

## **I don't write about race**

*for Daphne*

*after El Pearson*

I don't write about race.

I don't talk about race.

My white friends are very supportive.

My white friends perform allyship on Facebook.

My white friends apologize, but neither  
as often nor as profusely as  
they should.

I hide my legs from the sun and  
in the shower, they blend into  
the off-white  
mildew  
off the walls.

I hide my legs from the  
sun and in the  
shower I try  
to tell myself:  
I'm not one of them.

The day after I graduated college, I took my white  
father and my brown mother to the World  
War II Museum and we sat  
in silence as we read  
that the Japanese killed 20  
million Chinese people during World War  
II.

(How many times have I been asked if I was Japanese?)

My brown mother and  
I already knew this. I wonder  
what my father knows.

I don't write about race,  
I write about erasure.

I go to a bar with my white  
sister and my brown brother. Someone  
tells us that we all look  
the same, and I wonder  
what that means  
for me, a white-brown  
girl with an uncut  
dick. But then I  
remember  
that I've heard this before, that  
we all look the same.

I don't write about race,  
I write about gender,  
I once killed a cis white man,  
and his first name  
was me.

In Washington D.C., while walking  
through the National Mall, I hear a white  
teenager joyfully screaming with her  
white friends.

In Washington D.C. I am terrified  
to speak, I am terrified to  
whisper. I write  
poems on my phone instead.

I don't write about race,  
I write about silence.

My white friends talk  
about race. They say  
all the right  
words. I say  
nothing.

I read poems about white  
people to rooms full of white  
people and they laugh  
like they're in on the joke, they  
laugh like they didn't  
make me need  
to write these poems.

In a poem I ask  
white people everywhere  
to please go  
home. My white  
audience laughs and  
I wonder how much  
of me is laughing  
with them. I wonder  
if my father is laughing  
too.

I don't write about race,  
I write about erasure.  
I write only, and always  
about myself.

*for my mother*

I love fireworks,  
i'd love to see  
jesus in  
the street  
turning  
cop cars  
into  
anything.

faith  
can be  
such  
a disappointment, someday  
my mom  
will hold  
a book

with my name on the cover,  
though not the one she chose.

## **dog person**

*for my dog*

I tell my dog "sit" and he sits.

I tell my dog "stay" and he stays.

I tell my dog "dismantle" and he just looks at me.

We have both been trained  
to do so many of the  
wrong things.

I tell my dog to "stay" I tell  
my dog "stay" to my dog i  
tell to "stay" dog I tell, "stay"  
tell "dog" my to to stay oh dog  
tell me to stay good girl oh  
dog please  
stay.

**etc.**

a man looks  
at me

etc.

## **Shoot for the moon**

*after El Pearson*

If you miss,  
try and hit a cop.

**everyone at the coffeeshop is more beautiful than I am.**

everyone at the coffeeshop is more beautiful than I am.

I think about lily and I think about el.

I try to think about killing anything other than myself.

tomorrow is the fourth of july.

so many  
of the wrong things  
are going to burn.

they always do.

someone somewhere  
had their first kiss today, probably  
many people did, probably  
some of them were gay.

fuck it I guess I won't kill myself.