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## I Am Modern Margaret Garner

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## I AM MODERN MARGARET GARNER

Listen to the song  
Through the cotton in your ears,  
that my people picked for you.  
The song of the blue birds,  
that if you knew what they sang,  
you'd never hum along again.  
They sing our desperate cries back to us,  
and make us mangers of old nests  
so were able to give our babies rest.  
Just to wait for the brittle bow to break  
chipped away by steel heated by the holy bush,  
so they may fall into the eternal grace.  
A warm burial place akin to birth and rebirth.  
My baby's bones are not alone,  
but in company with other saturated skeletons.  
His caged birds sing to me sweetly:  
He'd never know the difference between  
your baby girl's and that of his own flesh,  
yet he preaches you are stained with  
most hideous and diabolical dye.

But he was so very kind,  
to take her younger sister and I  
to our watery baptismal grave,  
permitted to be washed clean  
of every hurtful touch,  
of all the grime and dust,  
that our plantation bore:  
the sour, bruised, distasteful fruit.  
The blue birds sink the seeds; no pollination.  
My last wish is for holy transformation  
Of water to not wine,  
But gallons of strict kerosene,  
to burn and purge this land  
Of all their tyrannical lords  
and their suffering slaves too,  
because no one owns the rocks or gems,  
the dirt, the lakes, or the mountain ranges  
besides the one whose mouth,  
will breathe breath into these floating lungs.  
Leave our bones to keep the seeds company.