Drapetomanic American Dream

The body was designed to remember
It releases adrenaline to flesh,
redirects neurological pathways
Born again, and again
Kin into kin

It is a vessel of time
adapting in agile directions towards liberation
as if abolition were a distant sun, instead of a birthright

The body remembers
decades and centuries and even seconds
without ownership
of itself, of land, or law

Ordered to lay in beds it did not make
traverse roads it did not willingly take
After all, consent is new to a nation built on clout and
dogwhistles to fake

News will tell the body it is ungrateful
then host a parade flaunting gas to light,
confetti of busted caps,
and go home to sleep tight
All while the body waits on justice

A gentle reminder to:
Take your own genocide "like a man"

Somewhere between fact and myth
the calves become sore,
performing a perfectly rehearsed, dichotomous ballet of

American horror and funny valentine

The body, too divine, almost believes it can play along,
but undoubtedly remembers

It was not born with thicker skin
It was not born with more suitable lung capacity
for work in fields
It was not born to be sterilized for convenience, nor sport
It was not born to be made small or strong about its pain
It was not born a cadaver, for use in some eugenics game

Strapped to a table of pseudoscience
fearing the repercussions for its defiance
this body corrected their fistulas
this body cured their syphilis
this body died of AIDS related symptoms
they failed to care about

this body endured persecutions and endless
prescriptions of “whip the devil out of them”

Dr. Samuel Cartwright, 1851
a psychologist who diagnosed this body with drapetomania
a mental illness better known as “runaway slave syndrome”

Centuries later
I’ll be that drapomaniac, not the American pie of your eye,
especially if it means grasping for my body’s basic function
to breathe air
to breathe air

This body is still running, and undoubtedly clear
this body was never theirs

I was not born to fill up their prison pockets
I was not born guilty to their gods or courts
I was not born to obey their self serving systems
I was not born to be beaten into submission by a state
I was not born to be erased and bend to their
snake like tongues
I was not born to teach my teachers
after crossing an ocean for this “better” life
I was not born to uphold their dominance of me

The body remembers the acts made upon its
flesh and bones
knows when to mutate and strategically comb
through our intertwined rotting roots
the body knows how to roam, while standing still,
after all this too is its home

In this home we’ve gotten good at adapting
towards that distant sun
closer and closer to that birthright
Abolition will come, Abolition will come

And until then
the body remembers, even if the mind tries to forget