

## Do-Over

You are long gone.

I am stranded in the third decade  
of the 21st century, post-racial by some accounts,

mortified by my fifty-year failure of interest in  
Who You Were.

When your only shining son appeared  
at your Brixton flat with a hippy white girl, American no less, you

sucked your teeth, gave me the stink eye.  
A lumbering obstacle to my seventies study abroad

Jouissance. Can we have a do-over?  
Meet at some Soho pop-up and sift through

racks looking for the perfect useless (what you call) frock.  
Or stroll into the Shoreditch Facebar redolent with

aspiration, where you could achieve the best you and  
I could achieve the best me, perceiving each other

through the grift of newness, sipping mineral water laced with ache.  
Who would serve us? Edgy artists of the articulate brow

or immigrants from yet another wave, doing mani-pedis  
clutching blurry photos of distant loved ones.

Would you be willing to  
Forgive my obtuseness? Could we untangle the scripts

we played into and played out. Is it naïve to think I could  
select a rich shade of coral lipstick to complement

your skin tone and it would mean only that.  
And you could steer me away from the black leather miniskirt

with zippers askew and it would mean only that.  
And we could embrace the striving artists and immigrants,

and our prior and present and  
made-up selves.