

NORTH CAROLINA

heat stretches out for miles
fields, brown and crackling
I can feel the vibration of mosquitos in my veins

it's my first time in the South
they laughed when I asked, "what the heck is grits?"

my body gravitates towards the magnolia tree
it has always been my favourite
pale yellow flowers reach upwards, undoing gravity
I am in the shade of the tree before I see it

the whipping post

stands short and unassuming
I am almost disappointed by how dull it is
a piece of wood, struck jarringly into the earth
a slight eastward disposition

I expected inflictions of time
deep wounds of history
blood of my ancestors
a haunting chill

pain in my own fragmented heart
the smell of burning sugar

instead it stands there
in all its regularity and reticence
with no stories to share

as if all the violence of white supremacy
would simply fade with time