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DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

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When in the Course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

*We hold these truths to be self-evident,
Next month's rent
is coming up, my mom
pawns her rusting jewelry.*

\$975 a month
and the landlord doesn't care for pocket change minimum wage.

I hear people say you can't put a price on happiness
my landlord smiles, says, "watch me."

So, my mom comes home from Dearden's, her hands and feet
and heel blackened with a \$3 Crossword
Lottery Ticket and sometimes a \$2.50 Miller High Life.
It gives some hope. She wins, sometimes.

My brother escapes for a bit
gets high
but eventually
the cops catch him.
For his own safety, they transport him to the grim new police station
and charge a \$500 ticket plus
\$250 for ditching

next month's rent,
is coming up, my mom
pleads my aunt to please let us borrow money again.

We couldn't afford to have the repo man here.
We can't afford a home.
We can't afford to pay the landlord

The police catch me for curfew
aprox. 11:40 p.m.,
for my safety, transport me to the grim new police station
and charge a \$333 ticket
compensation for the crime committed

the kids protest and rile up
but within city regulations.
permit within certain time frames proper sound decibels (no music,
that's loud and disruptive)
didn't get in traffic's way
no littering
loitering
school flaking rent paying bomb flailing oppressing destroying
desecrating the monetary system not us being jail breaking, amazing
government constipating revolution while we're smoldering the land-
lord's mailbox with a charring list of demands in our hands
allowed within city regulations.

and it was not so, for
the cops will catch you.
You can't afford another ticket anyway,
next month's rent is coming up.
next month's rent is coming up.
next month's rent is coming up.
I said next month's rent is coming up.

and so the police attend,
just in case it does get out of hand.

flames with spiteful red melancholy, maybe stencil our skies orange and
black and attack and twist 'em 'til
west becomes north and
east becomes south.

Til' the day they realize babies need food inside their mouths
and my mom isn't losing her teeth over the rent
and the police ain't pushing teeth into cement
and the heart isn't suppressing the wild anxious fire
onto the grim streets of Los Angeles anymore.