

Junior Division (17 & Under), Prose
Oladoyin Agbaje, St. John's
O'Donnell Military School (an excerpt)

The military school ran on a very and I mean very tight schedule. Every day at exactly 4:30am every child there including me would wake up, brush our teeth, take a shower and put on our depressing uniforms. No exceptions. You weren't allowed to be tired in the morning, or you would have to stand for 10 minutes with your arms raised as high as they wanted you to. If you had short arms, you would not want to be given this punishment. If you weren't done getting dressed in 15 minutes or less, you would lose dinner privileges for the week.

After we got dressed, we had dry bread and a rotten apple for breakfast which we had to finish in 5 minutes, or we would get beaten. Once breakfast was over, it was time for chores. We were in groups of 2 for chores. I was always paired with this girl named Aurora Fitz and at first, I found her annoying. Not only because I don't like people, but also whenever she got nervous, she would fiddle with her purple and blue bead bracelet she always wore (even to sleep). But after 3 months of living in the same room and doing chores together I found out that she was almost a carbon copy of me except for her brown curly hair, dark skin and grey eyes. Which was almost the complete opposite of my wavy blonde hair, light skin and blue/green eyes.

One thing we had in common was that we both wanted to escape this creepy and depressing place and we both loved getting in trouble and playing pranks on our supervisors and each other. Since we first met, we agreed that one day we would get out of this crazy place.