

Rodney Gomez

Drag Racer

Every Mexican boy wants a drag racer. A warhead to mount, tear ribbons from downtown's irregular heart. I made my boy a pair of wings in the shape of my hands, knotted and black. The first thing he did was fan himself on a hammock in the backyard. He slept for days in a whirring cocoon, racing in his head. He flew water out to the men building roads and the women pulling weeds in the prison yard. He was drawn to future deserts. Finally he flew as I wanted him to, out of bomb-shelled buildings. It was beautiful, the way his little arms scattered sunlight over pockmarked asphalt. Erasing the blight, imploding like a brown dwarf. One day I caught him at the tenement rooftop in pumps and green mascara, the wings penciled into a prom dress. So that was the white he wanted to wear, a mouth open with light. Why I had always trusted the sky. What every boy needs to become a man is night. Or so I thought, taking the black scroll from my mouth. Watching him weave it into a corsage.