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A Postcard for the Lynched

Deborah Elizabeth Whaley

They lynch with tongue and eyes,
hiding from their guilt inside
crafting brilliant,
phantasmagoric lies.

The rope swings free,
round hole, slip knot
head through
tightening and twisting
hang her tight and linger

Cast and oft shame,
manufacture guilt, displace,
then frame
now the Other(ed) body is to blame.

The rope swings free,
round hole, slip knot
head through
tightening and twisting
hang him tight and linger.

They carve words carefully,
paraphrase, postulate,
document dutifully
bleeding ink spreads hatefully.

The rope swings free,
round hole, slip knot
head through
tightening and twisting
hang her tight and linger.

Torture is back
sour not sweet
hands reach out,
neck limps downward weak

a wasted breath of trust
the body falls deep.

The rope swings free,
round hole, slip knot
head through
tightening and twisting
hang him tight and linger

Spirit murder of a people
capital punishment that lasts
a torn psyche
cannot run from its past
and the lyncher's wounded soul
will fissure fast.

The rope swings free,
round hole, slip knot
head through
tightening and twisting
hang her tight and linger

Kill with stereotypes,
sharp rope knives
no matter their wickedness,
a Phoenix will rise
again, and again,
and again,
for the people.