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Apartheid

Don Welch

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Apartheid

The police placed white crosses
on the houses they had cleared,
the people who were cleared
received little white crosses.

*Trust us, the crosses said,
we are your friends.*
One girl, about thirteen,
wearing hers as a necklace,

looked up at her mother.
The white cross kissed her flesh
the way a maggot would,
or an obscene notion.

It held on to her life,
it rose and fell with her breath.
It had its own motion.