

## Do Over

You are long gone

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

Mortified by my fifty-year failure of interest in  
Who you were.

When long ago your only shining son showed up  
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? Talk woman to woman.  
Meet at some Soho pop-up and sift through the

Racks till we find 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 and we could still perceive each other

Through the grift of newness, sipping mineral water laced with ache.  
And who would serve us? Edgy artists of the articulate brow or

Immigrants from yet another wave, doing mani-pedis  
Clutching photos of their distant loved ones blurred but not yet lost?

Would you be willing to  
Forgive my obtuseness? And could we untangle the roles we were cast,

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

To compliment 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?