

*standing barefoot on the bible*

MANDY SHUNNARAH

I'm grounded, lamenting my lack of preteen growth spurt, gravity keeping me from the top shelf. Two phone books won't do, so I add the family Bible. A golden-edged tome with white plush cover, the kind sold door-to-door by cons in the '50s when sedo and tetá immigrated to this country. Back when Long Island was still potato farms & the right of return was in near enough memory that sedo kept his old housekey next to his worry beads. They prayed to the Christian god they could have their country back; let their grandchildren never know America, this land that teaches them to use Bibles as step ladders. As if holy books are not an attempt at ascension to the divine.

27 O lift me higher, three books of the enumerated names of ancestors and saints, thick as the wood of any cross.