

memories of the ones I love

five-minute dreams

I forgot how to blink at the purple sky,
glittering hues of new colors.
I stand with longing,
but you, next to me
are planted among the soft green.
a loss of sweet words
our language barrier eats at me.
now I pay an arm and a leg
to learn my language the
government tried to destroy.
I will never forgive them.

you pull me out of my thoughts,
to follow your eyes to see
two moons collide.
I can taste the anxious air
how our end together is near.
I rub my hands on your shoulders,
yet you did not need my comfort.
your soft deep purple velvet
tingles my hands up to my head,
and yucca grows at our feet.
you beam with radiance
and I for the first time
know this harmony you speak of.

a granddaughter's journey

I must fly through the Arizona desert
to meet him under the New Mexico sun.

along the way I stop at skeleton mesa
to give my grandparents forehead kisses
and *clean* water for their peach trees.

I stay awhile opening my ears
among the red dirt to absorb their stoic words.

a visit I longed for...
longed for her gentle hands in my hair once more
and to hear his stern voice after so long

before I continue, she takes my face in her hands
wrapping her lilac headscarf around me

I float the rest of the way to Naat'áanii Nééz
where my grandma sets her words ablaze
taking up space where the system is against us

she sends me off with pueblo bread,
one for now, one for later

the sun beamed brighter while soaring in the clouds
and through the breaks between I see
the golden corn, gleaming like stars

I meet him in the middle, where he said he would be
letting the field swallow me

exchanging small dialogues and collected comics
from the Navajo Times and the corn stalks surround us
listening, shading us as we laugh into the New Mexico sunset

“You can't fly at night”, so I stay
and follow shicheii out of the field

untying the scarf from my head
kicking off my boots once in inside
fully sinking into the comfort of today's visits

my mother's home

my mother's home was tucked behind trees
and near the red rocks that wanted to be climbed
they yelled and waved for her attention
waiting to be a part of the next imaginary game they play.

my mother's home on the other side of the coin,
was filled with her laughter
escaping to a ravine glittering back at her
coming home with stains from the earth at the end of the day.

my mother's home was near a canyon
and when the canyon games grew old,
were substituted for pic n' run snacks and drives around town
sometimes returning to the canyon with their snacks.

my mother's home was brown on monopoly street
no white fence, no careful planning, not a single thought
but in the yard was her favorite dog with a purple tongue,
who waited patiently for her return from school, weekend trips to Gallup and
visits to grandma's.

my mother's home is on juniper ave. and again, on barboncito blvd.
even though the ravine no longer glitters, and the cottonwood trees are bare,
her home(s) stands still holding onto her

and when I go back with her,

you can hear the red rocks and canyons still call for her.

not a love poem, just an observation

you have memories of taking care of your siblings
just barely tall enough to reach the stove
to cook your spam –
but not old enough to outgrow your Saturday cartoons.

when you talk about your parents
you speak of your dad's singing and past
powwow groups.

your mom's intelligence and brown beauty,
and how
sometimes you think you are your dad
but you are your mom in every way.
a beam of resilience and strength,
in every moment life was against you.

skeleton mesa in june

together, we start before the sun

breakfast is black coffee with a side of KTNN,
filling every space of the empty hogan.

we start near the hogan and through the dead peach trees.
eventually making it to the top, only to go back down again.

you give back what you take from the earth
and walk with time on your side.

I follow her pattern to give back what I took
meanwhile, she sits against the juniper trees humming sweetly.

I walk to her to show the medicine and seeds inside
what use to be a flour bag, with a single faded blue bird.

she smiles, dusting off the red dirt that stained her Nikes.
and together we continue west.

where a new hum fell between the canyon walls
and Parrish creek mirrored the sky.

*reminiscing the summers away from freeways
and smog, replaced with children's laughter
and yells of "tag" radiating between the canyons*

together, we share seeds and songs.