

A Letter to My Father

Dearest Daddy:

Words travel, asshole. Think you're so clever keeping the children apart with lies of shame and regret? They do nothing but cover your tears of loneliness. The only lost cause in the dust is your soul: Distant wanderer of barren land, searching for a shore graced with our love. Step off the sand, the rushing waves of failure inundate you to your fingertips; these years are too thick to swim through. Can't break the surface on your last breath of air? Our forgiveness is your oxygen—I'd rather leave you to asphyxiate. That misunderstood shell of a little brother, his still tender heart beats on in your deliberate absence. He hasn't escaped it yet, the cocoon of confusion & neglect, still yearning for that love sickness you keep passing off on us. Lie after lie and every broken promise, neglected birthdays, needed diapers left on curbs in disgrace.

Daddy dearest, when will you be satisfied? My blood has already poured for you, washed down the drain with my last dregs of innocence in a lone dorm shower. Now you're out for his. Your children wither against the arrogant, tainted glare of your COGIC image. I still cast a betrayed glance to the Blonde Queen of Swords for her egregious choice of sperm donors. So are you reaping the joys of being stationary? Trapped in a walled world that closes in tighter with each new year—we are the sight beyond your chiseled window. Once declared too dark to be your offspring, now declared too white to be recognized, I dare you to finally notice. Catch a glimpse, sad man, you are the magpie to my shine. Now flutter on, fat man, keep up with my strut. It's the hopeless bragging about a life of which you have no clue; just another transparent attempt to parent an adult. Get a clue, old man—grey strands and sunken eyes mark your fallen glory. So welcome to this version of our world's AA: The Abandoners Anonymous. Please, daddy dearest, take a number at the door.

To Our Own Beloveds

Black Girl, Call Home reminds me

after all these years, I wasn't the only one.

you too were there,

wandering around in the Dark &

feeling for a Beat,

seemingly mere inches from me & others

in the mist, even if not fully in tune.

Now we understand where the breath doesn't always

fall in step with the bubbled pulse, that we can

flow together in ways previously ill-conceived

due to cowardly laziness and blatant neglect bound into apathetic law.

Blanketed lies behold no beauty in the beholder's eye,

and the must will blow its gust from the undercarriage soon enough.

With tear-streaked faces,

not waving but drowning

in the assumed & comforted days of our lives,

too sensitive to maneuver in a world

where the bully often lives both at home and school,

we will fight our parents out in the streets, be they blood or watered down,

to find these answers, regardless of
finding out who's got the right hindsight.
That is where the invite of spice originates
whether it's appreciated or not.
Oh, isn't it glorious
to finally see each others' signals?
The Sower's parables have a way
of prepping our soil for the next harvest.
So many seeds still want in the cracks,
overgrown from where you left them.

Speak of The Devil

When you realize you're working with individuals who are very capable of joking that their ebony fleshlights & dildos count as interracial relationships (that they definitely purchased before you got hired), after displaying bubbling eagerness at aiming verbal daggers, one's priorities tend to shift. Learning from one another takes on a whole new meaning when everyone's quirk is a slightly different shade of human feces. But I realize my anger is not the same as your apathy—and that's despite the fact that Saturn has enjoyed spanking my ass longer than some others.

Imagine people being so jealous of the freedom of consciousness that they passively-aggressively tease about having multiple books on hand like portable tools of life. They'd rather sit here and pretend they have something to judge, others are the characters of life they get to laugh at because their circumstances turned out to be different than the ones being gawked at by their listless, complacent eyes. Never had a strong focus themselves for the very thing someone else was born to do, so they mock what is not meant for them. This is where we learn our power, the weight of our space. They really can't handle what's actually being offered—a Reckoning within themselves—and they happily claim to hate for it. Ah well. Must be a Wednesday.

What lurks beneath your veiled insults is your own recognition of worthlessness, how you can be within and without and nothing and everything and it's all in one stroke of a blinking breath. How can the world forget about you and your mediocre Whiteness that's supposed to have made you a millionaire by now? Coasting on complacency as if that will save anyone, let alone the ideas you claim to preserve. How can someone like me, Black and woman and deemed crazy only by your lack of comprehension, have any clue what to do or where to go than your native intelligence? Dwelling in fantasies of being all that you can beeeeeee and finding zero gold in them-thar hills must really feel unfortunate. What vision is beyond the very indulgence that feels goddess-sent when there seems to be nothing else to strive for? Though sometimes it's a cushion for when there is something, because a place where everybody knows your name & calls itself your home is still needed—in moderation.

Just to be clear, I think it's fair to have the right to write about how it feels to be constantly stared at and whispered about wherever you go because your skin tone evidently highlights you as a zoo attraction to certain people. I want to talk about what it takes to attempt to exist in spaces that judge you as obvious outcast by the texture of your hair or style of clothing. I want to talk about how being in public with a book makes you a target for mockery by White mediocrity. I want to talk about how people who look at you and laugh because you apparently

breathe like a peaceful time bomb and it unnerves them for reasons they only whisper over 4 glasses of Chardonnay.

Speak of the Devil, I hear, when I walk into places I thought I could simply be, where “looking as I do” would simply be a Friday, but so far from Tennessee to Massachusetts to Colorado, living has only taught me that indeed, wherever you go, there you are. The Black-skinned one with a handful of greenback and plenty of beige pages beautified by aubergine ink, sipping tequila like nobody’s business, ever the enigma, power shaped into goddess form unfamiliar to these mountains, mainly thanks to decades of conditioning and gatekeeping and dismissal of history not so White, the glances and giggles never seem to stop. It would be one thing if it was because I was oh-so-Maybelline-born-with-it-beautiful, but that’s not what the hardness in the eyes read and the sneer on the lips say. You gaze at me as if you want me to be your marriage’s unicorn while resenting me for it. You look as if you want me to teach you how to twerk. You stare at me like you’re Buffalo Bill sizing up my skin and I’m the real American (Dream) Girl you only claim as Evil since you know and see and feel me as nothing else.

What’s in a Saturn Return? Mainly it’s the realization that not every fact you know is true, especially the ones about yourself. After that it’s navigating the looming existential crises one after another, constantly vacillating between society-prescribed sanity and your actual self, feeling the tic-tock-tic throughout your body, letting you know your innocence is definitely dwindling along with your collagen and cartilage, until one day the right trigger strikes the wrong chord and suddenly everyone around you with an old Lexapro prescription is your judge, psychiatrist, jury, and executioner. Pray you smell all the façades fractaling around, within, and without you.

What is in a lesson? The information of patterns repeating once, maybe twice, rarely thrice in a lifetime is meant to be absorbed and reflected to show tangible growth. But who is the growth for, yourself or the world? Maybe even for the Cosmos, since the student almost wants to show Teacher that they’ve learned. And what if what is being shown is the Grown Witch, the revamped version they tried over and over and O to murder on the clock and in broad daylight as if this kind of rebirth before all their shenanigans has never been known? When suddenly “seeing no color, only characters” is reciprocated that’s when certain ones get nervous of reclaiming a flip in power. Remember that it’s not starting and/or popping anything off, but finally joining the conversation, and that one’s simply trying to be all that they can beeeeeeee with what is had at the time, and working on building more with each beating breath. Sometimes when people who aren’t your audience don’t get that, they try to infiltrate because somewhere down the programming, they were told that everything was meant for them, including but not limited to spaces actually meant for you, your essence, and your sanity.

Cheers to truly knowing who holds that beautiful, beating contract now.

Generational Cures

Juneteenth boomed, sizzled all over
the neighborhood with bold righteousness.
Standing in the backyard,
Willonee's grandmother grinned at her
as fireworks continued to sail to the sky from her
umber fingertips.

"You'll inherit this someday," she beamed.
Willonee bounced as another flash
inflamed the firmament. Her amber eyes
glistened upwards as the tingle
in her hands began to ignite.
The wind blew and she closed her eyes.

Upon opening them,
the tingle in her hands remained,
but now her eyes beheld her granddaughter
waving under the sparks. It was Willonee's turn to teach.
"You'll inherit this someday," she smiled,
watching the little one cheer.

Hope You Hear This One

“Even the stars will love you!”
Whisper winds from distant seas
while carrying a hint of impending chaos.
Glow about my flesh, all for you,
this is a sacrifice, yet another,
for the first ones weren't as pure.

Ascending dimensions was the mission,
but not without knowing the weight
of all my fractals' reflections—
must be the troll toll.
Cut out gilded chunks from goddess's back like coins,
pound by pound,
the “truest” currency I've been taught to know.

Starry deserts of love across a sky
that will always be mine and yours
and hers and his and theirs and ours:
It's bound in the blood.