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Out of darkness

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Poetry

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Before, I slunk
around hallway corners,
felt safe
among shadows.

I dressed
in inky black
to evade
the spotlight.

I could not see
the stares
but I could feel
them.

Now, I have Juno,
a glossy black
Labrador retriever
named
after Roman goddess
protector
guardian
of women.

With her,
I cannot hide,
I cannot blend in.

Wherever I go,
a wave of whispers
follows,
my cheeks flush
bright red,
my hands shake.

Juno remains
focused,
calm,
confident,
she never
strays from her path.

Words float by,
they do not drip
with pity,
they ring
with praise.

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I nudge Juno forward,
her harness
forces me
to stand straight,
to throw shoulders back,
to let my heart
shine forward,
each step
feels
like flying.

I see
soft dapples
of yellow sunlight;
warm pink
rays
engulf me, and everything
is illuminated
with a vibrant
glow.

Before,
I only saw shadows,
where charcoal gray blurred
and blended
to ebony
black.

Now,
I cannot see
I cannot hide
I cannot blend
in
but with Juno,
I can fly
and I am
never
turning back.

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