

Youth

EL J REYES, JOHNSON AND WALES UNIVERSITY

A miracle crosses paths
with me, and I find myself
staring right at my youth.

She is young, as youth is; she
differs from how I've
imagined her. Her face is
stern, as if to frighten me. I
narrow my eyes back at her.

She is more beautiful than I
thought. The imperfections
mean nothing to me as it
previously did. Her eyes are
sad, not like mine. What
must the world be for a
youth like her?

She only asks one question,
loaded and inconsiderate—
“What has become of you?”

My eyes are not like hers. It
surprises her, when they
brighten, when I tell her— “I’ve
found some peace of mind.”
She does not believe me,
cautious and unsure, but
honesty was always our
weakness.

She stares right back,
searching. The next
time I blink, she is
gone.