

## MONTEREY STREET

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### First listen,

eyes close  
nostrils flare  
cool enhancive breath  
fantastical bird chirping  
top of slight hill  
an echo before the slope.

The soft hiss  
of trees  
distract from muffled bass  
below my bed.  
The neighbors are oblivious  
to my attempted slumber.

A sudden interruption  
to the barrio,  
a yellow burst of  
SUV against compact car.

Instantly alert  
I go searching,  
distressed  
hardwood flooring cold  
at my feet.

Icy fingers push back  
a blistering outcry,  
“Oh my...  
God?”  
Can't see the accident.  
*Where are my children?*  
Can't look down the block.

A young Chicana mother,  
on her cellular,  
followed by *bebida*,  
look towards the crash site.  
She's down in it.  
“...did you hear that?”  
“Yeah,” she hardly glances.  
“...two cars?”  
“uh-huh,” she keeps talking to the man on her cell  
walking through our yard,  
the black wrought iron gate,  
nothing phases her.  
With the shine above and below  
*bebida's* nose keeps the pace  
of Momma's meandering.  
One hand holding  
the other hand hopeful,  
beating heart  
catches my throat.

*My children...*

Remember  
they too  
are holding hopeful hands  
    in the air  
at school  
signing a beautiful language  
a discourse  
that hangs in the air  
reverberation of many bird calls,  
bumps of muffled stereos,  
cellphone conversations,  
hush of barrio whispers,  
around the small crash on Monterey Street.  
Standing still together means  
    we realize  
No one is damaged.