to the notebook kid

By Eve L. Ewing

yo chocolate milk for breakfast kid.
one leg of your sweatpants rolled up
scrounging at the bottom of your mama’s purse
for bus fare and gum
pen broke and you got ink on your thumb kid

what’s good, hot on the cement kid
White Castle kid
tongue stained purple
cussin on the court
till your little brother shows up
with half a candy bar kid

got that good B in science kid
you earned it kid
etch your name in a tree
hug your granny on her birthday
think of Alaska when they shootin
curled-up dreams of salmon
safety
tundra
the farthest away place you ever saw in a book
polar bears your new chess partners
pickax in the ice
Northern Lights kid

keep your notebook where your cousins won’t find it.
leave it on my desk if you want
shuffle under carbon paper
and a stamp that screams late
yellow and red to draw the eye from the ocean
you keep hidden in a jacked-up five star.
your mama thought there was a secret in there
thought they would laugh
but that ain’t it.

it’s that flows and flows and flows
and lines like those rip-roaring
bits you got
bars till the end of time
you could rap like
helium bout to spring
all of it
down to you
none left in the sun — fuelless
while the last light pushes from your belly

climbing your ribs

and you laugh into the microphone
and who is ready for that?