**Parable of the Ducks**

One stands at the edge if the canal, just where the water and grass meet, shakes her brown feathers from her neck to the tip of her tail as she waits.

Standing at the top of the slope (just before the ground heads down angled toward the water) is a green duck, a beautiful deep green. He twists his neck backwards and dives his beak into a nibbling focused on an itch that doesn’t subside for two minutes.

She can’t see him, but she knows he is up there; she won’t go into the water without him. He knows she is waiting, and although his itch has been relieved he discovers bread crumbs in the grass. He pecks at the leftovers with a casual nonchalance, unhurried and indifferent.

Other ducks are swimming already; brown ducks white ducks green ducks black ducks gray ducks, headed in rows of clumps organized by color—She still doesn’t go in, and I want to shout at her, tell her not to wait for him…but she wouldn’t listen if I did. Even though he’s a no good duck and she knows it too; even though she wants to swim with all the ducks—she complacently sits and waits as he fills his belly on crumbs he doesn’t really want and doesn’t want to share and she still waits.

-Melanie Carter

**Selma, Alabama**

They picked him up and quietly spread him out over the city in red white blue poor Jimmy Lee Jackson with your brains blown out you will be remembered by this hole in my stomach I’m digesting this ageless hate And fighting the ghosts who hang the confederate flag over those southerner’s eyes. Even the black folks.

-All else failing

I think That at least My poems could always fly In paper airplanes. The precise creases forming a body Around the poem, Serving as the vehicle Which will carry my poems to the world. Could be worse for a young poet, At least.

-Nicholas Reading

-Brea Thomas