

## Hetty's Tale

*An enslaved woman in British Jamaica went into premature labor after being stripped naked, tied to a tree, and flogged incessantly by her master with both whip and cow skin. She died a few days later.*

To own it—  
    the cattle prod  
    the cow skin  
        her back, neck, calves  
        the child in her belly

To own it—  
    the fatigue  
    of the beating  
        she kept on  
        taking taking taking

To own it—  
    the rage  
    the loss  
        of the cow the loss  
        of the stillborn child

To own it—  
    the fear  
    of the loss  
        of the cow  
        of the woman who latched it

so loosely  
    it took flight.