and “and” it begins with “and.” Before so much preceded the little leaf felt feet disturb concrete suffocate set fire to grey burnt old earth wake. The leaf heeded the wind, flittered, bent, fell, orange, browned, it would fall, be plucked, my elder.

The houses pass slowly by Stucco, tin, madera, Tones and skin shift, blend Sienna shadows of children Bounce behind short, squeaking Gates (green or pink or brown) And myself and a hen, Some iguana skin sliding (Like it is still alive, Leaps off the sidewalk Atop a light current).

Shades of algodón and denim We shared the same sauntering dust, Rested in our crevices. Folding the days work up Peering at me Peering at them We know each other Through sewing circle stories

One girl, never been in love, Smells the curious sent My oil passing She hisses And it is compliment. Bent over to protect her Is brother, indiscriminate Memorizes me

Conscious, I pain road Snap feet up with Every touch of heat. My breath mangles the air Where the sidewalk pauses For a moment, as if to peak Over bent shoulder Then toe around the bend again. The shore slowly approaches

And I am skin and shadow Burn and sputter. Passing heat. A weighty veil, the tongue precedes Stripping me, as others strip them. The guts roam elsewhere

Brother, tense muscle, Until the shadow leaves. No trace left makes us safe Alleviates identities Until something is shared, At least

The hide of my story will not be my invention

No matter how many Long-winded kisses I leave behind Or apologetic cushions I throw ahead The weight of my steps Cracks black walkway. The fractures reach the deep potholes Deep enough to suck in bodies lost in flood

A pair of boat sails catch Wind of my approach The pebbles crunching underfoot Listen to jettisoned air I return to the passing breeze; But ropes pull the curtains down

To put the boat to sleep. They have come too late. Tonight I leave by bus Spit out a few hours later