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“Can you sing out in the pouring rain? / Can you sing out, can you sing out?”
—Fishbone, “Pouring Rain”

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While both images still wound, the photograph of Tyisha, in particular, bears symbolic resonance: here she performs as Mama Younger from *A Raisin in the Sun* alongside her classmates, who eagerly hand her “the first present in her life without it being Christmas,” as Lorraine
Christmas, 1993, Grandma Vera’s House, Riverside, California. James second from left. Photo by author.

May 1996, Rubidoux High School, Riverside, California. Tyisha at center. Photo by author.
Hansberry’s stage directions say. In the play, this moment comes as the Younger family ready themselves to leave their squalid tenement apartment to desegregate Chicago’s all-white suburbs. I regret that in that moment, I, then a twenty-one-year-old white woman with a lot to learn, focused far too much on the new possibilities for the Younger family; I did not stress enough the blood, bravery, resistance, and death that paid for such possibilities and the violence of the white perpetrators who certainly awaited the family’s moving van (as they did Hansberry’s own family’s). The joy that Tyisha radiates as she accepts the gift of a new future—shining despite murder and time and my misteachings—haunts and inspires.

I have listened to this snapshot of James and this Polaroid of Tyisha for almost twenty years now, hearing their voices and the unyielding whiteness that silenced them. I will always have a lot to learn, but, at long last, this book amplifies what I have heard these many years. May the photograph infuse the phonograph (and vice versa) with the resistant resonance of the past and the present so that we can listen out toward a future world where children of color thrive and freely share their gifts. A world, at long last, worthy of Tyisha’s smile, with streets safe for James Martinez Junior, now almost as old as his father ever would be, and his spitting image.