

## AN ODE TO GRIEF

No. No. Please. Not again.  
For the first few hours, I do not watch.  
I can't. Then I do. It's everywhere.  
His death becomes a record  
Spinning in my mind, dizzying  
Even when I try to close my eyes  
The darkness holds his body  
His blood bleeds into the earth like Abel  
I am the earth and all I see is red  
This heavy body of mine heaves  
While anchors grace my ankles  
The deep crevices of my skin hides bodies  
I try to bring them to my chest  
But they turn to dust in my arms  
How can I mourn what I cannot touch?

In the beginning, I nuance myself blue  
I shake everything but their boat  
Until it's clear that it doesn't matter to them  
For them, this is politics, this is a conversation  
An endless sea of forgettable black bodies and names  
This is an ocean away and nothing to do with us  
Yet they interrogate each of my tear drops  
They try to debate me out of my mourning  
Argue against their American reflections  
Like this land isn't stolen and looted all the same  
White noise in my sorrowful symphony  
Spirit pierced by a white supremacist Cupid  
They can not begin to comprehend  
This weight is not a choice  
I was born with it on my chest  
I feel it with every breath

Dawn greets me with chalk outlines  
With the emptiness in another mother's eyes  
I try to pray for every black body gifted to Heaven  
But after days of trying, I finally choked on my tears  
Crying, trying to claw out my own sullied throat  
To make space for all of these names  
Each name sparks a flame in my spirit  
Letting me scream amongst the dead

If the fire finally burns me inside out,  
Remember I died how I lived

Black.  
Exhausted.