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L'Artiste

Elias Van Son
St. John Fisher College

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L'Artiste

Cover Page Footnote

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Italian leather--

Van Son: L'Artiste

those cinnamon-skinned mothers
who work in all those little stores
because they refuse to go on welfare
and their cabecita rizada daughters
who wonder how I got such soft, straight hair—
gather round as reggaeton blares
from my little silver Nissan
your poisoned gift.

Any day I expect you to flag us down
get him the hell out of the passenger seat
he's black!
but then again
what in God's name would you,
in your Christian Dior suits
I never bothered to learn to press,
be doing on the wrong end
of Goodman Street?

¹ During the Gulf War of 1991, Dr. Emil Homerin of the University of Rochester stated that Arabs and Muslims “dwell in the slums of our mind.”

ELIAS VAN SON

L'ARTISTE

while i may spread my arms and smile,
i wish and wait for more brilliant wings.
and l'Artiste pulled the sun from the morning sea,
but i slept while this was happening.
the sparrow's songs still birth inside my mouth,
yet they find no voice with which to sing.
and i might share my mother's eyes,
but she sees jesus christ in everything.