

For Immigrants and Children Masquerading on Stolen Soil (Part III)

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Today, and yesterday, and many days prior
my consciousness departed
from my constitution.

The familiar stranger curled
under the weight
of a borrowed independence.

Sometimes I wonder
if it's just me or the rest of us
immigrants and children
masquerading on stolen soil
who toil
with the feathers of our being
manipulating air and skin
for the promise of flight.

They told us to be grateful
to bow,
to hem the seams
of our frustration
without an inch of thread.

They told us to fold
our tongues
like pressed linens,
to sand the edges
of our voices
until they softened
and bled, until
they sounded smooth,
like rivers without mouths.

Today, and yesterday, and many days prior,
they said we were lucky to be here.

I say,

lucky is the land

that gets to tremble

under the weight

of our hunger;

lucky is the land

that names the captive free

while tightening her chains