

Testimony

I have no words,
Officer. Blame
my tongue, who stole
each one in its scamper
for escape
when he begged me—
when your men
with the gavel-bang
voices hounded me.
Yes, I remember
bodies, their blur.
Her temper
already unravelling
from bad wages
to sore feet.
Breakfast dishes
he'd been told to wash
still stacked
in the sink.
Shouts charging
for him before she
even reached his room.
How I peered
from the staircase
a second too late—
Officer. I just heard
a hand thrash through
air—breathlessness—
the teacup clatter
of her bones—then
the swell of quiet.
My tongue tied

It tried unravelling.
The crater left behind
a scream
that couldn't escape.
A sudden smack
of reds & blues—the law
pounding on the door.
Bodies blurred the room—
swarmed—hollers—handcuffs—
unravelling the Black boy
to his knees.
They wanted to know
what I had seen.
She said remember
how his fist sheathed
into the red
of her mouth—
he said tell them
it wasn't him—
of our lifelong flee
from the thrash of her
muleta tongue—
they said who hurt who—
I said when—at what point—
they didn't hear—just
hissed like their radios—
tell us—can't you
remember—who
swung—who's wrong—
you saw—but
I blinked.
I blinked.
Truth lost within
that dark bridge between.

My bones knew who.
My eyes did not
& he shattered—
a dish against drywall.
Don't you see, Officer?
There's a fist where
his heart used to be.
A second is still
charging through the house
of me.