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Age: 16, Grade: 11

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Category: Poetry

Bent; Boy; Palm, Milk, Butter, Honey; Rough; Temple

Bent

Beaten down.
Body shaking,
sweat pouring from
my skin,
sweat pouring from
my brow.

My back is rough
and calloused.
My back is bent
and twisted.
Atop it sits a burden
I never asked to bear.

And when my momma
says it's just a phase,
she adds a pebble.
And when my daddy
says I'm not his child,
he adds a rock.
And when my heart is
broken by the boy who
I thought gave a damn about
how I felt,
a whole mountain is slammed
upon my creaking, cracking bones.

I never asked to fall in love
with the way he smiles,
with the way he laughs,
with the way he looks at
me like I'm the rising sun that
brings him light when I'm
only the sunset that brings him darkness.

I have already scarred my own
body time after time
and you don't get to lace it with
anymore lashes.
I have beaten my body bloody
night after night

and you don't get to cut me
up to cut me down.

My back is bent from the weight
that others have placed on it.
The stones that fall from their
cracked mouths and add up
every moment.
But I will drop this crushing
force from my body because
one day,
the pebbles,
the rocks,
the stones,
and the mountains
will roll right off me.

Boy

The way your
skin feels like clouds.
You bring me a place
I never believed could
be mine.

Heaven incarnate,
body glowing in the
halo of the sun.
The way your lips
give birth to dreams
I never dared to manifest.

And we're no longer in
the material world.
We've transcended all
of the weights meant
to keep us down,
the people who would
clip our wings.

Boy.

Palm, Milk, Butter, Honey

Inside of your
hands,
the walls fall
away.

The world melts
as we paint a
Picasso and dance
beneath the
light.

Phasing in and out
of reality, blues and
pinks and purples and
yellows swimming on
our skin.

Caressing your smile
in the bowls of my
palms. Your tears melt
away into light,
into honey that flows
from your lips.

Their words can't
reach us here.
Our shoulders become
mountains.
Our hair becomes
jungles.
Our skin becomes
deserts.
Our bodies become
a refuge.

Boy,
I will never let them
touch you.
In my arms, all of
your fears can melt
away like butter.

This place of
milk and honey is
ours.
This place is where
we can love with
no regrets.

Let the lights wash
over us and cleanse
off the burns that the
world brings.

Palm.
Milk.
Butter.
Honey.

Rough

Run my fingers
through your forests.
I want to explore,
unlock your wonders.
Learn the taste of your
waterfalls and traverse
your mountains.
Your skin is sandpaper,
my body is the wood.
Refine and smoothen me.
You want to read my stars,
catch my dust in your palms.
Watch the morning rise upon
my face and clasp my fire
to your body.
Who says that we can't be
miracles?

Temple

Holy air hold
me upright walking.
Waking, treading,
floating.
Step into my sacred
place, my hall of
worship.
Wallow down in the
shining water,
free of all attachments.
He told me that
this was the first time
that he truly connected.
Lips on skin, hands on oil.
Creation has never been
so beautiful.
Caressing touch to
crescent moons and
blazing suns.
Oh, say that we'll exist forever!
Past space and time,
our bodies melting
and mixing together like
the primordial soup
that gave birth to us.
Call us pagans for believing
that we are worthy of
making love in this home
of hate.
You will not be able to steal

this black, black magic.
This black, black love.
My ethnic is my scripture,
my divergence is my temple.
In these ebony walls,
lie two statues interlocked
and dedicated.
He told me that even he
could not have conjured
up such beauty and love.
I told him that I could.