

Offshore

Only property owners have the luxury to hold the past.

my grandfather, ex army
puffs his 6th cigarette of the evening
watching derailed smoke legs retire in thin air across the Bhutan border

it's a world full of plastered jazz
a mausoleum
of inebriated ghosts tied at hips with a sylvan nerve of amnesia

his fingers wrap around the cigarette body a little tighter
another telling of an ending moment,

the smoke now fades into
a different lane- a boulevard noir
while he sings a punjabi ghazal,

His memory lives in warm street light.

A familiar swing

In god, I imagine myself leaving-
swallowing a tongue too big for my mouth,

watching my teeth grind this illness
like a hermit soaring the hems of raw meat

What to call this burning of the horizon into becoming a body that will hit the freezers
before orange rust turns brown?

I know how it killed my sister-
One summer, when I was seven

It swirled up her neck till she cried in stillness
and birthed a family heirloom of crow massacre

A flock of exiled birds migrating for relief

I speak the same language as her,
of erasing myself till the only piece left of me is the
half bitten ham over the kitchen shelf.

I gulp grief like fever tonic/when I throw a stone in the river,
It comes back and cuts my mouth into pearls.

They say my last name doesn't matter, that all my dead are immortal, they call me an
inspiration when I really become a tragedy.