Holy Week, 1625

By Javier Perez

Each year, we celebrate *semana santa* through reenactments of a crucified white body and its subsequent rerising. As I would gaze I felt a friction chafe my pupils raw until the hues of the soil distorted into unsacred the skin beneath my nails colored blasphemy.

But if the seas can harmonize the azures of the heavens and indigo of our hells, I, too, can paint a sensible landscape out of the gamut of my blood, its acrimonious polyphony and warring cacophony.

To better understand the pulsating rebellions that fuel my *picaro* ways, I mined my veins for auriferous Saints decorated in rust. History is my ormolu, El Salvador my kiln, and I am molded from hypotheticals and tumultuous tribes of rimes revolting within my Spanish:

> ¡cacaotero’, monos vola’os del campesina’o, que estamos’ demasia’o encachima’os! ¡siempre seremos cimarrones, mis Salvatruchos!

When I stumbled across missing pages of history torn from my skin, I uncrumbled my thighs and pinwheeled myself across velvet storms until I was suspended in dance frozen in the dissonant movements between scarlet ankles and makeshift names christened onto us like splintering placards;
as the winds wailed with incantations
summoning my underskins to infiltrate the gospels,
I quieted my ghosts
– as I was taught to do –
so that this brown skin felt less entombing
& more resurrection reenacted.
The sun thrice tugged on my neck
& I denied its fire before I heard
a police siren crow like a rooster.

“la raza”
is an obsolete prayer.
It has yet to intimately nail my naked feet with
the machetes of slaves in San Salvador
who too reenacted a (up)rising during semana santa 1625;
a revolt that reminds us, 400 years later,
Jesus was also killed a Black rebel.
This is a wound Salvadoreños have hidden beyond the ether
beyond prayer’s reach,
for fear of not being resurrected
after bearing the cross for so long.