

“Why Whales Are Back in New York City” by Rajiv Mohabir

After a century, humpbacks migrate
again to Queens. They left
due to sewage and white froth

banking the shores from polychlorinated-
biphenyl-dumping into the Hudson
and winnowing menhaden schools.

But now grace, dark bodies of song
return. Go to the seaside—

Hold your breath. Submerge.
A black fluke silhouetted
against the Manhattan skyline.

Now ICE beats doors
down on Liberty Avenue
to deport. I sit alone on orange

A train seats, mouth sparkling
from Singh's, no matter how
white supremacy gathers

at the sidewalks, flows down
the streets, we still beat our drums
wild. Watch their false-god statues

prostrate to black and brown hands.
They won't keep us out
though they send us back.

Our songs will pierce the dark
fathoms. Behold the miracle:

what was once lost
now leaps before you.