
SKIN//Content

OR, PARTITIONING THE VARIANCE OF DREAMS

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Contested.

Pitied.

Envied.

Characters march like Calibri through white space
dragging the broken backs of margins twice lynched;

New blood upon hues lines, fractured:
a return.

Did you catch that? That's
a drop.

These shades are not silhouettes, shadows of shallow footprints
pressed upon the banks of the Columbia – fuck your fables.

If you see us singing, art upon bones in rhythm, blues of trials
and trails unfair; we've bled and dripped, wept and shed this art;

Contoured the topography of privilege, fertilized these
stolen lands; spilled, poured, and replenished – we are full.

Latticed resolve in the form of scars upon scars upon
our many shades the sun still rises sweat still beads

upon this collective callous we call *United*; the curves of our
warmed shoulders shaping horizons borne of movements:

arms unfolding
 elbows cracking
wrists turning
 hands burning
to preserve these embers.

And somehow
you managed to miss
it all.

Our fruit
 turned familiar
in your white daughters' mouths,
wondering

whose arms
tilled the soil

whose lips
slid
upon the truth

palms pressed
upon the engines
of conscience:

do you wash them first?

Rinse away risks imprinted upon our brothers
imposed upon our sisters
whose children still dream
dreams of peeling away your fears
and the corneas that cover them,
planting them next to the Rio Grande.

But fear is no more fruit than it is seed
and skin is no more canvas than it is peel

So this art is not a cover
upon a white imaginary,
nor an ode to its contentment.

It is black.
It is brown.
It is caramel.
Character
embodied
to the marrow.

Surveilled.
Policed.
Painted.
Worn.
Danced.
Eaten.

You feast
upon
this skin
yet you'd starve
within it.

IDEAS//Forever

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summer stars
concealed by sparks
from a front room

tears singed
as wings of fireflies
push through

thick air of darkness –

who will light these humid nights
to starve these flames
forever

mend our burned palms
so we can grow
futures

from the fertile ash
left beneath
our nails?

SEASONED//Counters

OR, AN ODE TO GOOD TROUBLE

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Eggs cracked by hands blistered on batons
the night before, my Aunt T watched it on the TV –
indignation plated with craft, over easy
spread upon imaginations as if the mind
would not devour itself, falling

into cavities carved by convictions, decades
of doctrines dissolved and discovered each morning
when the lights come on, dripping

Black

coffee undoubtedly grown by hands of the same,
to be sweetened, sipped, enjoyed even –
basic taste buds revel in dark desires,

reveal:

y'all wouldn't sell shit without the fruits of labor
confined to the contours of those rusted shakers –

salt, pepper, sugar.

How sweet indeed, to believe yourselves;
countless counters holding up your postures,
our bloodied brows on swivel, unrested
backs upon stools – weapons of the weary
spinning circles beneath your gaze,

realization:

whiteness cannot exist

without yolks.

Bring my toast.

