

My grandmother gave light to the
world seven times on this island

she's cracked her hands open more times than that

split her palms every Saturday
making linens white

mended them by the crackling fire
each blue-black night

a life of making children full,
yuca fresca in every one of their mouths

a life of roasted coffee beans
in iron tins
all bathed in gold

on a distant,
crushing peninsula
fingers cracked from the
ice-blue wind
I think of sugar cane
stripped bare
by my grandfather's dull machete
the green husks at our
feet

and my grandmother behind him
one hand on his shoulder
the other outstretched towards me
a soft dew
on every one of her fingers