I don’t write about race
for Daphne
after El Pearson

I don’t write about race.
I don’t talk about race.
My white friends are very supportive.
My white friends perform allyship on Facebook.
My white friends apologize, but neither as often nor as profusely as they should.

I hide my legs from the sun and in the shower, they blend into the off-white mildew off the walls.

I hide my legs from the sun and in the shower I try to tell myself: I’m not one of them.

The day after I graduated college, I took my white father and my brown mother to the World War II Museum and we sat in silence as we read that the Japanese killed 20 million Chinese people during World War II.

(How many times have I been asked if I was Japanese?)
My brown mother and
I already knew this. I wonder
what my father knows.

I don’t write about race,
I write about erasure.

I go to a bar with my white
sister and my brown brother. Someone
tells us that we all look
the same, and I wonder
what that means
for me, a white-brown
girl with an uncut
dick. But then I
remember
that I’ve heard this before, that
we all look the same.

I don’t write about race,
I write about gender,
I once killed a cis white man,
and his first name
was me.

In Washington D.C., while walking
through the National Mall, I hear a white
teenager joyfully screaming with her
white friends.

In Washington D.C. I am terrified
to speak, I am terrified to
whisper. I write
poems on my phone instead.

I don’t write about race,
I write about silence.
My white friends talk about race. They say all the right words. I say nothing.

I read poems about white people to rooms full of white people and they laugh like they’re in on the joke, they laugh like they didn’t make me need to write these poems.

In a poem I ask white people everywhere to please go home. My white audience laughs and I wonder how much of me is laughing with them. I wonder if my father is laughing too.

I don’t write about race, I write about erasure. I write only, and always about myself.
for my mother

I love fireworks, 
i’d love to see
jesus in
the street
turning
cop cars
into
anything.

faith
can be
such
a disappointment, someday
my mom
will hold
a book

with my name on the cover,
though not the one she chose.
Dog person

For my dog

I tell my dog “sit” and he sits.
I tell my dog “stay” and he stays.
I tell my dog “dismantle” and he just looks at me.

We have both been trained
to do so many of the
wrong things.

I tell my dog to “stay” I tell
my dog “stay” to my dog i
tell to “stay” dog I tell, “stay”
tell “dog” my to to stay oh dog
tell me to stay good girl oh
dog please
stay.
etc.

a man looks at me

etc.
Shoot for the moon
after El Pearson

If you miss,
try and hit a cop.
everyone at the coffeeshop is more beautiful than I am.

everyone at the coffeeshop is more beautiful than I am.

I think about lily and I think about el.

I try to think about killing anything other than myself.

tomorrow is the fourth of july.

so many
of the wrong things
are going to burn.

they always do.
someone somewhere
had their first kiss today, probably
many people did, probably
some of them were gay.

fuck it I guess I won’t kill myself.