

i look at flights to Bangladesh / research best times to visit / before or after monsoon season / i watch YouTube videos of tigers in the Sundarban Forest / compare prices of package tours through tea plantations / Dhaka or ...? / hotels are cheap / i look at flights to Bangladesh / where my father lives / where his family lives / Khulna: where he grew up / half my genes connected to land i have yet to visit / afraid they'll call me American / for America stamped itself on my skin without consent / will their eyes peruse my sand-hued flesh? / will they wonder where i'm from? / it happens in Los Angeles / at the hair salon / señoras ask nothing / their gazes say it all / i don't want to be the center of their attention / or their exotic doll / i want to belong / i'm afraid the Bengalee blood rushing in my veins is not enough / i'll be a stranger in a land i hoped to find connection / i look at flights to Bangladesh / i budget / i take notes / how much money will i need? / my passport expires / i told myself i'd go before it did / do i need a visa? / i daydream of meeting my grandmother in a bustling city center plaza / she knows who i am / it's the eyes she says / just like your father's / she'll take me to her home / where we'll pray / she'll do my hair / present me with a sari / she won't say bastard or half-caste or half-breed / i look at flights / i look at flights to my grandmother's cinnamon-scented arms / they cost too much /