

Magnolia

Alice white knuckles our way over the slumbering
Pontchartrain tells me about her days selling *gui*-tars
in a past that resists resurrection every mile marker

another confession old ribbons of cattails and lightning

sift through the indigo like acts of God through our
kitchen window six states ago as spirits crouch in the soul

tree just past their best windswept whites catching
bits of sky and insects as we wait for violence to rewrite

the landscape I enter the live oaks glassy-eyed drunk
on country homeward to a truth I know will not free me

what violence we commit by leaving by loving a town

only in elegy rich is the singing of frogs and crickets
brass buskers inventing new ways to grieve we were music
box women from the very beginning struck by the

brutality of the myths transposed onto our bodies

epochs of song wrested from our hands and replaced
with the gospel we most feared after another man

decries the sins of my soft lips slipping slick into hers

across the bar I pay the saxophone man to carry
enough sound to cover the crime of us burying
our childhood bones to assimilate the churchgoers'

ocean what emerges from the months we bedded
terror stored our instruments on the second floor 'cuz

we adored a city prone to flooding where the men
wept before the storming oaks at the racket of

our blues the harsh spectacle of our desire