

Chloe Hooks

Background Noise

back where I'm from
 women got tape dispenser tongues
 clip their talk, dust whipping their faces
 shut down sound with a lipstick snap
 powerful enough
 to pin drunk brother to the ceiling
 or maybe
 refasten a broken reputation

back where I'm from
 the smartest girls yank out velvet muscle
 unroll wet ribbon until
 they secure a dream of wrapping paper
 crisp creases, coiled bow
 and
 present it to their lovers saying
 this is
 my gift
 to you

I'm from
 that place of homestyle heat
 where Missy learns rhetoric from a sticker-burr
 where all the ladies' cotton compliments are slick with oil money
 and where Nana's stash of lye unfilths errant mouths

back where
 Mother's loving strategies are hot chocolate and tequila
 and cicadas thrum while Sissa skinny-dips between Cyprus toes

where
 a rawhide scent beguiles and
 a little girl can't tell
 daddy's hunting belt
 from
 daddy's dancing shoes