

You asked me if I knew how I got here,
More specifically, how I ended up on the right side of Slauson
and not the part

where freeways fight for cars to slam into their edges.

You asked me if my grandpa also stole my grandma away
From La Misteriosa, Campeche,
— or another land with no water —
On his horse before she promised herself to God.

You asked me if I knew words like
Popocatépetl, estrenar, aturdir—
words that should resaturate the blood
of my mother,
like tears against
dried watercolors.

You asked me if I thought your mother's sister would ever return,
or would be returned.

The last you saw was her hair tucked under a veil,
a bride to a Man who has not yet failed to sit and watch
the rest of us
attempt to make it out with a new tongue.

--Marilyn Ramirez