Negative

By Kevin Young

Wake to find everything black
  what was white, all the vice
  versa—white maids on TV, black

sitcoms that star white dwarfs
  cute as pearl buttons. Black Presidents,
  Black Houses. White horse

candidates. All bleach burns
  clothes black. Drive roads
  white as you are, white songs

on the radio stolen by black bands
  like secret pancake recipes, white back-up
  singers, ball-players & boxers all

white as tar. Feathers on chickens
  dark as everything, boiling in the pot
  that called the kettle honky. Even

whites of the eye turn dark, pupils
  clear & changing as a cat’s.
  Is this what we’ve wanted

& waited for? to see snow
  covering everything black
  as Christmas, dark pages written

white upon? All our eclipses bright,
  dark stars shooting across pale
  sky, glowing like ash in fire, shower

every skin. Only money keeps
  green, still grows & burns like grass
  under dark daylight.


Source: To Repel Ghosts: The Remix (Alfred A. Knopf, 2005)