

we've been acting like these books were bound to save us

*as if when we blow the dust off these covers,
that maybe we can finally learn to read these titles*

we've been acting like these books were written for us

*as if when they penned these stories,
that maybe they did mean to include us*

we've been acting like these books couldn't have been written by us

*as if when we opened our toolboxes we discovered,
that maybe we were given a different set that we don't know how to use*

see i'm starting to think that maybe they desegregate the schools to get the black students away
from the black teachers

like maybe someone decided that we needed a an "equal" play in His game when what was need
is a fair chance at survival.

haven't you seen the bodies piling up on these street corners?

hear the sirens
of babies and mothers

i think these headlines are starting to look

a lot like crosses
burning on my screens

we've been acting like we don't know how to read these headlines

as if these words are brand new

we've been acting like these words are brand new

as if nobody in 1955 saw letters to shape

"NEGRO BOY WAS KILLED FOR 'WOLF WHISTLE'"

we've been acting like we believe in this equal opportunity

as if we weren't handed a loaded deck to begin with

we've been acting like we can't tell that they've been feeding us bullshit in these lunch lines

as if our tongues haven't been working for the past thirteen years

we've been acting like our tongues haven't been working for the past thirteen years

as if it was a requirement to chop them off before kindergarten

we've been acting like these books were bound to save us

we've been acting like these books hold the only stories worth hearing

we've been acting like we don't have stories of our own to tell
we've been acting like our fingers are broke
we've been acting like we've run out of ink

(i heard a rumour that they promised us shoes for the war)
(i heard another rumor that we're supposed to be pulling ourselves up by our bootstraps)

*-the ones that came
with the shoes
we were promised-*

we never received any shoes

(we've been acting like these books were bound to save us)

so i guess that means

we gotta make our own bootstraps

strip these books of their spines

use this leather to construct

(shoes for each other)