha Moon....”s

—**D. A. Powell**

“Moon writes with wisdom, rage and grace of the slain, the stolen and the conquered.... I find myself utterly ravaged and unreservedly restored.”

—**Tracy K. Smith**

## Love

Once you’ve decided (it is a decision)  
your skull won’t bleach  
in the sun like a lost animal, what else  
is there to do in any desert but study at the feet  
of succulents drawing relief out of no where,  
bristle with lessons? To walk & walk far past  
whatever singed—the trudge  
of faith every body afire knows until some  
inexplicable, glorious flower or face  
sirens the water & honey rooted in your cells, rolls  
all of the little stones away & roars  
without words, *rise*

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## About the Author

Kamilah Aisha Moon is also the author of *She Has a Name* (Four Way Books 2013). A Pushcart Prize winner and a 2015 New American Poet, she has received fellowships to Vermont Studio Center, Rose O’Neill Literary House, Hedgebrook and Cave Canem. Her work has been featured widely, including *Harvard Review*, *Poem-A-Day*, *Prairie Schooner* and elsewhere. Moon holds an MFA from Sarah Lawrence College and is an Assistant Professor of Poetry and Creative Writing at Agnes Scott College.