

Kevin Simmonds

Frequency No. 41

Inside the dark estrangement
sheltering me from people not

unlike me
I can only hope I do what matters

make my mother proud
seize every opportunity to greet my neighbors

make them comfortable with my education
& love for dick

My Wifi can take me out of here
anytime so can my credit score

The sandaled Muslim chants inside the C
holding his prayer book & gripping the bar

the black girl keeps him in her sight
pays attention to his obsolescence

never once looks at anyone
to corroborate this witness

She's blessed with willingness
It's raining while I type this

Not in San Francisco
where the streets strain under the weight

of tech buses & the smeared shit of capital
Money keeps the aim true is right



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My Bed Stuy block all ash
everyone with black lung

I fume

Pick up your dog's shit
Why everybody gotta have a pit bull

My faggot smile threatens
You savage heartbroken black man

I'm sure you've also mistaken it
for music

Oh no she didn't
Ratchet hoe

Everything you touch is a drum is right
No matter where you are

This is African & American
diasporic

certain/wherever

we've been chain linked fenced
corner stored

high rise subsidized
by Them

As the A train goes
darker & darker

hardening
into clenched jaws

a man with the horizon inked
across his right tricep ripe & molasses



my sutures loosen
I blink back tears & swallow

It's too late now

I'll never know anything beyond
what a black man looks like

I'll never know how he'd lay
my body down & untie me

because I'm bound so tight
I might as well say yes to any man

that looks at me for longer
than it takes to know his breathing

has slowed & he sees me
promising ripe

dreading
his disapproval

A young brother walks by
Forbes rolled in his right hand

a sister with a viola on her back
shifts weight in her espadrilles

I'm running late & count fifteen bangles
on the West Indian woman's left arm

