

BLUE CODE OF SILENCE VS. BLACK & BROWN BODIES

by Andrea Blancas Beltran

Dead grasshopper & an assembly

of ants. Death as feast, death
as elevation of another species. What

of the ants? This frenzy of legs & claws,
their impenetrable exoskeletons. The swarm

to disassemble what's left of the grasshopper
from antennae to tibia to wing. The slower

ants scavenge the remains. None
give any thought to rights of burial. They feed

& feast then flee back home to their mama.

BIG SHOT

by Andrea Blancas Beltran

In Syria young girls mistake / cameras for guns. Adi Hudea's raised fists now two / small stones, & the two smaller black ones / her eyes as she surrenders her fear / to a stranger & his lens. / Someone might call it / a small offering. On a good day / she might use her hands / to clutch a makeshift swing, her mouth the shape / of the noria she longs to see / back home. In America / young girls are captured by / their handheld camera phones, always before / the lens. My sister sends me / videos of over-rehearsed sad faces / when she's having a bad day—another B /in biology—black eyeliner thick / as the day's depression. On a good day / she circulates a photo of the new designer / purse every other girl at school clutches too / & her mouth's one / carefully rehearsed O, a black jewel / of abyss at its center

GRANDMA ON FAITH AS FIELD WORK

by Andrea Blancas Beltran

Driving through Socorro, cotton bolls glowed in the light of the moon. These are what I wished upon. My daddy told me, Stars are an illusion, mija. Just keep your eyes on what's ahead, not above. Daddy told me, Be happy your hands are small. We can make more money. Daddy told me, Be happy your skin is white, white as cotton when it's clean.

Andrea Blancas Beltran is from El Paso, Texas. Her work has recently been selected for publication in *Gramma*, *H_NGM_N*, *Entropy*, *RHINO Poetry*, *Radar*, & *Pilgrimage*. You can find her @drebelle.