**How Dare You, Joy Harjo**

Gavin Van Horn

Slash the blue horizon

 with crimson mesas

yellow my hands with mesquite poems

stoke my dreams for what lies beyond this shot glass and miles of road

The grass has been questioning me, see

 always questioning: Is this home?

insisting: Where are your feet, boy?

For so long, I’ve strung beads of a life on fishing twine

 walked by cover of night

 under a clouded moon

Played it smart as I could

 mostly colored inside the lines

hedged my bets with paperwork

The grass whispers

 sometimes I hear it

like tittering children down the hall, I am afraid

I have not known how to properly answer

 overthought blueprints, manipulated vision boards

 filled journals as though they were ledgers, grimoires, recipe books

The grass whispers

Where do you rest your head on stolen land?

Where do you begin to heal your colonized mind?

The grass breathes, sighs really,

I think it asks too much, it only wants my faith

not much at all, just what is worth a damn

The crow and the sandhill

 chuparosa and saltamontes

 the fence lizard pumping his head up and down—

they are all conspiring, calling me to ceremony in a frayed world

The grass whispers

there is weaving to be done,

there is weaving to be done

In brutal winters

when they are most needed,

good stories grow like question marks

lilting bean stems in cups

They rise, shaping themselves into a wordless: What if?

What if you and I listened to clouds and crows and mesas,

to stories wending their way through veins of earth,

 never ending with a period, always flowing: What if?

The grass nods along:

 go on then, before you lose your nerve

 the horizon bends toward the mesa

there is weaving to be done