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## Birmingham Fire and Rescue Haiku, 1963

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*Ashley Jones*

BIRMINGHAM FIRE AND RESCUE HAIKU, 1963

What about us said  
we were on fire? What said  
extinguish quickly,

fill up the hose and  
set the dogs loose? Could they smell  
our confusion? Or

was it our singing?  
Were our voices like sirens,  
a chorus of blood?

We were wet black seeds  
in that raw Birmingham flesh—  
we germinated.

Did the photos show  
our fingers stretching like roots?  
Did they show our eyes,

how they reached sunward,  
to the hot, bright, silent star  
that could turn water

to steam, seeds to fruit?  
Did they see themselves become  
our fertilizer?