

Untitled

I grew up in the quicksand of White Suburbia.
That kind of childhood where the concept of race
leaves you sinking. There's never been a time I
wasn't drowning in it.

I was the kid all the other kids stared
at when they saw my parents.
Dad: Black. Mom: Mexican. Therefore, me: Impossible.
I was the kid who thought she was adopted because
the white kids told her so.

But who could blame them, or me? The same kids
who thought blankets protected us from everything.
And the moon followed us wherever we wandered.

And somewhere my ancestors laughed and cried,
trying to pull me free.

The thing about diversity (the institutional,
white kind that crackles at the back of my throat),
is that it has always required the death of me.
Asked for my body on some GroundHog Day
type of mess.

Like I could've sworn I left this carcass of myself here yesterday.
The thing about diversity, is that it makes me want to
tell my ancestors to stop tugging. I'll meet you on the other side
of whatever is the opposite of this.

Mom said if I was going to write poetry in college,
they'd require me to make it as Brown as possible.

The thing about me, is that there's not a single person
who's heard me perform a poem/
about the way I have been coughing up white sand since I was a child.
Who never learned to take a breath without sputtering grains.

My throat is most clear when I write poems about aliens.

Or the versions of myself in parallel universes, with nothing
but lungs for a body. The only time skin and words
meet on the page is when my own agenda calls for it.

I like to think somewhere my ancestors are
smiling. Breathing relief. Resting. Finally.