Winter in Waveland

by Yasmin Elaine Waring

They build them high they do in Waveland, Mississippi. The tall houses with their skinny thighs spread wide flirting with the dusky coast, like antebellum ladies petticoats lifted, stockings wetted, ankles bared, saving their hems from the unpredictable tide, tempting grey men who will bleed in black and white, swept under cages of steel crinoline, they mistake for shelter.

Their bones, roused by Katrina, have long settled now. A confederacy of Quercus Virgiana, Southern Live Oak having nursed on their marrow, circle generations of deep-fried apartheid around petrified cores. Thick veils of Spanish Moss cannot hide their shame. Jefferson Davis was not a racist. His diaries filled with cravatted penmanship, gentlemanly proof that economics have always guided ethics.

The reconstruction will be televised.

Recorded in two-minute clips that skip over the rotting fruit dangling from branches that refuse to break. The Battle Hymn is now a Syren song advertised in Garden & Gun, bargained the soul of the South they have for funky juke joints, buttermilk biscuits, big ass ceiling fans and the finest line of shotguns available for the ladies. A sonos sound system is no remedy. The skin still blisters and scabs from the chill of such luxuries.

Let the slap of northwesterly winds unmoor their four-poster reveries. I'll follow the Snowy Plover who will not be deterred from finding her place along the shifting sand.