

## Karisma Price

### My Phone Autocorrects “Nigga” to “Night”

My nights  
play cousin to  
their mothers' favorite  
kettles. My nights won't consume  
their reflections so they pour milk  
in their coffee. My nights never rest  
so they sing their shadows to sleep. Sometimes  
they don't remember any words. My nights have frogs  
stuck in their throats, no light soul, every bit of pain, my nights  
all Louis Armstrong minus a trumpet, and my nights play chicken  
with the train. My nights both shoe and polish. Both Sambo and Bruce  
Leroy. We all little pretty medallions on our grandmothers' nightstands. My nights  
are mistaken for other nights that bear no resemblance. I saw the sinew of the oldest night  
in the neighborhood on the floor, his saint pendant missing. All the small, down-feathered nights  
scatter from the groan of pig sirens. My nights don't know their history. My nights are pecans without  
the trees that grow them. My nights instruct all the people in their head to weep. My nights hate the firefly  
cutting their darkness. *My night, did you see them? They just walked right past us and didn't even speak.* My nights are ordinary,  
wear ruffled socks, have the best belts. My nights don't always go to church but my nights are lambs worthy  
of the morning. My nights are revised constitutions, crypt keepers, my nights are a congregation  
of alligators on a rumpus bayou. My nights hiss into themselves. No one hears. Their blood  
rolls its eyes. My nights chew gum and sunflower seeds. My nights eat pork. My nights  
get the itis and slur their speech. My nights protest protests. The government  
watches. My nights live in Brazil Botswana the Congo Cuba the D.R. France  
Grenada Greece Honduras Ireland Liberia Lithuania Nigeria Venezuela  
Zimbabwe. My nights live in America to remind you of me. Some  
people think my nights are better with their eyes closed but  
my nights have beautiful corneas. My nights wash clothes  
that don't belong to them and won't look their bosses  
in the eye. My nights know necessity. My nights  
oblige. When my nights die, I wash them on  
my kitchen table. After my nights are  
washed, I throw away the table.  
My nights have names. My  
nights smell of sage.  
My nights smell  
of the muddy  
rivers they  
will never  
swim in  
again.