

## **Body of an American**

Mackenzie Fowler

The only blue I know is  
for the ocean they sailed across.  
The only stripes come in the form  
of scars from countless whippings.  
Red for the blood shed  
by all minorities alike.  
And as for the white stars,  
I see them dance before me  
with brilliance  
as a result of being punched in the face  
for daring to say I have the  
body of an American  
with my pecan tan lips.

But I do have the  
body of an American.

My knuckles and wrists  
pop with pressure.  
The same amount of pressure  
used as an excuse for parents or lovers  
to justify their abuse.

My restless legs beg for movement  
as I try to sleep,  
beg me to run and run fast  
because that's what I'm  
supposed to be good at.

My knees let out bangs  
at the slightest hint of movement  
much like the cops  
to my friends and family.

My eyes, near-sighted,  
barely able to see what's in front of me.  
Yet I still try to sense what's happening  
around me  
while people with 20/20 vision  
choose to turn a blind eye.

My stomach screams at the world  
as it digests,  
letting all of creation know  
that I have indeed  
had some sort of food  
since people like to think  
I starve.

We all know  
the only thing starving  
is their incessant need  
to diagnose people with  
things they saw on Facebook,  
waving their invisible doctorates  
or PhDs  
around like the flag  
on my front porch  
we all take advantage of.