

an almost all-black occasion

the never good enough child
tugged on the hemline of her grandmother's yellow dress
with her sticky fingers
an apology was never asked for but
forgiveness was never given either
the sticky child begged for attention with her watery eyes
never with her pulled taut mouth
never with her words
when left unanswered,
sticky fingers rubbed together until ashened hands emerged from wear
the child-sized handprint of a mistake never left her grandmother's mind

the raw sides of the ashened child bumped up against her mother's leg on the sidewalk
across the road her mother's mother pointed her sad eyes at one perfectly unaware daughter
the raw child waved five inflamed fingers as the disappointed eyes shifted to meet hers
watery eyes bidding for connection scarcely noticed approaching headlights
her chubby legs moved towards pavement on their own and
one mother's scream erupted from a hereditarily taut mouth

thus followed: a purple hemline rippling from the abruptness of maternal instinct;
legs dangling in the air; one sock exposed to sacrifice

the innocence blinked out from wide eyes in one slow motion
the shoeless child watched her afterimage lose a dress flat to the hungry jaws of a steel box

the once perfectly rhinestoned leather now imprinted with tire marks

the imprinted child looked for her grandmother's concern in a stoic face
her grandmother's shoes had not moved from where they were
a child-sized hand clung onto her ankle, hemline still sticky with resentment