

KIRUN KAPUR

## Anthem

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Love begins in a country  
Where oranges weep sweetness  
And men piss in the street.

Your hands are forever binding  
Black strands in a plait. Your mother's  
Childhood friend has steeped

Your skin in coconut oil, tucked  
Her daughter beside you—the night  
Is a womb, live with twins.

Heat's body presses every body.  
Sharp chop of your uncle's cough  
Clocks the hours; your sister's washing,

The rush of your thoughts. Morning  
Is nine glass bangles hoisting sacks  
Of sugar from the floor. I'm not talking

About a place, but a country:  
Its laws are your mother, its walls  
Are your dreams. The flag it flies

Is your father waving.