Red Stick Noonshine
By Michael Thompson

I've never stompdanced in Oklahoma, but full centuries of old Creek newsreels have motion-stopped in me, twirling cycloned fenders into loosened braids to the pitch-black refrains of settler philosophers at 3 am, twisting counterclockwise each rusted bolt about your body next to me.
Oakbarks growl excavations from centuries of blood-mound memory, catfish snapping Aztec blues through screen doors drenched in cornfield sweat as green as Chuska cedar. Thighbone shells tied rawhide tight to strands of hair, the hands of your air morning fog across my back. My ribbon shirt sears like moss, and river mud stabs through missing history as rotted as a slough-side lynching. Moonlight chokes in gashed ravines of liquid crow where Fowltown elites once grappled stickball fields weeping wild onion dreams. Broken arrowheads hide themselves. I have resemblanced tattoos echoing cheek to chin, mirrors of denial and acceptance—a dead quail posed solemnly sharing starry quilts with a rabbling rabbit. Earth as dark and moist as sin releases my uncovering, my un-mounding, my kidnapped wife, my arrowed erroring. *Futurity*. Whiteshell moons escape your teeth in coondog winterness, emergence story of barbed winter ice, splayed blackjacks cloaking footprints. Limbs shout blood hymns to a slow spring glistening of chaingangs; sandstone shadows climb scuppernong dawns. Exhausted, preachers flee.
The skull of Cowe Harjo cradles my gaunt irises. Eyelids rise on Crazy Snake. Like a drowsing drum, Okmulgee loam prays dreams beneath my feet. *A map of sorts*. That's what she said. Like a deer's heart gushing red, Mvskoke songs drench my hands. **You and I are tangled now. *Fvtcv*.**
(Mvskoke *fvtcv*: truth)

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