

CROWN OF THE ARK

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blessed be / blessed be / blessed be
a boi knifed from the cattle's rotting
lungs, golden brown child imposed against
the smoking pavement's silted chest
if they hold him there long enough will he
sediment into the porous stones, gone
forever / melted baby boi / ice cream kid
leaving behind only his sticky stench for us
to rinse ourselves in. how else do we remember
our loves; we must wear their too small heels
and dance across the fracturing mausoleum
our mouths coated in a red so thick / luminous
it must be quoted direct from their still boiling blood
we arrive dressed in their names ready for war

we arrive dressed in their names readied with war
horses by the dozen, the thousands, the millions
we know they will come thirsty for land and skin
a tidal wave of angry sticks launch at us, pointed
end first. but did we not create the sidestep out
of dance, just to avoid their spears; and let us
be quite honest about our reasons, we are not
hungered for soil, looking for space or gold
there is no power higher than my grandmother's
fried chicken that we must obtain. yes, even there
the words sound so dirty in my mouth; ownership.
the friction between want and have, the space
between their knife and the soft underbelly of
our throats, singing, "we are free; we are free"

our throats, sing, “we are free; we are free”
and yet, i fear it might be time to build the boat
to shovel in all our loves, some by their remains
the good roots of their hair. to find a place,
a planet, maybe, that will take to our scalp
and bloom, wild—river children, sweet silked
edges laid to rest by grease and a hot comb
i wish it were so simple to construct the bridge
from here to nowhere close, a world built on
forgetting the shape of monuments, i say in spite
i’m sorry, i am stalling, again. to watch lightning’s
slow capture of tree bark, of limestone, of cobbled—
—path. i don’t want to leave here, i just must find
a place where my body is not up for auction or debate

a place where my body is not up for auction or debate
seems unlikely. but let's call the spade by another name
for once. it has taken me three lifetimes to get to here
and all of the people seem just as stank. just as ready
to cast me off the edge of their dust covered planet.
it seems unlikely, we belong anywhere not made from
silly putty gums. the wet gnash; whipping at the back
of our necks with heat's violent belt. i must ask why
this feels so familiar; this ache rattling the forest
of my stomach. what happened to all the children
with the buttered artichoke hearts and fried
okra smiles; i don't trust much here i can't call
my own, that is not covered in glitter and brown and
bright.

bright
and brown
and glitter covered
we search
for a planet
we can call
our own.
“we are
free”
“we are
free”
by the cut
of our
spilling throats

cut the spilling throats
pour the souring soda from its palms
release the flock of fluttering balloons
into the night sky's open and willing jaws
this is after all a celebration, right; something was
born or dead or made over again by what
we tend to think is god or luck or supposed to be
a million lilies freeing themselves
from the undersides of our tongues
and what light they bring to the surface
carve the ghost into their best dresses
play the music slow for them to turn trans
lucent gold; children of the forgotten trees
come among us to sing your songs

come among us to sing your songs
of glory, O' glory of the crystal glistened
skin. O' glory of chicken fattened in the grease—
—still sweat, the pop/the bubble/the braising limbs.
O' glory the neck bone hidden in the drenched
leaves soaked in salt. O' glory to the first
dance, the first shake, the first lung belting
out a sweet hymn. O' glory to the boy. O' glory
to the girl. O' glory to the boi in body flipped
in new skin. O' glory to the kiss, the moon
to the night full of kin our new names we brought
here, alive! we have made it! we have made it, safe;
blessed be /blessed be/ blessed be

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