

2005

Black Rage VI

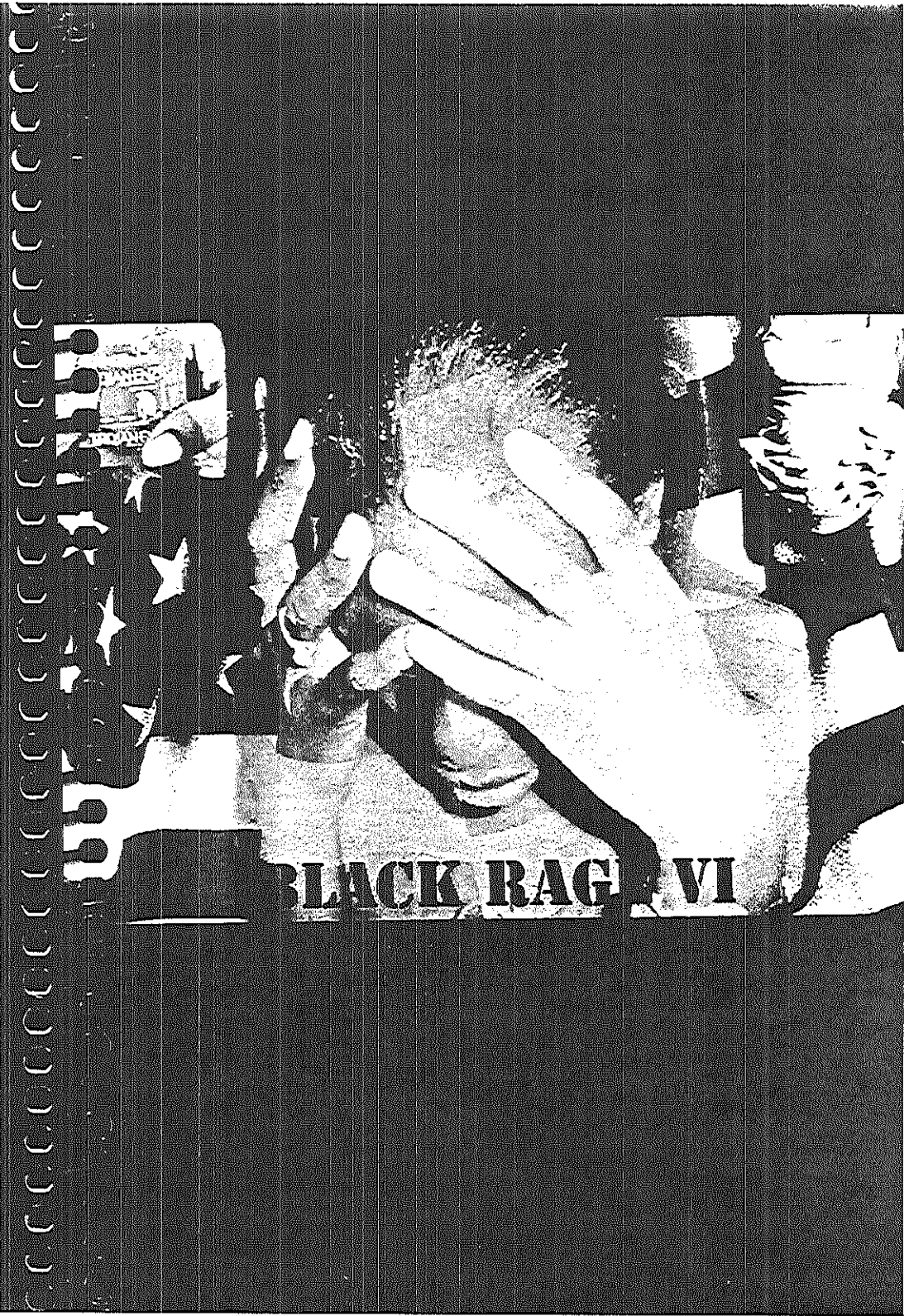
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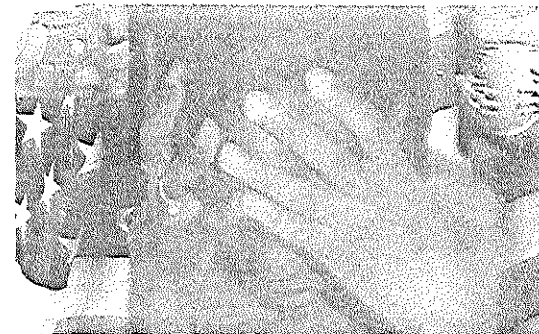
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BLACK RAG VI



BLACK RAGE VI

Dedicated to
The Black Student Union
Spring 2005

Statement of Purpose:

To allow for a creative outlet for students of the Black Student Union of Denison University.

Introduction

The need for this publication came about when the expressions of a number of Black students were denied from other campus publications without any valid justification. As history has proven, when faced with limitations, we as Black people then create a means for overcoming that limitation—a means that is significant to our own interests and beliefs. Therefore, we came together as a Black community in search of resolution, and decided on *Black Rage* as the instrument by which we would let our creative voices sing. This unprecedented publication serves as a refuge for the Black students at Denison University, by offering an avenue for our poetry, prose, short stories as well as other unique writings to be read, respected, and held in utmost regard.

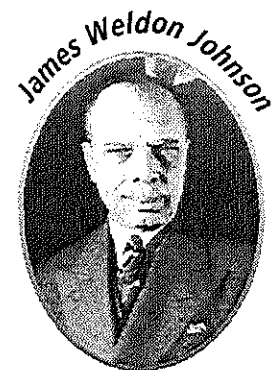
Acknowledgements

Late nights... Great talks... Constant Rage...

I would like to personally thank the wonderful ladies who helped with the compilation of poetry, prose, short stories, and art work found in **Black Rage VI**. Bayurat, La' Tonya, Tametrice, and Kerri, somehow you endured the long nights of frustration, power trips, and dismay! I thank each one of you from the bottom of my heart for your hard work and perseverance. Each of you played a significant role in the process of this magazine and deserves recognition for setting yourself apart from the herd and taking on the most difficult task of *Black Rage*, the publication. A special thanks goes out to Bayurat, La'Tonya and especially to the advisor of *Black Rage*, **Toni C. King** for your unfailing involvement.

Ashleigh Jemiah Fritz

***Silence is the greatest enemy, the time is now,
speak out and voice your demands***



Heritage Tribute: ***"Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing"*** ***James Weldon Johnson***

*Lift every voice and sing,
Till earth and Heaven ring,
Ring with the harmonies of liberty;
Let our rejoicing rise,
High as the list'ning skies,
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
Let us march on till victory is won.*

"Lift Every Voice and Sing" was composed by James Weldon Johnson in 1900. It was originally written as a poem, but was set to music by James's talented brother, John Rosamond Johnson. This dynamic duo created the National Anthem to millions of black Americans. *"Lift Every Voice and Sing"* was James' poetic tribute to the history of African struggle and perseverance in America. This hymn was written in the days of the Jim Crow South, this anthem inspired African Americans to persist in their struggle for equal rights.

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STRUGGLE

STRUGGLE

UNTITLED

The legacy has been overshadowed by war
War in the nation, war in the community
And we all wish to live out that legacy
But our leaders have been muted
Muted by a nation where all of our children
Have been left behind
We are the most mimicked, yet the most hated
We are silenced by modes and methods
Bound to chains of oppression
Some say we are slaves
Still on the ship, and waiting at the port
Waiting to live out a legacy
Of kings, queens, and dynasties
We shall overcome...someday
One day...overcome procrastination, excuses
Remember we are the victim...but a victim of
Our own crimes. We choose not march in the greatest
Of our ancestors. We shed tears...and we are shamed
Guiltily and guiltless. Dead and Alive. Powerful and Weak.
And yet we choose to be silenced. We are only as loud as our drums.
Our drums tap and do not boom. We say we want freedom, but
We oppress ourselves by polluting our communities with hate and disdain of
Our own reflections. But we see the end of the road, we see across the river.
Our feet are muddy and our brows are low. We see the light of freedom.
But trample through the mud, and stroke through the turbulent waves
Moving up and down, back and forth on freedom shores.
We take our text books; lay them on the wood made by our ancestors
We are revolutionary; we are the beginning of a song. Full and loud.
And somehow we know this is only the beginning. We are not done.
We know our purpose, and the creator has blessed us with the opportunity.
We have nothing to hold us back, but our own weight. Grab hold to my hand sister.
Grab hold to me brother. Fix your eyes on mine, and look into the horizon
The heavens are our limits. We shall float into the glory. A metamorphism from
Slave to Rebel. Rebel to Revolutionary Leader. Let us live out the legacy and
March onto the mark of greatest.

Vanidy M. Bailey

SLAVE RIDE

Black faces in an opaque tunnel
A light fading at a distance, fades slow
As the stream of pain trickles down
The water parts—as if GOD himself torn down the waterways
O' dear LORD, the slaves on the ship miss you
Mama crying-babies dying
Daddy not around for the sake of labor
While the white grasps make deals on the ports
Bargaining like the Prince of this World
Sign here, a contract to hell
Fiery eyes light flames in their souls and weaves circles
Around the ebony spirits
O' Dear LORD, the slaves in the ship miss you
Sit quietly, whipped and blood engraved
Tears crystallized as bodies fall into a watery abyss
Females hold their warm glory, torn-ripped and empty
Nail them and pierce their flesh on the cross
DO not rip the veil of sin and shame from their face O' LORD
'Forgive them for they know not what they do'
Break my legs; cause my body to give up the ghost
For a new land is a waitin', and it needs our care
Let it be raped like our Mother's and Daughter's
Ancestors of Kemet cry—and the pyramids miss the power of Black Kings
But GOD, our purpose and destiny lies in these ship walls
Dead, wounded, starved—and bewildered
O' dear LORD, the slaves on the ship miss you.

Ebony Nunes

BLAXPLIOTAION'

Run Skip Jump

Sing for him
Don't sing for you

Mass rolling film
For you

Smile for em'
Act like you's dumb

They love it
Clapping Shackles

Bold eyes
Red lips
Just keep em' laughing
You'll win in the end

Run, Skip, Jump

Ebony Nunes



THEY CRY

3 tears for the red, white, and blue

Land built for them boi, not for you

Toil the soil, reap what you sow

Sand that they don't acknowledge what we know

Limitless hands

For Limitless lands

Cry for me, waterways flood tear ducks

and mine eyes can't see

I cry for you son and I cry for me

Black hands built the land of the free

and White hands leave our motherland diseased

Burned—Blackened—and kept Enslaved

Branded on the ship where the name PROPERTY was engraved

200 years son, and I'm still counting the days

I shed 3 tears for the red, white, and blue

Cause this history book don't hold the truth

Ebony Nunes

DADDY'S DANCE

Daddy play'd jump rope last night
Sly baby 1...2
Didn't do nuttin to play this game
Sly baby 1...2
Gave a lil wink maybe a nod
Sly baby 1...2
White man said it's time to play
Sly baby 1...2
Tied Daddy's hands n' put a bag on this head
Sly baby 1...2
Gasoline drenched Daddy's feet and hands
Sly baby 1...2
Negro spirituals flowing from daddy's lips
Sly baby 1...2
White man cheer, women clap—Give the signal
Sly baby 1...2
Let the games begin—jump daddy
Sly baby 1...2
Daddy Dead

Ebony Nunes

I WAS RAPED

Iris, don't talk this way.
Iris, don't walk this way.
Iris, don't look this way.
Iris, can you please...please not be so out spoken.
Can you please...please not be so assertive.
Listen.
Be open-minded.
Be the mature one.
Stay on task.
Be prepared.
Be organized.
You slander my name and convince yourselves that my violation is just.
Slowly my cloths are being stripped away, involuntarily, forcefully—I have to graduate—I let them destroy my precious treasure that I though was controlled by my free will—I have to graduate—They penetrate—I have to graduate—I bleed there is no pleasure—I have to graduate—frustration—I have to graduate—anxiety—I have to graduate—PAIN—I have to graduate...the only thing I have to look forward to is the end! When it's over, when you are pleased, satisfied, when your requirements have been fulfilled. But now I am a rape victim.
You made me a rape victim.
YOU made me a rape victim.
YOU. YOU. MADE ME A RAPE VICTIM.

-Iris Estelle Santiago



UP IN SMOKE

The people cried, "We want a King"
Someone for moral clarity
Alleviation from financial depravity
And excavation of this terrorist regime

Instead you got a dictator
Proven to be an eliminator
Of Social Security, Human Lives
And yes ALL of our allies!

"Pharaoh, Pharaoh let my people go"
We listen to the cries of the Iraqi's
Oh new King
Why are you killing me?
Is this your definition of setting us free?
Please realize I don't have any oil in my bathroom drains
And before your men blow out my babies brains
Please explain
How are you any different from Saddam Hussein ?

Weapons of mass destruction, homeland security and
your perpetual war on terrorism
You told us we were fighting against evasion
And getting revenge for the people that died in 9/11
While increasing patriotism in the nation.

But if my Webster's definition of terrorism is true, then
Mr. Ruler shouldn't we be protecting ourselves from you?

They told me to vote or die
On November 2, 2004 I did both
For on the day my faith in the American government went up in smoke.

God is my Chief Justice

Tina Marie

All my love to men/women in war!!

WANNA FIGHT. JUST BREATHE.

While you rest on that crutch you call the American Dream...I fight for equality, equity, fairness, understanding, appreciation,—our rights. I understand that you want your kids to have everything...I too want my kids to have everything...but what everything means to you, is not the same for me... I don't want my future to be bound and controlled by this societal structure that condemns differences and enslaves the less fortunate...unless I put myself in a position of resistance to the dominant culture that oppresses, my children will never have anything. Look. Unless I fight for my rights, my children won't have rights. Listen. Unless you fight for your rights your children won't have them.

There is a difference between the puppet and the puppeteer...today I feel like the puppet...wanting to be real...no something more than real, free...not bound by these strings, not control by this outside force...Iris. Just breathe.

I do not fit...I don't want to work with the system...I want to fight it...I don't want to negotiate...I want to fight it... (deep sigh) I just want to fight it... Iris. Just breathe.

Iris Estelle Santiago



DISTRACTION

Distraction, can you predict my reaction?

By the way I talk, comprehend how I'm acting?

Distraction, you see my smiling face

But deep inside, immersed, these feeling can't be erased

Distraction, you wonder if this girl is true

If she is as she seems or if this façade is meant for you

Distraction, you assume that you know me

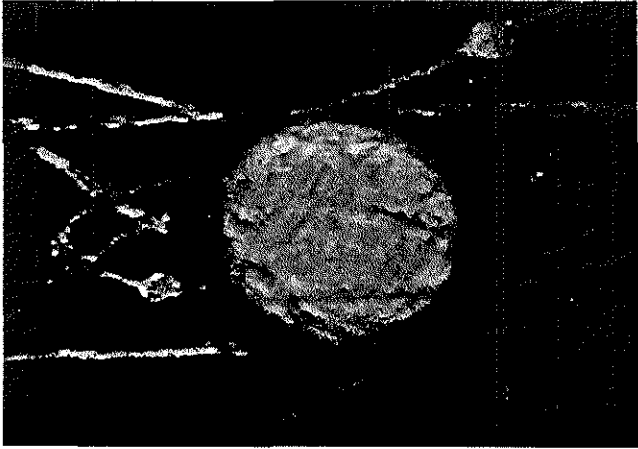
But the female concealed inside shall remain for all of eternity

For the truth, you shall never know

Cause those exact feelings, inside is where they shall grow

Because of this, I have and shall forever remain in this state of Distraction

Bayurat



INTERPRETATION



EBONY SKIN

Strong Black woman, I am

Do I scare you?

Don't be scared...

This is just me, being me, being B

Smooth, round, brown

Skin you see

So you label me, try to define me, with no result

Cause I'm complex, a multi-faceted gem

So deep, oh so deep

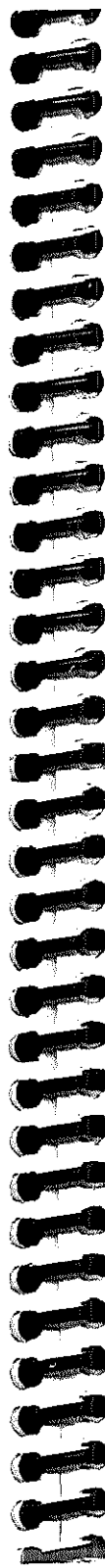
But will you ever know?

I smile for you, keep you entertained

Are you happy?

Ebony skin, my skin, soul

Bayurat



BLACK IS ALL THE THERAPY I NEED

Sing Chocolate Child
Let dem hips go wild
While the spirit of the ancestors overtake you!

Groove Carmel Baby
Embellish in the drums 'til daybreak
While each thump thump makes yo heart anew!

Smile Cocoa Wonder
Radiant yet powerful like thunder
Refusing to let the cares of this world take you under!

Let loose lady late`
For you know what they say
Laughter is like medicine to the soul

And you too my midnight mountain
For God has given you strength and endurance like a fountain
But even Jah Himself has a sense of humor

Move dem brand new legs
You unborn ebony vibe
Let yo mama know yo black soul is alive

Now just pat yo foot
My hazel Nana
The timbre of Mother Africa ain't forgot about ya!

From the amber Cradle
To the russet grave
Letting go and loving your blackness is all the therapy you will ever need!!!

I cant be nothin' but Black!!!

Tina Marie

MY PEACE OF MIND

I only want a love like soul music
Where my heart beats simultaneously with the rhythm
And the melodious vocals whisper to my core
And when I awake, the lyrics are still in my head
And I realize this is what life is for, the essence of my existence
An existential awakening, without the choice
Butterflies in my stomach when the tune hums
Tingles down my spine when I hear that note
Shivers down my back in my favorite part
And I can't stop smiling, when it plays
When it gets dark and the air gets stiff
And the moonlight is the only thing peaking into my window
My mind drifts, drifts, drifts
Thinking about not what you say, but how you say it
That's what makes me love you
We share our experiences and life lessons
Even when you make me cry it soothes me
You're the only one I need
The only one that satisfies me
My peace of mind

Kinza Faiz



NEIGHBORHOOD ACTIVITIES

Momma cookin' them peas, whippin' up cornbread.
My sister and her friends on the stoop,
Gossipin', laughin', and playin' the dozens.

Ms. Dorothy 'cross the street pressing Marquita's hair,
Bone straight, reaching for the middle of her back.
Marquita's baby brother is attempting to "bounce"
Finding his way off the stoop, craving adventure.

Up the street, Jaime Jr.'s barbershop is full of men,
All dedicated to the fade, clean 'fro, and the art of argument.
Sandra's hair salon is full of juicy-seductive conversations,
Perms and enough hair-extensions for all leukemia patients.

Tyrone and his crew, around the block,
Still can't win a basketball game,
But they got high hopes for the up coming tournament.
Shoot! They might as well sit in the stands.

Brother Reubon is chasing Tracy's bad kids out of his store.
They always stealing five cent candy and escape in laughter,
For them, the next day is a new day to steal something different.
But for Brother Reubon, it's a new day to engage in unwanted exercise.

The summer days may change,
But momma and them's activities never will.

Tametrice

HALF TURF

Under the heat of a vibrant sun
Stands a rickety, old, house.
Upon half dirt, half grass turf.

Below the outskirts of the yard,
Ebony-skinned children, play bravely yet cautiously
On this half dirt, half grass turf.

"Give it to me!"

"No!"

"Give it to me **now!**"

A push.

A shove.

A fall.

A crowd.

Laughter and humiliation,

Changes the temperature of an already hot Mississippi
To an unbearable hot Mississippi.

Within the crowd

A punch is thrown.

A pause.

The children, slowly react:

"Oooooooooohhhhhhhh."

A shout of "I'ma tell momma!"

Soars atop a bowed head.

"You shoulda' gave it back!"

"It ain't yours to begin with!"

"So!"

"I'm still tellin' momma!"

"Take it."

The sacred toy is returned.

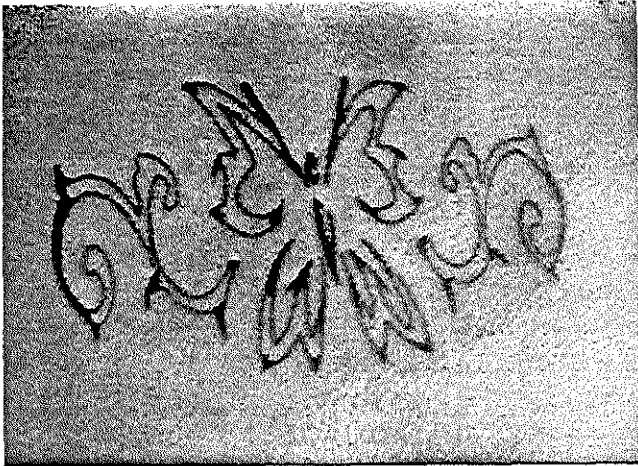
Buzzes and hums of laughter and friendship

Cool the hot Mississippi day

On the half dirt

Half grass turf.

Tametrice



HIP HOP

Big boom boxes resting
on the shoulders of
Real men, so they say.
he with the loudest
Music gets the dopest
lady, dressed in black
Tights and a leather jacket.

They spittin' mad words
flowin', suppose to be rhymes
But they aint no MCs.
for real, they're too cool
Wearing fades with double
lines, gold chains resting
'Round their necks.

Pop that arm but
don't forget to lock
It, moving to the beat.
a spin on the head,
For a good minute,
just might show out
The best dancer.

British Knights on the
court, cracked cement
Fashioned with sprouts of
grass. No net needed
On the hoop frame
long as the boom box is
Blasting music straight outta Bronx.

Block to block
year to year
Radios keep spinnin' them
hot tracks. Our ears
Listen to them tight lyrics
we jam to, maybe even
chill to. It's hip hop.

Tametrice

TRUMPET

Sleek

Slender

Fits into the hands

Of a real Blues

Man—What you talking

Loud

Soft

Sets the mood just

Right—For Lovers

High

Low

Gives feelings that are

Soulful, gets you

Moving—May I have

This Dance

Long

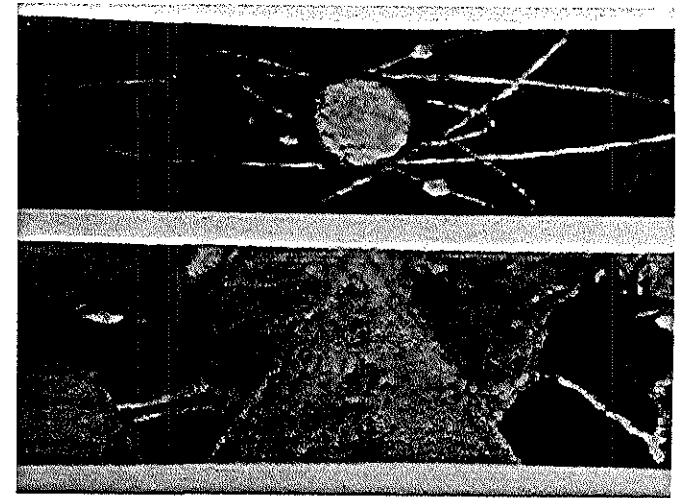
Round

Shoots soulful sounds

From the belly to

The ear—It's real y'all

Tametrice





UPLIFT



EACH OTHER: A TRIBUTE TO THE URBAN COMMUNITY

Hispanics, Blacks and plenty more, living together
No longer fighting for equal rights or against discrimination
But a chance to live and see daylight again.

Here, young men say why bother?
Because they grew up without a father.
Relationships between mothers and daughters are crazy
Due to the introduction of a new baby

While the white men congratulate
Their brothers
We the urban community
Continue to kill each other.

It's now time for the urban community to take a stand
Where every boy becomes a man, and every father a dad,
This would give the children of the future more than those of my generation
had!

It's time for mothers to raise their daughters as ladies
This would stop the cycle of Babies having Babies!
We need to stand together and give
Before there is no life left to live

This is for my every sista and brother,
It's time that we realize that we need each other.

Tenaya Butler

FINALLY...WHAT I WANT

"Thelma, I can't wait no longer. When you bringin' them biscuits from that oven?" Charlie shouted from the living room while reading his Sunday paper, seated in his favorite chair. Though there was a comfortable sofa of floral design and a firm recliner of sleek black leather, Charlie chose to sit in the torn cushioned chair which was fashioned with a raggedy sheet.

"In a minute."

"You said that minutes ago. Now woman, I is hungry and want some of them good biscuits. Unless you saving 'em for another man."

"Charlie, please! Relax. Let me change into my favorite house dress and I will be out in a minute to check on the biscuits." Thelma was in the bedroom transfixed in front of the closet still trying to decide on what color dress to put on. The blue dress was her favorite but she knew Charlie loved the soft yellow dress with the flowers printed on it from every corner.

"Good." Charlie gets up from his chair and walks over to the oven and places one hand on the handle. Before he could pull the oven door open, Thelma takes her towel and swop! "Ouch!"

"No peering in on the biscuits. I know when they ready. You gotta remember, I cook from my soul. Now be patient."

"Alright but woman I really can' wait no longer. I'm hongry not hungry. That hongry that make you do things."

"Like taking a peek at the biscuits, huh?"

"Exactly." Charlie peeks around the full figure frame of Thelma to see if he really saw what he thought he had saw. "Hey someone's at the door."

"Sure you aint saying that so you can get the biscuits 'fore they done?"

"No Thelma. I believe I saw someone at the door."

"I don't believe you."

"Woman, just go to the door."

A muffled voice rose from behind the screen door. "If you don't come to the door, you'll never see ya best friend again." Thelma slowly walks to the door almost as if she is afraid of what could be behind the door.

"Fannie, that you?"

Fannie pops from behind the screen door screaming, "Surprise!", scaring Thelma to chuckles.

"Fannie, now you know I can't see good without my specs. Ha. Ha. What brings you over?"

"Your biscuits. Smelled them all in my house."

"Haha, stop it! Come on in girl."

"I'm serious. Child, all you got to do is start selling 'em at the café or market or Johnny T's store up the street. You can't tell me that you wouldn't get no business. Most people in town know how good they are. If I were you, I'd get to baking and selling."

"If I were Thelma, I would take them biscuits from the oven and serve 'em to her man 'fore he finds another sweat heart."

Thelma looks at Charlie with a raised eye.

"Just joking baby." Charlie returns to his chair and continues to read his Sunday paper. Fannie stands beside Charlie's chair and says, "Hello to you to Mr. Charlie."

"Look here now, don't be coming in my house starting stuff. I'd have to go call that old man of yours so he can put you back in your place. Hello!"

"Ha. Funny. Jaime ain't stuntin' you. Jaime knows how strong-headed I am. He knew that 'fore he married me."

"Enough you two." Thelma walks to the oven to remove the biscuits. "Fannie, you had breakfast yet?"

"Sure she has but I haven't!"

"Hush!"

"What!? Just joking with you sweetheart. You know I love you."

Thelma sets the biscuits on the table. "Sure you do. Now, have you had breakfast yet?"

"Nah. Smelled your biscuits and thought I'd just skip that part of my routine." Fannie takes a seat at the table. "Was pretty easy to do seeing that Jaime isn't in town."

Charlie makes his way to the table. "So that's why you down here talking that junk you talking?"

"Girl, how do you live here with him?"

"You know, I ask myself that every morning. Never seem to come up with an answer though."

Both women laugh as Thelma sets the table. "So Charlie, what part of breakfast did you prepare?"

"That a trick question?"

"Won't be once your wife goes 'head and start a bakery by selling those good biscuits of hers."

"My woman aint starting no bakery or selling no biscuits. She is fine at home. I take care of Thelma. All she gots to do is keep house."

Thelma pauses for a second. "Hold your horses Charlie and don't be letting you britches get tight. You saying you wouldn't want me to make no money of my own?"

"Aint saying that baby. Now come on sit down so we can eat breakfast."

"No! I won't. Why? Huh? Why I can't make my own money?"

"Not now. Now serve me some of those biscuits."

A look of disgust takes hold of Thelma's face. "Fannie, I think its best you leave now. Charlie and I need to talk in private."

"Come down to my house later." Fannie leaves the house feeling a bit annoyed by what continues to interrupt her visits quite often.

With her hands on her hips, staring Charlie dead in the eye, "You gonna answer my question?"

He stands up, "Wait now. Don't you think you getting a little ahead of yourself? I am your husband. You don't address me that way."

"What! Charlie..."

"Baby, I provide all you need. No woman of mine has to work an//d no woman of mine will work. I work hard night and day to provide for you and the children. I've made my decision. You won't be selling your biscuits."

She pounds her fist on the table and screams, "*My decision!*? It's not your decision to make. Just like I can get out and vote, I can get out and sell my biscuits. Wake up Charlie! It's the fucking sixties, just in case you didn't know. I won't let you run my life Charlie Curtis Mayfield III. Now you listen good and well, if I decide to sell my biscuits and open up a bakery, I will. If you don't like it, you can walk!"

"Alright." Charlie storms from the kitchen table, rushes outside, climbs into his red pick-up and drives away fast into a distance leaving a trail of smoke.



With her back turned to Thelma, who is seated at the kitchen table, "You didn't come down yesterday. I imagine things didn't go to well 'tween you and Charlie."

"No they didn't. I can't believe he feels this way. It is 1962, not 1925. Maybe other women let their men talk shit to them but not me. I have my own mind and talents. I want to use them both!"

"Calm down." Fannie takes the towel and wipes her hands and looks at her friend. Everything will be fine. "Once you go back home, you and Charlie will make up and I will be back down for breakfast or dinner or whichever one I can successfully have without you two having an argument."

"Won't be no making up! Charlie left yesterday after the argument."

"What!" She hurries to take a seat at the table. "Are you serious?"

"Yes I'm serious. He hasn't even come home and its nearing the evening. Fannie this is all your fault."

"What!"

"You heard me. Had you never come down talking 'bout me selling my biscuits and me opening up a bakery then Charlie and I would have never argued nor would he ever left."

"I just wanted to encourage you, unlike that bone-head husband of yours. He trapped in the olden days and won't even let you work. I just want you to get out and make something of yourself. It's time out for all that talk of sitting home and tending to children. You gotta get out and show yourself to be a woman worth more than being a mother. I know your potential. We have been friends since we were knee-high and I won't let our friendship end over this. Oh no." She walks back over to the stove to stir the peas and check the bread.

With her head bowed, "I'm sorry. I'm just so frustrated. I don't know if Charlie is coming home and I want to start up my bakery but I don't want to loose Charlie in the process."

"Well, I can't tell you what to do but I will suggest that you do what you feel is best. You just remember, we could use a bakery in this town."

"You sure know how to make me smile."

Fannie turns towards Thelma and embraces her. "Hey, we're friends. If I don't make you smile, that bone-head husband of yours sure won't."

"Hey, lay off my man."



Around the corner from Thelma's house is a store that lets everybody in the neighborhood pay their bills, make their groceries, and buy their weekend liquor. Johnny T's is diagonally across from this juke-joint, The Blue Light, where lots of people hang out during the day but during certain hours of the day, Johnny T's is the hot spot. The owner, Johnny, is mopping the floor before a big rush of customers come into his store and starts "chewing the fat" about the day's gossip. He sees Thelma coming into the store. With a sly grin on his face, he asks, "What you know good slim?"

"Now you know I'm married."

"I can't call you Slim?"

"No. You can call me Mrs. Hendrick."

With a raised brow and that sly smile of his, he asks, "Is that right?"

"Yeah." She makes her way through Johnny's store trying to find some coffee to go. Johnny stares at her till he can no longer see her figure, which is sort of hidden by a rack of chips.

"What you all dressed up for."

"I'm going downtown to meet with Sadie Jones. I'm trying to buy the building on the corner of Lynch St."

"Is that right? What for?" He makes his way to the coffee machine to give her a hand and to see and hear her better.

"I'm opening up my own bakery."

"So all this talk from Fannie aint jive talk then."

"Nah. But I don't have the building yet. I gotta meet with her this morning and present to her all that I plan to do with the building and she is gonna look over my financial records and see if I am eligible for a loan. You know, all the stuff it took for you to get this building. Shouldn't be hard, since this is a woman I will be dealing with."

"Sadie Jones? I'm sorry to tell you Slim but that Sadie Jones you going to see this morning is a man, an uppity black man for that matter."

"What are you trying to say?"

"What I'm trying to say is that Sadie Jones aint no joke. I hear he is more lenient towards people of his kind. You live in this ghetto where according to most people, no good thing come out of. You just be prayerful going in there.

Have your presentation well thought out and beyond together. Don't worry about

paying for that coffee. You can pay me when you get your bakery up. Hopefully that will be soon. A brother will need another spot to crash besides his own." Johnny walks back towards the front of the store and puts the mop away. She grabs her coffee and happily says, "Thanks Johnny."



Thelma drives downtown in her Ford. When she entered the downtown area, she couldn't believe her eyes—all the tall buildings, the people dressed in nice suits carrying briefcases, papers, and exchanging conversations. The area was definitely alive and well at 10:30am on a Tuesday morning. Her neighborhood did not spark a noise until noon. She parked her car near the curb and fed the meter two dimes. She walked near this brown tall building and walked inside. The building was gorgeous with various pieces of art work and statues. By the time she made it to the ninth floor, she thought she had seen all she could imagine but she was wrong.

"Yes, I'm sure he will be available some time later. Can I get your name and number and I have him call you back later? Okay, spell that last name again. Yes, Mr. Nyjal Oyedeji, I will have Mr. Jones call you later. Goodbye."

Thelma looks around the office astounded. The paintings on the wall, the brown carpet, the nice chairs and the view of the King Edward Hotel just took her breath away. The only nice things she was familiar with were the things in the Jackson Mall. The things in her home did not come close to looking like all her eyes fell upon.

The secretary attempts to get her attention. "Excuse me. Excuse me? Miss? May I help you?"

"I'm sorry. Yes, I'm Thelma Hendricks. I have an appointment with Mr. Jones this morning."

"Okay. Let me find your name and I will let him know that you are here."

"Thanks." The secretary walks to Mr. Jones's office door, which is cracked.

"Like I was saying Micheal, this deal you are about to close is going to score you big bucks. Better watch out man. Everybody will be after you after this deal." She knocks on the door and sticks her head in. "Hold on for a minute. Come in."

"Mr. Jones, a Thelma Hendricks is here to see you."

"Send her in. Micheal, let me call you back." He walks over to shake her hand and guides her to a brown leather chair with hand-carved designs. "Mrs. Hendricks, how are you this morning?"

"I am doing well. How about yourself?"

"I'm doing really well." He sits down at his desk and looks over some papers. "You are here to discuss with me your plans for the building on the corner of Lynch, correct?"

"Yes I am."

"Well, there has been a change in plans. I have a meeting in half an hour and I need time to prepare for that meeting. So, if you have the written proposal and your financial portfolio, leave it with me and I will look it over and give you a call some time this week. How does that sound?"

"Mr. Jones, I was really prepared to discuss this with you now. I do have the written documents but I thought it would be better if we discussed it now so that I could possibly get a response now."

"No offense Mrs. Hendrick but I am a busy man. I have lots of people beating down my door wanting this that and the third. I really would like to look over your written proposal and call you. If that is not good enough, then I suspect you will be going to someone else in town. Who that will be, I have no clue. Like I said earlier, I will give you a call. Are you leaving the written proposal or not?"

She hesitates, then replies, "Yes."



Fannie looks at the clock and notice that it is seven in the evening. She grabs her magazine, gets comfortable on the couch situated in front of the television, and calls Thelma. "So how did it go?"

"Girl, Johnny wasn't telling no stories this morning when he was giving me the heads up about that Sadie Jones. You know he told me to leave the written proposal, he didn't look over it before I left, and told me that he will call me some time this week. What kind of mess is that? And on top of it all, he was a jack-ass. I don't know what I am going to do. First I loose the support of my husband and now this Sadie Jones turns into a jack-ass in the flesh."

"Charlie aint back yet girl?"

"No, it has been two weeks."

"Damn. I don't mean to say this but he might be shacking up with some other woman."

"Don't even say that girl. I don't even want to think things like that. I just want him to come home." Thelma lays back on her bed and places her forearm over her eyes.

"Why? He is not supportive."

"I know but you gotta understand that Charlie and I have been married for twenty years. I am not the age of a woman that can just go out and get some other man. I'm forty years old, not thirty-five."

"Or twenty-five like this woman I'm looking at in this magazine. You gotta be young girl. I just say wait it out, you know. Has he called?"

"No. That's why I'm worried so. I don't know what to think. Good thing the kids are all moved out and don't have to go through this."

"Right." Fannie puts down the magazine, gets up from the sofa and walks to her bedroom and lies beside Jaime. "It had to be more than you wanting to open up a bakery and be independent that made him stay away that damn long. If not, he just a petty old man, a bone-headed man at that."

She sits up on her bed and looks at the different pictures of Charles and her and the kids. "We've been having a few arguments. I saw him down at the bar all in the face of another woman some months back. But I've gotten past that but every time he makes me mad, I fly off the handle about that woman he was with at the bar."

"Seems to me that my statement was a little bit accurate."

"I don't want it to be."



Charlie walks in the house after a long day of work. He thinks the house is empty until Thelma walks from the back of the house and leans against the left wall that leads to the hallway. "It's been three weeks. What finally brings you home?"

"I just had to clear my head, had to think about a lot of things. You know, just take a break from you and all this mess we been through. You know, all the arguments and misunderstandings."

She leaves the wall and takes a seat on the couch in front of the televi-

sion set facing the window that gives a good view of the yard. "Oh. But like I asked, what finally brings you home?"

Charlie continues to stand in front of the screen-door. "I realized that I wasn't thinking straight. Maybe you do need to make your own money cause I might not be here no longer. I think I'm gonna leave for good. I realized that, you and I are no longer good for each other. You want one thing and I want another. You standing your ground and I'm gonna have to stand my ground. I think you will come to your senses."

Immediately, she stands to her feet, places her a hand on each hip, and sternly says, "Excuse me!? You selfish, egotistical bastard! You know what? Get all your shit out of my house now. Don't stand here another minute in my living room talking shit to me. Go pack your shit."

He advances towards Thelma. "You know what woman, you gone get enough of talking crazy to me."

"I said pack your shit up and get the hell out. From the looks of this house compared to what I saw a week ago in an office building, you haven't been doing much for me except giving me gray hair and trying to run my life. Get out Charlie and don't come back."

"Sandra, I am gonna need these papers faxed to Chuck Williams, like now. Take a message for all my calls because I have lots of work to do today." Mr. Jones turns around and Thelma is standing directly behind him with her hand extended.

"Mr. Jones. How are you?"

"Mrs. Hendricks, right?" He shakes her hand.

"Right. Do you have a minute? I really need to talk with you about my proposal for the building."

"Sure, step into my office." Both he and her walk into his office. "Alright, have a seat."

"I'm afraid that won't be necessary considering that you are very brief. Did you look the proposal over along with my financial portfolio? Have you gathered a decision?"

"Well Mrs. Hendricks, I reviewed the portfolio and all other works and it looks good to me. There is one problem, though." He sits at his desk and looks over some papers. "Considering that you have very little credit, the bank will not be able to give you the amount you asked for. I fought as hard as I could and they are

only willing to give half. Half is better than nothing at all. So, the building is yours. However, you do need to come up with a way to pay the rest of the building off and handle all other expenses that you did not present in your proposal."

"Thank you Mr. Jones. You don't know how long I have been waiting to hear your decision."

He gets up from his desk and walks towards her. "Well, I'm just glad you caught me today because I have to go to yet another meeting. Good luck on the bakery."

"Thanks."



Thelma arrives at Johnny T's around two in the afternoon. By that time, the crowd has returned to their jobs and regular routines of the day. "Johnny, I got the building!"

"Alright Slim!" He leaves the counter and hugs her tightly. "So what's next? We gotta get you set up."

"Not just yet. I have a small problem, the amount of the loan I asked for, I will not get. I can only get half." She leans against the counter and sighs. "So, I can't get the equipment I need or the materials to fix that building up."

"Well, Slim. Don't worry about all of that. I'm sure we can come up with a plan to get you the rest of the money you need. If all else fails, you will just have to bake from your oven and sell from your house until you get the money you need. Everything will work out."

"Hopefully. I'm glad somebody besides Fannie is by my side."

He leans against the counter next to her, places his hand on her shoulder and says, "What you talking, Slim? You know we love you, all of us in the community do. It's just your husband acting unsupportive. Don't worry about him. You don't need him. So get that head of yours up and move forward. Everything will be fine."



"Girl, where is your fan? I am hot as all hell. This kitchen of yours gets real hot. Shoot!"

"It's in the closet." Thelma takes a seat at the table and wipes her face with her rag. Fannie raises more windows and grabs the fan from the closet. "Get it quick. I don't know how we stood this heat for five months."

“Well, the first couple months, it was winter.” She plugs the fan into the wall, turns it on high, and takes a seat near the fan. “Now it’s spring but we all know a spring in Mississippi feel like a scorching summer in July almost.”

“That’s true.”

“At least the biscuits been selling and all the cakes we been baking. You checked the bank to see if you got the other half of the money to buy the equipment? I don’t think your oven or mine can take this any longer.”

“I’m going by later on today before it closes. We should be very close though. Just earlier this week we were within one thousand dollars of having the money we need. So, after today, we should have the money. If not, I’m just gonna have to buy the equipment we really need and wait on the rest.”

“Sounds good to me. To bad Charlie aint here to witness this.”

“Don’t even mention him. He is history in my life.”

“Come on Thelma, you know you don’t mean that.”

“Yes I do. He made the decision to leave in the first place, so I seconded that motion. Maybe it’s best that we don’t be together.”

Fannie turns around and looks at Thelma. “So when y’all getting a divorce?”

“That I don’t know. Maybe he will be serving me some papers soon. I don’t know. I just don’t know and don’t want to think about it. Just makes me sad all over again. Girl, check the cakes.”



“Next in line please.”

“I’m here to check the balance of my account please. Can you write the balance on a small sheet of paper?”

“Sure, Mrs. Hendricks.” The bank teller checks the balance and writes it on a small sheet of paper. “Here you are Mrs. Hendricks. Have a nice day.”

“Thanks.” Thelma walks out to the car but is stopped. “Thelma! You got a minute? Don’t ignore me woman. I just want to talk to you. Thelma, just let me talk to you.” She turns around and sees Charlie.

“What you want? All you gone do is talk more shit and tell me that what I’m doing is not what you want. This isn’t about you. It’s about me being independent. Looks like I got to be independent these days seeing that you proved that you can up and leave me and be very unsupportive.”

Charlie looks surprised. He grabs her arm, gently. “I’m sorry. I do love you. I just feel threatened at times. Times aint like they used to be. The man used to bring home the bacon and the woman fried it up in the pan. Now, it seem like we both gone be bringing home the bacon. Who gone fry it up?”

She almost smiles but manages to keep a straight face. “Is this what your fits of leaving home for various weeks is about? I can’t believe you. You just don’t think or get it, do you? You think you can throw these fits and think I’m just gone fall right in line like some child. That worked years past because I wanted our children to have both a mother and father. But the children are out of the house and I can’t be that way no more. I got my own mind and you got to respect that if you expect to be with me.”

“I know. I just feel threatened.”

She pauses a moment and looks around. She concentrates on the street lights and the people inside cars and those that are on foot passing by. A trickle of sweet brings her back to the reality in the parking lot outside of the bank. “By what? Because I have my own job doesn’t mean I won’t need you anymore. I will need you still. This job hasn’t put much money in my pockets lately. I’ve been investing every penny into the equipment needed for the building and the bills since you stopped paying the bills. So, yeah, your money is needed. Don’t think this bakery has been pushing so many pennies into my pocket. It hasn’t.”

“I’m sorry to hear that.”

“I’m about to go now Charlie. Fannie is waiting on me.”

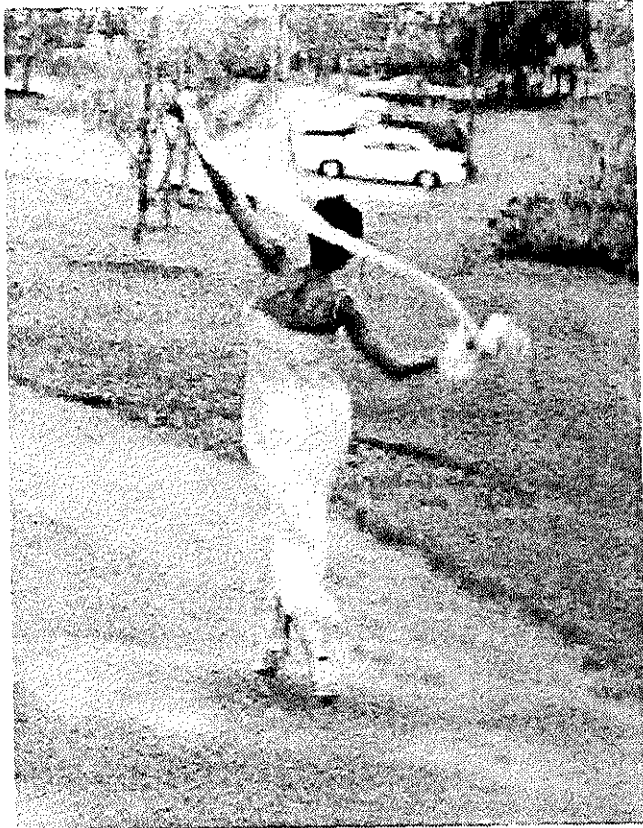
“Wait! Don’t go. Thelma, I want to come home.”

“You don’t mean that.”

“I do. I really do.”

“Sorry Charlie. I don’t know that you will not get mad and leave for weeks on end once again. Not that this was the first time. Like you said, we have had too many arguments. Now, I need more time to think about things. You know, clear my head. My bakery opens up next Friday. Stop by and give me some business some time. See you around.” She gets into her Ford and drives away. He stands in the parking lot watching her car disappear down Woodrow Wilson Avenue.

Tametrice



THE ESSENCE OF A WOMAN

The essence of a woman is trapped in her smile...It's locked in her hands between her thighs and in the grace of her style

The brilliance of a woman is secured in her walk...It's magnified through her sense of poise and in the manner by which she talks

The sophistication of a woman is trapped in heart...It's shown in her gaze and clasped in her love for which can never be torn apart

The tenderness of a woman is held in her touch...It's engulfed by her kiss in signified in her eyes that never say too much

The existence of the world is trapped in her womb...It's nestled by love nurtured by faith and never shaded by gloom

The love of a woman is seized by spoken word...It's cleverly crafted as a tickle of the ear a whisper in the wind barely in an audible voice that can barely be heard.

The foundation of a woman is created in God. ...It's not buried from view nor is it cloaked by fear or hidden behind a façade

In the essence of every true woman found in God, the love of the world, and a twinkle in her eye that sets every man's heart ablaze.

My African queens the essence of a woman is found in you.

Travis Culver

BADD BROTHAS

Brothas gotta be badd
On a daily, they're abducted
From society's vision.

Constantly silenced into
Submission. Trampled upon
With conspiracies of defeat.

Persuaded to hate themselves
'Less they date opposite
Of mom's reflection—disown black.

Brothas gotta be badd
Remaining steadfast laboring
Day and Night—Never

Slippin with the burden
Fashioned upon their shoulders.
Busting what was beat

Centuries past. Answering
Knocks of opportunity
Continuing legacies of

Badd Brothas. Imprinting
Their own legacies in history.
Brothas gotta be badd

Striving above and beyond
Stereotyped talents—Taking
Back what's rightfully

Theirs with the raising of one
Fist. Armed with hope and
Knowledge that they

Indeed are Men—Make
No mistake. Badd Brothas are
Revolutionizing society, trans-

Forming perceptions, Challenging
Systems, breaking barriers
Laying new ground for

Those to follow—Brothas
Gotta be Badd, for there's
No other way to be

Strong and Black
Badd
Brothas.

Tametrice Hodges



DIFERENCIAS

How can I ask you to stand by me if we are going two different ways?

How can I expect you to respect me if that involves disrespecting you?

How can I ask you to support me if I'm what you are fighting against?

How can I tell you that you leaving will make me sad if you staying will make you sad?

I can't and I won't cause in due time I will heal, and not to say that I don't want you but I won't need you to stand by me.

Iris Estelle Santiago '05

HISTORY OF CURVES

Rahsheda looked in the full length mirror, and made a sour disappointed face. They looked perfect in the store window. She imagined how she would look as she walked into the new Jamaican nightclub that just opened- "Jamaican Me Crazy." The jeans had spoken to her from the store window, she saw herself going down into a tantalizing wiggle as she moved her legs in and out to the pulsating Caribbean beat. These jeans could not have been categorized as anything less than perfect. But now it was a different story.

"Oh my goodness Telly, I look like a hog," Rahsheda blared to her friend in the kitchen.

"Sheda you never looked fat a day in your life."

"So you admit it, I look fat. I never said the word fat, so you must think I look fat."

Shantel rolled her eyes before walking into the large sized bedroom that smelled of fruity lotion and petruoli oil. She quietly handed her friend a glass of herbal tea, "Huh, drink this, it helps weight loss." Rahsheda looked at her smart mouth friend with dismay, "That's not funny Shantel. This is a very serious matter."

"Ok, ok, what's going on? You were so excited over those jeans, I darn near thought that you were going to make love to em'."

"I look like Miss' Piggy's sister."

"Oh yeah, I know her."

"Look at my thighs, they're just too big."

"Her name is Mizz BroomQuesha."

"Who?"

"That's Miss' Piggy's sister. They got the same daddy.

BroomQuesha grew up in the hood. Yeah, act like you know."

Rahsheda continued to pull at the belt of her jeans as she laughed at Shantel's corny joke.

"I don't see why you're tripping Sheda. You look like a beautifully shaped black woman in those jeans. Why are you calling that fat?"

Rahsheda ran over to the small sized chair that shyly huddled in the corner, "Oh my goodness here we go again. I'm about to get the 'don't -let-white-media-distort-your-representations-of-ethnic-beauty' speech. I'm not trying to hear your classroom discussions right now Telly. I need to plan on getting a membership at the gym so I can downsize my goods."

"Girl your goods don't need to be downsized. You're thin enough."

"Telly look at this," Rahsheda pointed at her full hips.

"And? I'm, looking."

"It's not good to have too much hips. A nice amount is good, and most people would love it. But too much, is ... shoot, overweight."

Shantel laid on the bed sipping on her steaming herbal tea as she shook her head in dismay, "What time is it Sheda?"

"Six o'clock."

"Wrong, time for a little lesson."

Rahsheda huffed in an annoyed fashion but turned over to a more comfortable position knowing that this discussion was going to be longer than she expected.

"First, let me reiterate that you are beautiful. Always have been, and always will be. Second, let me share with you a little history. It starts in Africa with our great, great, ancestors." Shantel looked at Rahsheda to confirm that her story would not go unheard.

"Yes, ok Telly. I'm listening."

"Ok, well the women in Africa were much like the women all around the world. You know, breast, legs, smaller figure, and everything else. They worked in the field and helped out with the family. Pretty much what all the other women did around the world in those days. You follow me?"

"Yes, I follow Shantel."

"Then something horrible happened. These brown princesses were stolen away from their fertile land, and were taken to a land not quite developed. The soil was hard, and the work was too. These once delicate princesses had to become fierce warriors because their life wasn't easy and soft like the warm African soil that they were used to. It was rough and cold like the foreign soil they were forced to cultivate. Most of these former princesses

died. Their small tender bodies could not hold up to the cruel work that they were made to do. But, there were a special class of women who were popular in their home land for their known strength. These women had supple breast, firm arms, sturdy legs, and vivacious hips. They were prized figures in society, known for their untouched beauty and sculptured bodies."

"What was the name of these prized women?" Rahsheda asked, now engrossed in the story that her friend was telling.

"Why cheapen them with words? They were beautiful beyond compare. There was not a name in any language that could aptly describe how one felt in the presence of these great women. These magnificent creations."

"Wow, well what happened to them?"

"Well, something special happened, a phenomenon that no one was able to explain until now. While the soft and tender women died from their vigorous enslavement, these extraordinary women survived. They looked their captors in the eyes and they kept on living. They refused to hide their strength and magnificence. The foreigners were captivated by their stoic presence, and they paid great amounts of money for their. But, instead of respecting and dignifying this woman they made her into an object of mere desire and lust. They stole away their pride; at least that's what they thought. They put them in the fields all day to cultivate their land, and then they mistreated and abused their precious bodies at night. These captors were especially filthy, coward-like, and hedonistic. Society made these women feel as they were worthless, but secretly the women of the foreign land envied her beauty, courage and willingness to live, and in private dreamed about having the curvaceous body that these amazing women possessed. And these women continued to show their strength, and while they mourned the loss of their more dainty sisters, they worked hard alongside the strongest of men."

"So, exactly how does this relate to me?"

"The delicate women could not survive to usher into the world their offspring. That means only these strong unique women were able to survive and they continued to bring into the world a new generation of off-

spring. And what do you know, around the age of twelve to fourteen, brown gangly looking girls began to flourish into brilliant women with the same supple breast, firm arms, sturdy legs, and vivacious hips. These characteristics made it possible for them to survive. Harsh days in the sun with the chance of extreme fatigue and muscle strain were a bit more bearable with these strong assets. More muscle, meat, and thighs on the bone actually meant more chances of survival. More cushion for the pushin. "

"Shantel!" Rahsheda said in surprised tone.

"I know, I know. That has a sexual overtone now, but it was very true back then. She had more cushion to be able to work and to press on. This was her might. So, the next time someone tells you that your breast are too big, or that you have too plump thighs and booty, tell them thanks. Your great, great ancestor gave you those things, in hopes that you would stand with pride. And that you would never hide your gift and glory. "

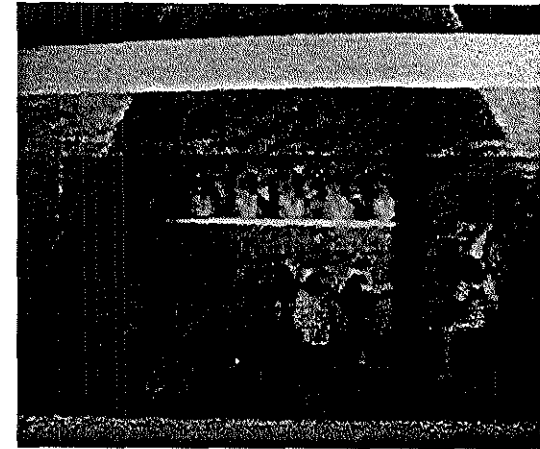
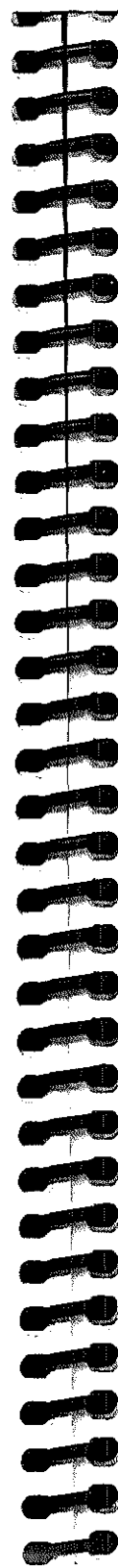
"So you really think more thighs and booty helped black women to survive slavery?"

"I don't think, I know."

Rahsheda grabbed her half filled flower mug with herbal tea. "Well, let's have a sip for the women who passed down to us a means of survival and pride."

"Yes ma'am, I'll take two sips for that."

D.C.





LOVE

MY BLACK QUEEN

My Black Queen,
Only time I see you is in my dream.
You appear to me in the form of an angel.
My heart continues to fall for you,
Why must you let it dangle?
Every single part of you from head to toe,
Brings a part of me I have never known.
We begin with your head which hold your omniscient like brain,
If a man knew the knowledge you possessed he might go insane.
Those piercing eyes I tried to look into,
Clearly showed the beauty inside of you.
The curve of your lips,
Made my lips yearn more to kiss.
As I ease down your neck towards your chest,
I can only imagine the places I would want to caress.
No, my black queen is not an adult toy,
But a homie, lover, friend that brings joy.
Now I found myself starring at her invigorating breasts,
I could picture how God wanted you to be blessed.
Gracefully moving towards the lower torso,
I can't count how many times I tell my hormones no.
The curves of your hips that may contain the goods,
Makes a brother wonder if he would, could, or if he should.
As my eyes curved around those hips to that fruitful derriere,
Even a strong black man couldn't bear those tears.
The legs serve as a primary significance,
They control her walk of elegance.
God walked for her to preserve her fresh and pure feet,
Allowing her to walk only when the perfect guy she would meet.
My black queen
Only seen in my dreams
When will she become embodied?
For without her I am nobody.

Eric Locklear

Where Would I Be

Where would I be without the love of my life?
Where would I be without you by my side?
Mother, for years we have been a pair,
Mother and Child
Teacher and Student.

~C&E~

You are that constant in my life,
that I never question.
You are the piece of the puzzle,
that fits perfectly.
You are the light,
that shines on me in my darkest hour.

~C&E~

The foundation I hold so dear,
That which gives me hope for brighter days.
The 'C' for Carrie
The 'E' for Eric
The '&' for the tie that binds us together as
Mother and Son.

~C&E~

Where would I be without you in my life?
Of this I'm not sure,
But I thank the Lord daily
for placing me where I need to be,
And that's here with you.

Happy Mother's Day
Mommy

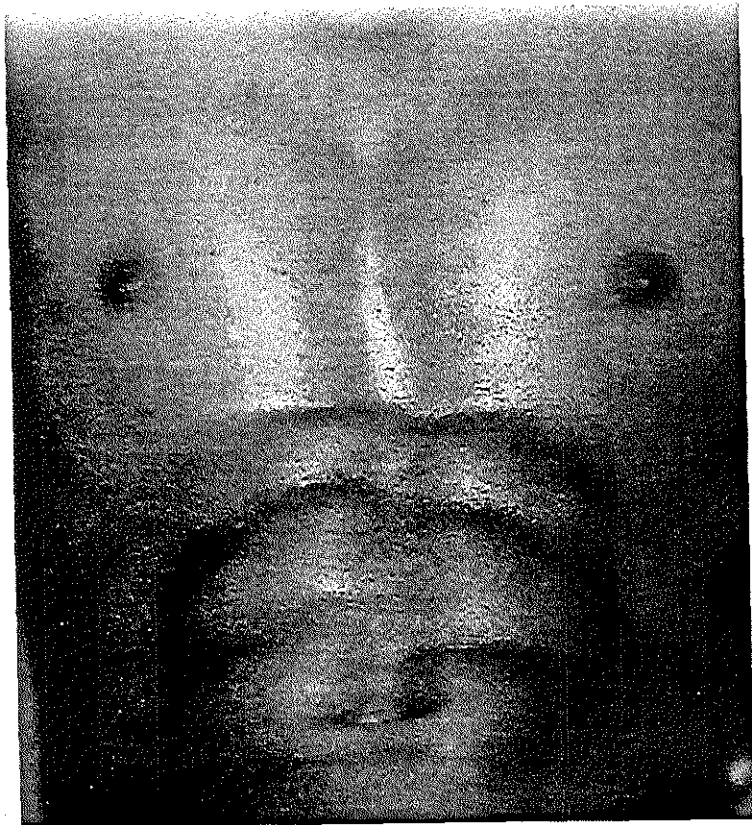
Eric R. Norris



MY SISTERS

Where would I be,
Without those who guide my path.
Where would I be,
Without those who gave me courage.
Where would I be,
Is a question I ask myself.
As these four years come to an end,
And I look back on all I've done,
I am reminded
That when times got hard
And school seemed impossible
There you were,
My sisters
My guiding lights.
From your enlightenment,
Came my success,
From your love,
Came my peace.
My sisters,
Strong, beautiful black women,
From you I have gained the strength to rise,
Rise above fear, rise above doubt, rise above.....
I thank-you,
Warriors of now, leaders of the future, queens of the Nile.

Eric RaShad Norris

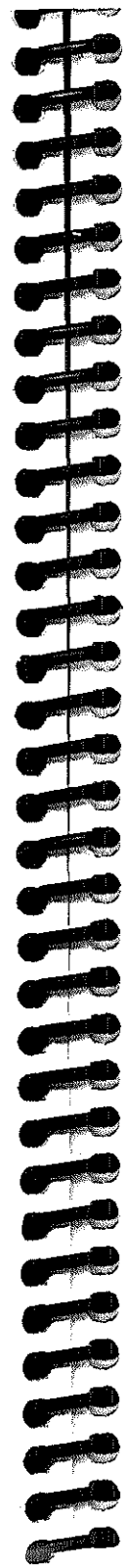


QUALIFY

They say if you love what you do,
You'll never work a day in your life
I believe that also goes for husbands and wives
So here's my now hiring sign, but be sure to read the fine print
Actually I'll read it to you, so there aren't any unnecessary applicants
It says:
Period point blank NO BOYS ALLOWED
Young men with aspirations of real manhood
Can come but I prefer men
Cause u see I need to grow
Not be pulled down by the pseudo man with his sag to his knees meeting
his white t
The only tee I want to see is under a button up or a blazer, please believe
If you step to me you better be on your p's and q's
Not because I'm stuck up but because I don't lose
You see there'll be a battle between you and I
About the treasure that lies between my thighs
And how you're not that kind of guy
YEAH RIGHT
Don't get it twisted I'm not generalizing, I'm just specifying
My standards are high and I won't settle for less
Not because my head is in the clouds but because I deserve the best
I'm the queen-to-be my daddy tells me
I'll inherit the kingdom and all its majesty
And that can be with or without you
So don't consider yourself one of my necessities
Because I'll walk my father's streets of gold alone
Not because I'm self-sufficient but because I'm not dependent
We were made to compliment each other so lets do that
I don't want the 50/50 relationship I want a 100%
You give me all of you, I'll give you all of me and we can give it all to God

So if you believe you're qualified
The King of Kings takes applications daily for his daughters and queens-to-be
He who findeth a wife findeth a good thing
There are many rough drafts and wannabes
But only one final copy reflects His image
Duplicated many times but very hard to find
So if you're looking for an insecure female that'll settle for anything that
shows her attention, even if it's a rapper wannabe, down-low maybe, talk to
you any way he want to, anti-chivalry type of guy
You need not apply
If you only see yourself as a famous rapper with a big house and tight whips
and see me as your ride or die chick that will cook, clean and sex you up
whenever you want
Please also see me holding my stomach in pain as I laugh hysterically
So in conclusion,
If you aren't a man with a world-changing vision, a wardrobe with more than
forces and long tees, not afraid to do what he wants even if his friends dis-
agree, that can inspire me to be more than I knew I could, and does the
things he knows he should, that makes serving Him a pleasure and not a bur-
den, and can stand in faith in the face of the uncertain
If you're not a man that's been born twice and knows my father, Jesus Christ
An interview isn't necessary, I'm glad you applied, but you my brother don't
qualify

Brooke



UNTITLED

Let me be your verbal salvation
Your true inspiration
There is no need for hesitation
Because its time for a restoration
Elevation
Embrace what you fear
Only push the hurt away-baby I'm right here
Don't tell me about that lame brother and what he did to you
Cause I'm the one right here, and the one who's about to make love to you
You don't have to cry no more
Because my love is the core
Your love's yearning has been on mute
But I know the root
You been hurting for so long
You been trying to be strong
And you feel all you heart's energy is gone
But baby don't fret
I got this...
Lay your body down...
And let me kiss you up and down
From head to toe
You have never felt like this before
Warmth from inside of you once, twice, and thrice, you beg for more
And you're torn
Your soul has died and you body has just begun to mourn
You are surprise I know what you're thinking
But I have a fined turned ear...and you heart is speaking
It seems like you don't believe me
You don't understand and you don't believe what you cannot see
I understand that baby

I know what you mean

But I know you are the figure that I have been seeing in this dream

The dream that I floated to the top of the mountain called ecstasy

And all of this warmth seemed to just radiate in and outside of me

And there was nothing exchanged but a simple kiss

And this figured smiled and replied, "Call me Bliss."

That name stayed in my head day in and day out

I didn't know until now, what that was all about?

You were that vague image in my dream

You're the one that my body seems to find

Is that wrong?

Am I coming on too strong?

That's okay you don't have to answer me,

Just come close your eyes, lay next to me, and reply in my next dream

Anonymous

PARTING IS SUCH SWEET SORROW

You stepped onto my life so sudden so gentle

Standing there with your arms outstretched.

Listening, loving, holding and consoling

Damn, I'm not ready to let go yet!

My love.... I am convinced

That you were heaven sent

As a reward for my pain, tears and sorrow

For you have brought happiness, peace and rest.

My baby, my man to you I've given my hand

Accompanied by my heart body and dedication,

My faith in new beginnings, my trust in forever

and believing it will be all right.

My confidence in relationships, assurance in love
when we're MAKING it,

And knowing that afterwards, you will hold me
through the night.

Your genuine spirit, pure intentions, and passionate nature intrigued me.

It's that chocolate coating, that masculine stroking and tender embrace that
pleases me.

Now I'm saying good- bye because life is calling me in another direction.

But love, don't be afraid because in the sky this union of two souls was made,

And I know our love will be resurrected.

Now don't cry for me, don't shed a tear.

The times I've shared with you will always be

And when I'm gone please carry on

For when our paths cross yet another time

It will be on higher ground

May His Peace Be With You Until We Meet Again.

With All that is With in Me...

Tina Marie



BABY

My baby.....

So sexy, so smart, so pleasing, so endearing

Being in your arms, feeling your embrace

Love, life, light, is what I feel

I gaze into your eyes and I see the future

My happiness is you

My heart is you

The blood that flows within my very veins is you

You are my essence

You are my soul

My baby

To you, from me, with love...

Bayurat



MY HEART BELONGS TO YOU

You are the personification of beauty,
A true goddess,
A woman,
More beautiful than a work of art
A vision of loveliness
An image of perfection
To whom I offer my
love,
affection
and protection.
To you
My lady love.

I open my heart to you,
To reveal all within:
my love, my passion, my everything.
All that I share with you,
my ebony princess, my Nubian Queen, my angel
sent from heaven above.
To hold me, to love me, to comfort me,
My lover,
My companion
My friend.
A woman whose true beauty
Never can be done justice
By mere words.

Nevertheless I try,
to express my feelings
through these words from my heart
Though these words may be forgotten,
I wish for you to remember this.....
You are my beginning and end.
You are my sister, lover and friend
And there is no me,
If there is no you.
And from now until forever my heart will always belong to you.

Eric RaShad Norris

QUIERO SER SU ÚNICO (ONE)

How do you make love to somebody without being in love? It's not instinctual, lustful but deeper, meaningful, sensual. I could truly transmit everything I feel, everything I want you to feel, and everything I fear to feel, to you, through you—I want to have your face in my hands and look at you, in your eyes—examine your lips—penetrate your thoughts and create a connection between us that becomes one. No longer does one plus one equal two but rather one plus one equals one—one—one. I do not want to share this moment with just anyone but I would love to share this moment with you. Would you consider being one with me? You do know what I am requesting, don't you? Be one with me. My body, my mind, my soul, my heart—be one with me. I'll be your body, your mind, your soul, your heart; but please just let me be one with you. One. Your one. **O**nly one, **N**aturally one, **E**ternally one.

Iris Estelle Santiago

COVENANT WITH DESTINY

You and I were born together before time
This is destiny manifested
Today we enter the thick of love and life together
And our life begins today
To get here we had to go through many things
Not content with God , I searched for satisfaction through people
Meeting you today confirms that as a mistake
Through men I strayed away from my Father
And didn't pursue my covenant with destiny
I only imagined love like this
Seems like a fairy tale I made up in my mind
Of dancing in the sky on cloud 9
As we, he and I, now me and you concluded the past and began our days
Lost in Loveland, while writing our biography of love
We're locked in but not with a negative connotation
We began the journey of elation, love givin', and makin'
I remember the days, weeks, years I dreamed of you and this day
I would have never believed that this feeling was real
An unexplainable tingling I feel
My hair stands saluting my king
It makes me feel warm and sleepy like I could just lay with you all day
How ironic is intimacy
I'm happy but my heart is hurting from the uprooting of my bitter flowers
From the pain showers that left scars in the soil of my heart
Love is pain they say
And it is better to have loved and lost than not to have loved at all
But I'm glad I lost their love or whatever they call it
Cause I had a covenant with destiny and I encountered you

Only God can make me feel like you do

This is destiny manifested, we're supposed to be together
You were worth all the lonely nights and all the bad weather
God lifted my head from the dirt and set my eyes high
You were born with me before time

Brooke Hayes

UNTITLED

young and naive,
the body belied her innocence.
curvy and coquettish,
her presence masked her fear.
She was a fish out of water
drowning in the unfamiliar air.

the boys saw this innocent- they liked it
they wanted to talk to her, touch her
have her, own her
they wanted to turn to their friends and say
"yeah, I hit that."

she let them have their way with her
it was easier than letting them actually know her.
she was empty—
no silken kiss nor whispered promise could
fill her.
she was alone—
no warm hand nor crowded twin could
keep her company

not so innocent now
a coldness settled over her
she welcome affection—
relished a boy's attention
it was just a game now,
conquests and scorecards
her body was a commodity
in demand and available to the highest bidder.

Kerri Grinnage

UNTITLED

You have seen distortions
Of my true affection
You have felt brief moments
Of my passion
You have seen partially
My devotion to you
And when you put them all together
And saw my potential
You ran, from me, and yourself
You lost yourself in the world
And even though I saw you
I couldn't rescue you
I felt vulnerable, not having you there
But you looked so happy
So I acted like I didn't care
And when that world blew up
I was mad
I saw you there but I couldn't help
And again I felt vulnerable
Knowing you were in such pain
And I could do nothing
I who pledged to be your protector
I who led our world blow up
I am sorry
I didn't mean to hurt you
Please forgive me
For not protecting you when you needed me

Anonymous

UNTITLED

The times I held you
Did you not question why
The way I held you
Did you not wonder
The way I looked at you
Do you not notice
It is obvious
That I Love you
I wish I knew
But when I tried
You left me behind
And found someone else
So you are happy now
But I am suffering
Can you not see
That I think of you
That I care for you
That I'd do anything for you
That I love you
No, you choose not

Santiago Camilo Espinosa



Untitled

Your flow wedges me
The contrast of consuming
The two elates me
One skews my mind, deep thought
The other restores

Confliction of rejuvenation
And the eerie mood I succumb to
Dreggy uninhibited
Non-inhabitant to my soul
Familiar awakening to my body

Filter Nourishment
You are pure and uncontained
Power to destroy
You assist creating life

The sky gets dark
Then, you gather in one of your many forms
Small peels fill the atmosphere
Collect on the ground
And I rake you in again

Natural refreshment
I drink you and feel revived
Cools my sensations
The other eases my mind

When I need you most
Is when you feel best
But I always desire you
Down the hill near the sand,
I'd observe the affects of you

Heightened senses, I feel you
You purify me
Some subliminal freedom
Odd, both uncontained

One restrains me, other
Is just unrestrained
My body goes numb
I prefer you chilled, it soothes
In your natural state
You are beautiful free

I remember when I abused you
I replaced what I needed from you
That is when I was at my worst
But as I mature, I know just how to use you
Enjoy you, appreciate you

When clouds get heavy
Small drops of you fall
But, when you get angry
You take many forms

Wherever I go, I can rely on you
One thing that stays the same
I always want you

I keep you in me
For as long as it takes
I climb into you
To cleanse myself and unwind
Then preferred hot

When you drip down me
We can spend hours together
The various types
Like the many sides of me
That you stimulate

Anonymous



CONTRIBUTORS

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- Tina Marie Andrew** Senior 2005 from Chicago, Illinois
Communication/ Pre-Nursing double major
Member of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority Inc.
Favorite Quote: "The race is not given to the swift nor to the strong but to the one that endures until the end"
- Vanidy M. Bailey** Senior 2005 from Everywhere and Nowhere
Black Studies/ English double major
Member of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority Inc.
Favorite Quote: "Without a vision the people perish"
- Tenaya Butler** First-year 2008 from Rahway, New Jersey
Psychology major
Most Memorable Moment: Graduating high school
- Travis Culver** Senior 2005 from Canton, Ohio
Political Science Major
Member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc.
Inspiration: Women's Appreciation Dinner
- La'Tonya Edgerton** Senior 2005 from Columbus, Ohio
Spanish major, Sociology/ Anthropology double minor
Most Memorable Moment: When I got to know many of the member of the class of 2005 on a deeper level at the first Posse Plus Retreat.
- Santiago Espinosa** Senior 2005 from Chicago, Illinois
History/ Education double major
Inspiration: I was sad about some girl turning me down and this is how I expressed myself.
- Bayurat
Fashina-Jinadu** First-year 2008 from Cleveland, Ohio
Biology with a Pre-Med focus
Favorite Quote: "What is a good mad but a bad man's teacher? What is a bad man but a good man's job?" -Lao-tzu

- Kinza Faiz** Sophomore 2007 from Avon, Connecticut
Communication major
- Ashleigh Fritz** Sophomore 2007 from Beachwood, Ohio
Economic major
Favorite Quote: "The people we are in relationship with are always a mirror, reflecting our own beliefs, and simultaneously we are mirrors, reflecting their beliefs. So... relationship is one of the most powerful tools for growth....If we look honestly at our relationships, we can see so much about how we have created them. *Shakti Gawain*"
- Brooke Hayes** First-year 2008 from Columbus, Ohio
Political Science major
Most Memorable Moment:
When God revealed my gift to me
- Kerri Grinnage** Sophomore 2007 from Midlothian, Virginia
Theatre Performance major
Inspiration: All of the work I ever produce is founded in my life. I can't recall specific inspirations a lot of the time, the work I produce is usually just an organic "the way I feel" expression of whatever is running through my mind at the moment.
- Tametrice Hodges** Sophomore 2007 from Jackson, Mississippi
Communication/ English double major
Inspiration: Desire! I have always been told, "if you don't use it, you'll lose it." The strong desire within me inspired me to write what I knew and what I was very familiar to me. Such desire has kept my talent within my heart and on the pages I produce with life-like language.
- Eric Locklear** First-year 2008 from Columbus, Ohio
Mathematics major
Favorite Quote: "You're either part of the solution or part of the problem" - *Eldridge Cleaver*

Eric Norris

Senior 2005 from Columbus, Ohio
Communication major
Member Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc.
Most Memorable Moment: Returning back to college after taking a year and a half off. This moment made me appreciate all that I had worked for. Also, it let me realize where I had been and where I am going.

Iris Santiago

Senior 2005 from Humboldt Park, Illinois
Spanish/Education double major with a concentration in Latina American and Caribbean Studies
Inspiration: Everybody has a story to tell, my pieces of work are my stories...my experiences, mis recuerdos, my life...these pieces were written and inspired by my Denison experiences.

