What I Want

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What I Want
By Megan Van Horn

I want to go back to my grandmother’s apartment stacked and sandwiched between Cape Verdeans and Nigerians and I want to sit at the folding table and press my palms against the sticky crackle of a red vinyl table cloth.

I want to make myself a space between jumbo pill boxes and red envelopes and cross my legs on a stool in between bird cages and orange trees.

I want to walk across tiled floors in slippers three times too small for my feet but that still protect my soles from the cast-off grease from thousands of operatic feats with a wok and two arthritic hands.

I want to settle down my bowl of rice at that
sticky crackle
of a red vinyl
tablecloth
and I want to sit
across from a legacy
stacked on a defunct fireplace,
photographs of a
family lineage branching
out from her children
into theirs.

I want to pull
out boxes from
her closet and
ask her,
when the night has
settled in around us,
why she has torn out
all the faces of her
husband in the albums
while she still
visits his
grave.