

The Day My Mouth Broke Up With Apologies

The day my mouth broke up with apologies,
I finally felt the weight of my voice laid on my shoulders.
I do not apologize for my voice anymore,
I do not apologize for my unrouged lips,
I do not apologize for my body or spirit.

The day my mouth dumped "I'm sorry",
made my teeth prick blood from my lip
because I still felt apologies rising from my tongue.
But now I do not apologize for my poetry.

The day my mouth broke up with apologies,
I was beaten.
Screams pushed at my throat,
violence pounding on my back.
I wept an ocean but my tears were
not good enough of an apology.

The day my mouth left apologies standing alone in the dirty street,
I looked up at the dark sky, thanking the rain making it impossible for an apology
to crawl out of broken lips, still baby pink, no blood or rouge staining my childhood.
The day I left apologies, I finally started truly using my own voice,
and not just the clammy indoor voice apologies always wanted me to use.
That day I broke up with my whisper and hooked up with my shout.

Hooked up as in finally finding the strings
that kept us together the whole time.
My mouth still apologizes.
But now it apologizes for burning toast, bumping into strangers,
and forgetting to pick up oranges at the market.
It does not apologize for being a woman,
it does not apologize for being a girl.

I do not apologize for my voice.
I will not apologize for my existing.
I will not apologize for this either.
Instead I say

Your welcome.