

RIO GRANDE REVIEW

Volume 30

Fall 2007

The University of Texas at El Paso

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In Silence

Melisa Cahnmann-Taylor

*"Do not the most moving moments of our lives find us without words?"
—Marcel Marceau*

A bug flew into my right cornea so the eye doctor
asked me to cover the left and read sideways prongs. I guessed
"E" but second guessed "F" or "I." With the foreign object
blurring sight I didn't know what to expect from signs

like the one between the parking lot and the college
with a balloon on top. When I saw the cluster of Black girls
sitting on the concrete steps nearby, round streetlamps of hair
lighting up young bodies, I guessed minority recruitment

until I parked and walked closer to blood drive. The drops
kept sight dim. The tallest among them might have been
comfortably sitting on nothing, like Marcel Marceau trapped
inside a cage with his own gloved hands. I left

the daylight around them, illuminating my white-faced
world. I'd like to rest on the edge of a chair,
pulling it out from under me yet sitting still, white gloves crossed
over absurdist knee, thighs burning to create my own front row.

These girls might have been waiting for class,
wanting to give. I didn't ask. The walls I made had no words.