

### 3 INCHES OF GLASS

will see me 8 times as much as my mama,  
warps the light around it sick  
the way they say my daddy's smile  
used to,  
gotta mouth where it eat the hard-earned  
of everybody I know 'til it shit  
more beer,  
more diabetic,  
more cameras,  
keeps two worlds staying two  
like law, like accents thick  
as okra,  
be bulletproof & arrogant,  
think we all news-at-eleven,  
always two seconds from laying  
another man's bones domino  
against the block,  
tryna to speak my slang,  
act like it know me, like  
we boys or somethin',  
gotta sweet tooth for chocolate-  
'hood-thick & homespun hips

that backtalk when they switch,  
that's why it be tryna game my mama up  
everytime she go up there  
and get a pack of squares without me,  
thinks its slick talking that quicksand  
but I know it called either her or me  
out our name last time she pressed  
her middle finger right by its lip  
like the barrel of a nine,  
got one more time,  
got one more 'gin before my hands  
spiderweb-crack the uppity from  
up out its shatter-proof,  
only 3 got'damn inches, but I swear  
it be slick as it be genius,  
be slick as it be everywhere I look now,  
from bank deposits  
to visiting cousin Jay  
doing a dime upstate,  
each with its own bible of *black* jokes  
stashed trigger-ready right by  
the handgun & silent alarm,  
each staring at me like I'm young lion

dumb, light in my eyes roaring  
the cheap paint off the walls  
like I'm still king of somethin'  
down here in the clogged heart  
of this zoo,  
is downright offended by how straight  
my spine arch back above my hindlegs,  
no animal in my strut, just proud,  
just 66 inches of *fuck you*  
stretching God-ward, dog-tired  
of breathing the air-thin line  
between *free* and *free-range*.