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Letter to My City

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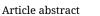
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Letter to My City

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Abstract

In this poem-letter the speaker addresses their hometown, a place of familiarity and contradiction. Through exploring the dark past of Southern North Carolina an intimate account of living in community is illustrated.

Keywords

Home, city, familiarity, lineage, longing



Letter to My City

My city is the one segregated around high school with packed classrooms and stolen-back history lessons filled with praying for souls of slaves thrown into mass graves plentiful and robust like fertilizer for the land– bodies used as fodder with familiar hair and lips and fingernails all pressed close in dirt nameless.

Days spent weeping with classmates, imagining our own bodies slaved and dirt-packed or sunken into the deep, supposing who of us unstrong enough to die without our people; I go back to 2016 election aftermath, us terrified and clinging to each other woven

> give me again something to weave around, let me be weak again, submissive, arms of arms of arms of everyone around

grasping on to each other

take me back to busted sidewalks and gunshots and long ass bus rides take me back by the corner shop, the nail salon next to the beauty supply and circle around a few times, let me look around for a while.