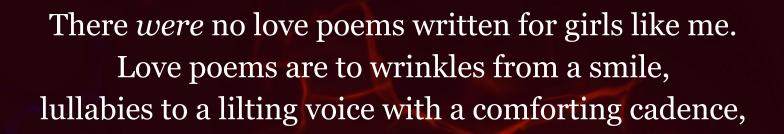


Or purple-red ringlets around my eyes from tears who wipe the dirt off my face sluggish trickles become the bayou that weave through Houston's sidewalks.

My tears are mere shadows of sadness beneath the moon's ambiguous gaze.

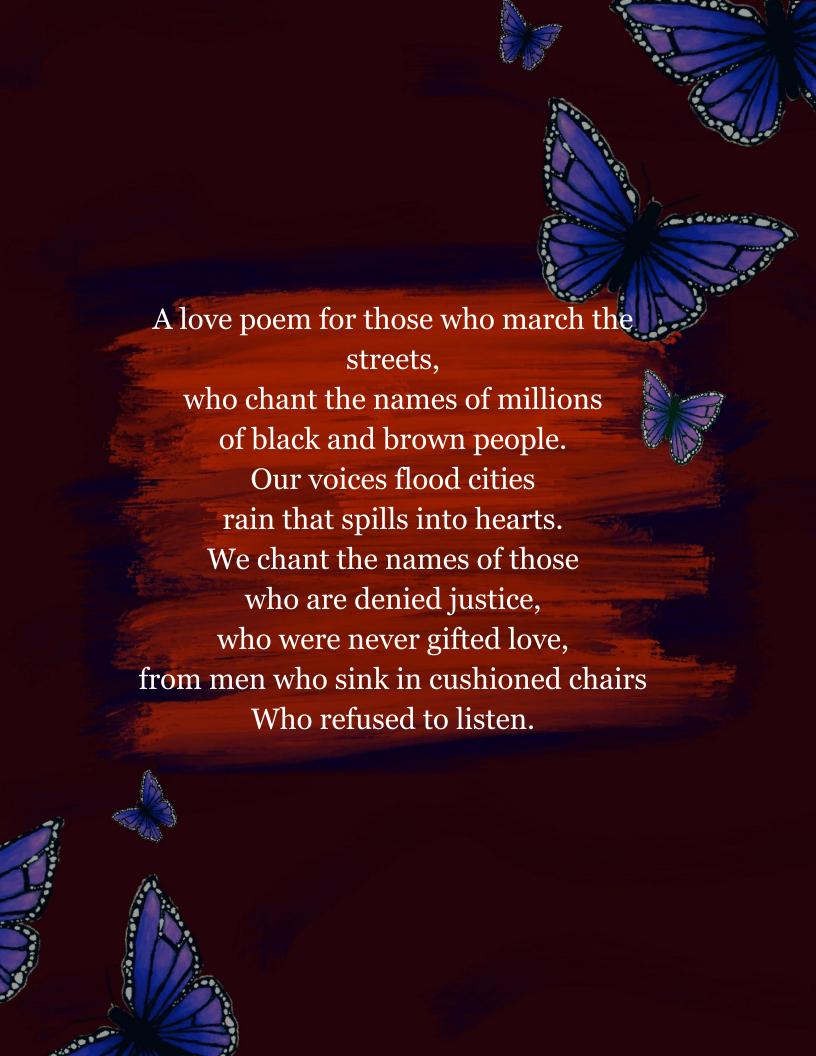
Yet the sun's brutal rays shine to furious rivers eroding scarred skin.



To giggles that are red butterflies released from parted lips.

But this is *not* a love poem to a dainty princess.

This is a love poem for you and me.

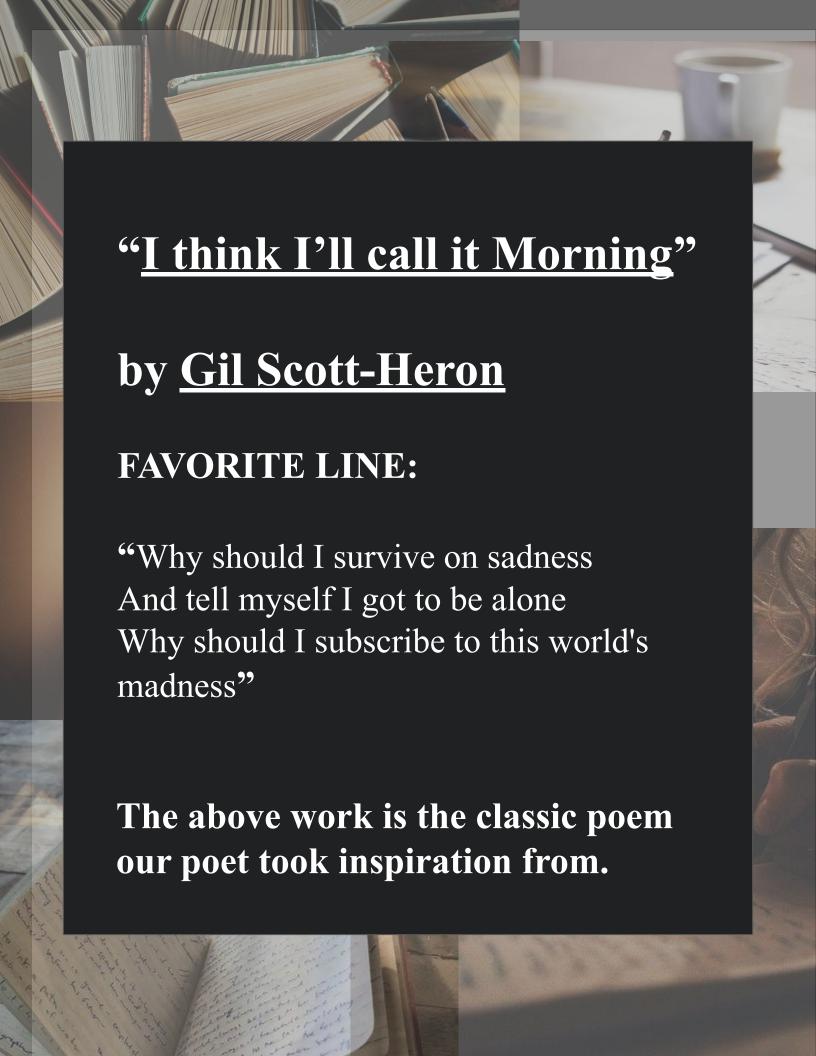




The suns brutal rays shine to furious rivers eroding scarred skin.



A moon only shines with the sun's reflection



<u>Don't Rain On My Eclipse</u> By Diamante Cameron

A moon only shines with the sun's reflection.

If clouds cover the sun,

The moon is nothing.

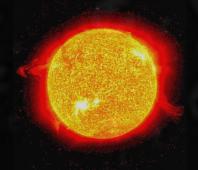
So please no rain.

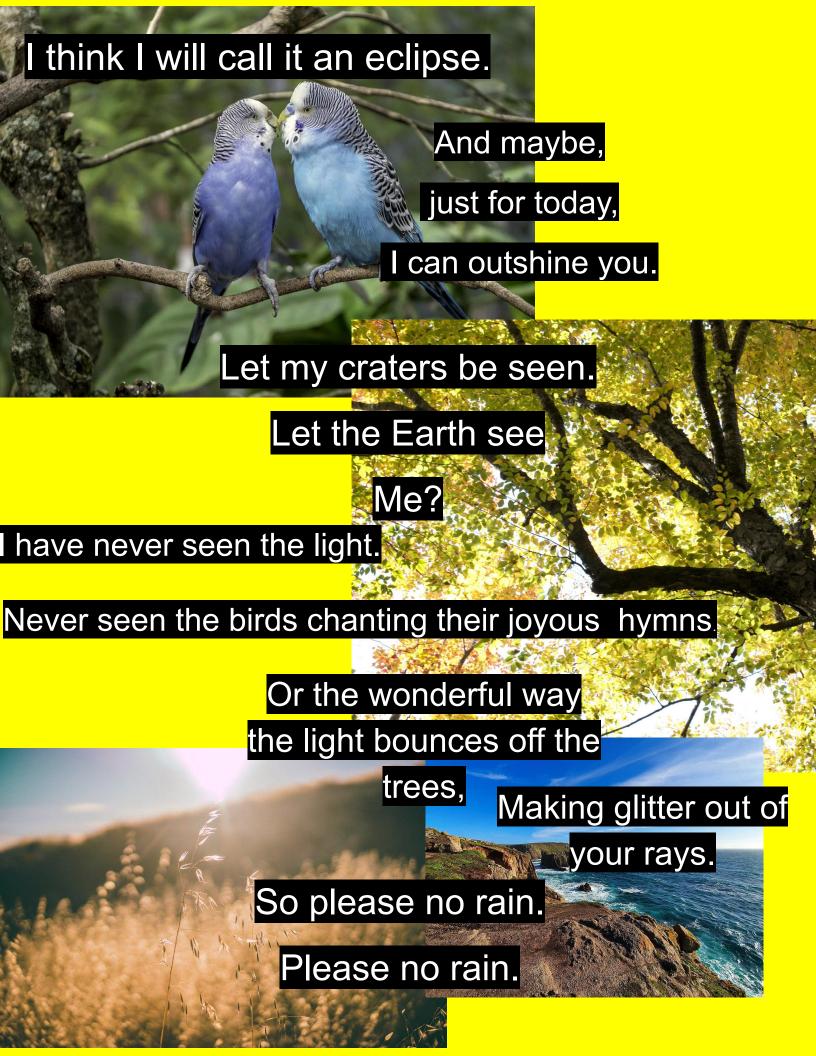
Please no rain.

I want to be a good moon Reflecting your gleaming light.

But somehow I am in front of you in the daytime my dear sun,

So please no rain...
Please no rain.





I am moving past you my dear sun.

I know now how it feels to be,

seen.

So why my dear sun are you scorching me for it?

Why aren't you shining on me?

Why did you make my sky dark?

I know I shouldn't

But I wish for rain.

Rain that will wash away all of the plants you have grown so tall.

Rain that will make mudslides out of the mountains you shine on.

RAIN THAT WILL WASH

YOU

AWAY.

So please rain

Please rain.



I think I will call it an eclipse.

And I will never stop blocking you out my deceitful sun.

Because I am a moon who controls the

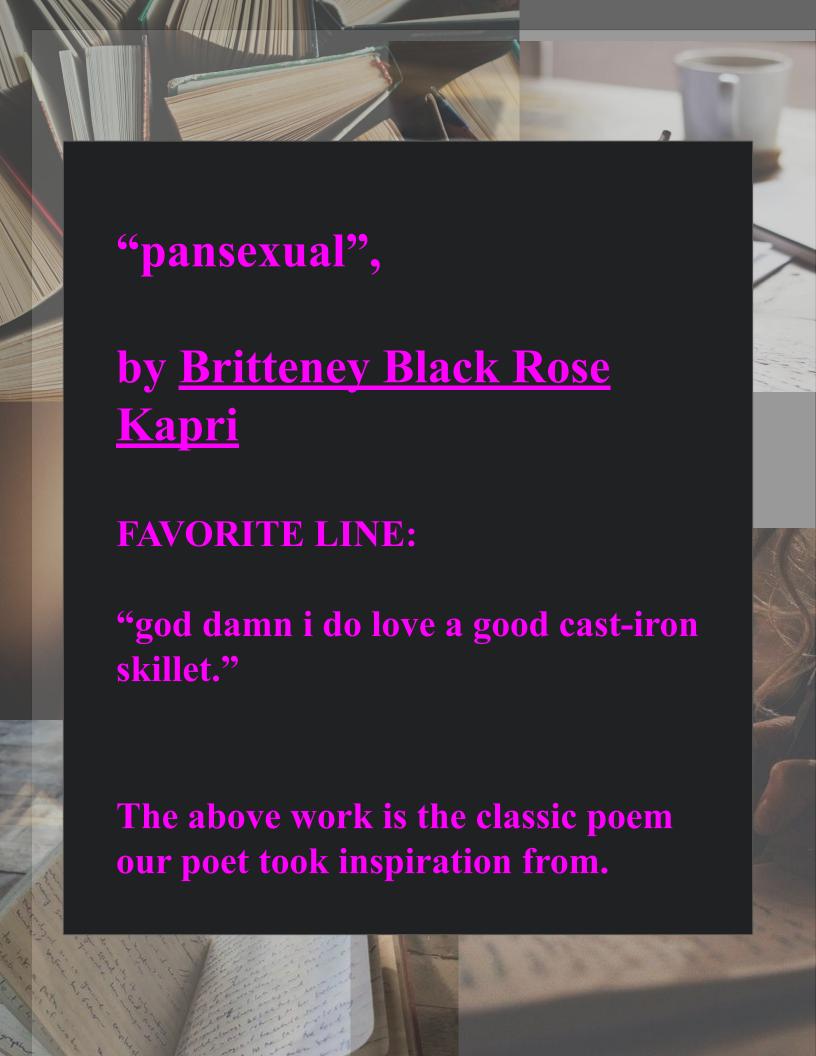
ocean's tide

So let it rain

Let It Rain. "Or The wonderful way the light bounces off the trees, making glitter out of your rays"



"this is not for, let's say, your stereotypes to glimmer in the sun..."

















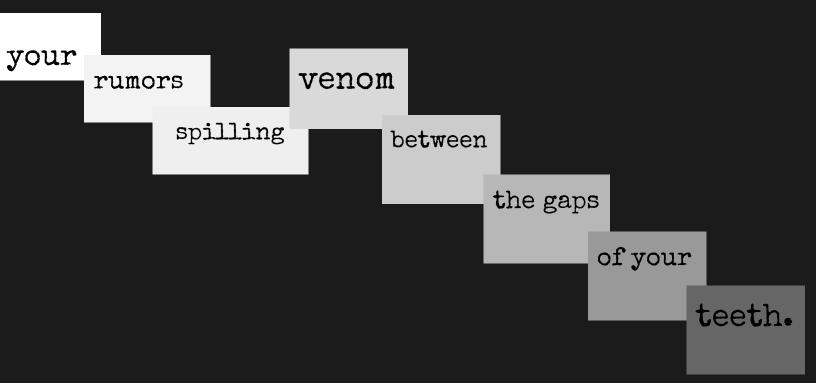






by dani.







to my lovely haters:

no, this is not a declaration.

this is not me breaching and abandoning my humble cottage far off in the closet. this is not me confirming your rumors spilling venom between the gaps of your teeth

this is not me in a phase, as if i was obsessed

with a spur of colors like your toddler loves elmo on their pampers.

this is not for, let's say, your stereotypes to glimmer in the sun, ever so honest. this is not me switching teams because they are winning and i feel safe as a winner

this is not for my flamboyant agenda, nor planner.

this is not for you nor your bigotry.

this is for loving.

this is for loving from adam to eve, this is for loving whoever the fuck i want.





"It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences."

-audre lorde.

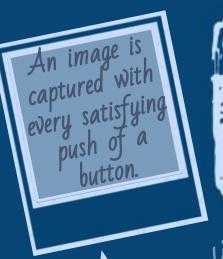


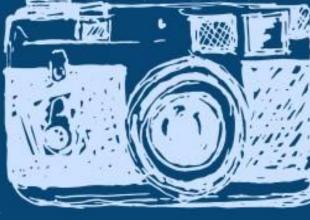


MY PERFECT PICTURE

Isabella Michaels







I inspect each



looking for my flaws

While looking at my possibilities

I am at ←WAR → with myself.

Part of me wants to choose the photo people will like

I try to "edit" myself to look like the instagram models.

With curves like valleys and skin like silk.

I want to be pretty

even though it makes me uncomfortable.

Like walking in high heels that I know don't fit.

Zoom in, Zoom
out-take a step
back and look at
the whole
picture. Should I
choose the photo
that shows who I
really am?

I am the girl most boys stay away from. I'm outspoken and have strong opinions. I'm like the truth when you know that you're telling a lie

My picture seems to say: here is the girl who wants to fix the world. My picture has a strong intensity, like a deep bass hidden within a song, booming beneath.

In my picture, I
don't have the
perfect body. My
skin is blotchy,
my stomach isn't
flat, and I'm
slightly
disproportionate.

In my picture, however,
I am comfortable. My
movements flow, almost
like I'm dancing. The
rest of the world falls
away and I'm alone
dancing within the
photography of myself.

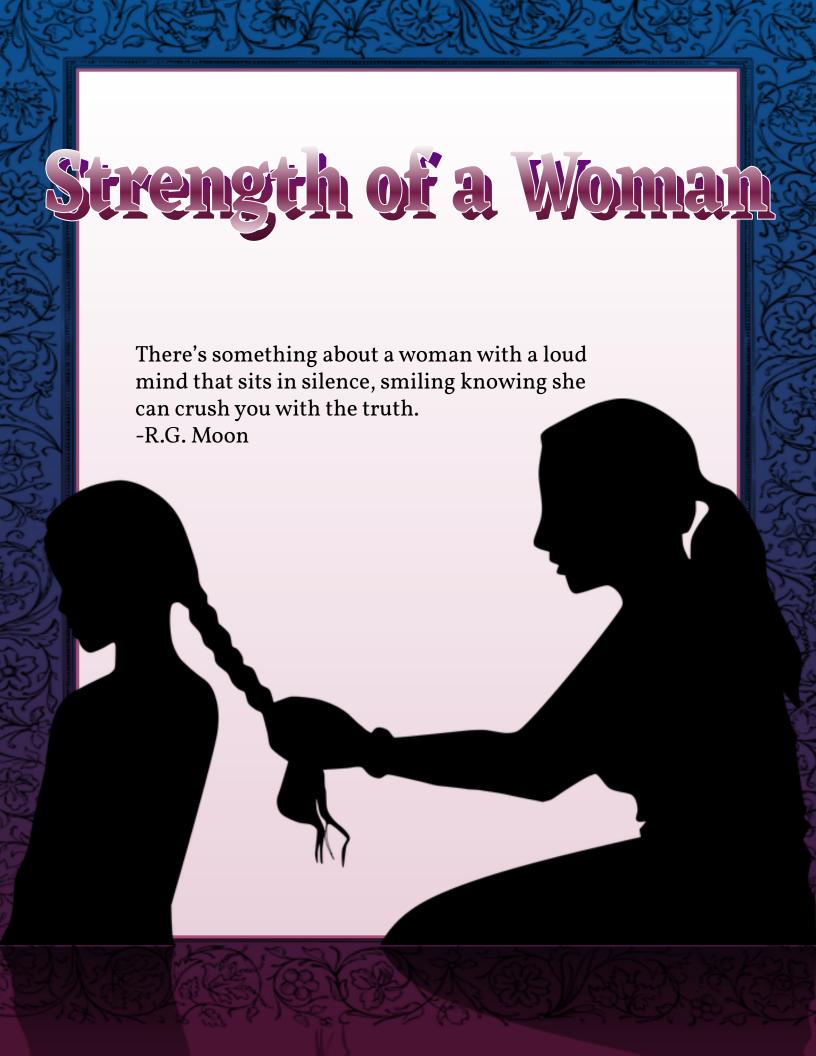


It's then that I realize how easy it would have been to be the pretty picture. People would be attracted to my sweet demeanor instead of being repulsed by my intense personality.

A simple sickly sweet smile could have been enough to mask the determination blazing in my eyes.

But who wants to <u>look</u> perfect and be dying on the inside?

So, BigXBoy keep your smile - I'm pretty damn glad
I'm not a perfect picture.





FAVORITE LINE:

"a river more ancient than this daughter of eve mother of cain and of abel"

The above work is the classic poem our poet took inspiration from.

The Mother's Will: Daughters, Stray Not From the Grape Vine

By: Salome Agbaroji

Last Will and Testament

I.

I Am/She Is

I hereby declare myself the mother of Eve.

Dawn of the stars.

Inertia of time.

Bearer of the Fleas and the Fawns

And the Whales.

Matron of creation.

To my Daughters, and Her Daughters forth.

May She inherit this river.

Periodic flow of the finest wine.

Predestining fertility of the riverbanks.

A Red Sea that Moses cannot sever

With a staff of snakes and a sword of tongue.

This womb is a staff.

Weaving tendons with the infinity of breath.

Sowing seeds bearing djembe drums

For eternal central rhythm; internal.

External: the flow of wine.

For her: a river.

Needle knowing bounds beyond the constraints of hope.

This womb is a staff.

(Fine Print)

The river: Urged from the gravity Created on Day 2.

III.

May She inherit the Garden of Eden.

Draw close to me, And stay close to me.

With this comes:

The Vines of Mana.

The Brush of Humility.

The Sage of Pride.

The Willows of Aptitude.

All of which bearing fruit.

Let her bypass the Tree of Knowledge:
Those seeds are already within her.
This time:

Let my Daughters partake in the fruit alone; For Adam and his sons are allergic. (Fine Print)

The Garden: Urged by the river Created on Day 3.

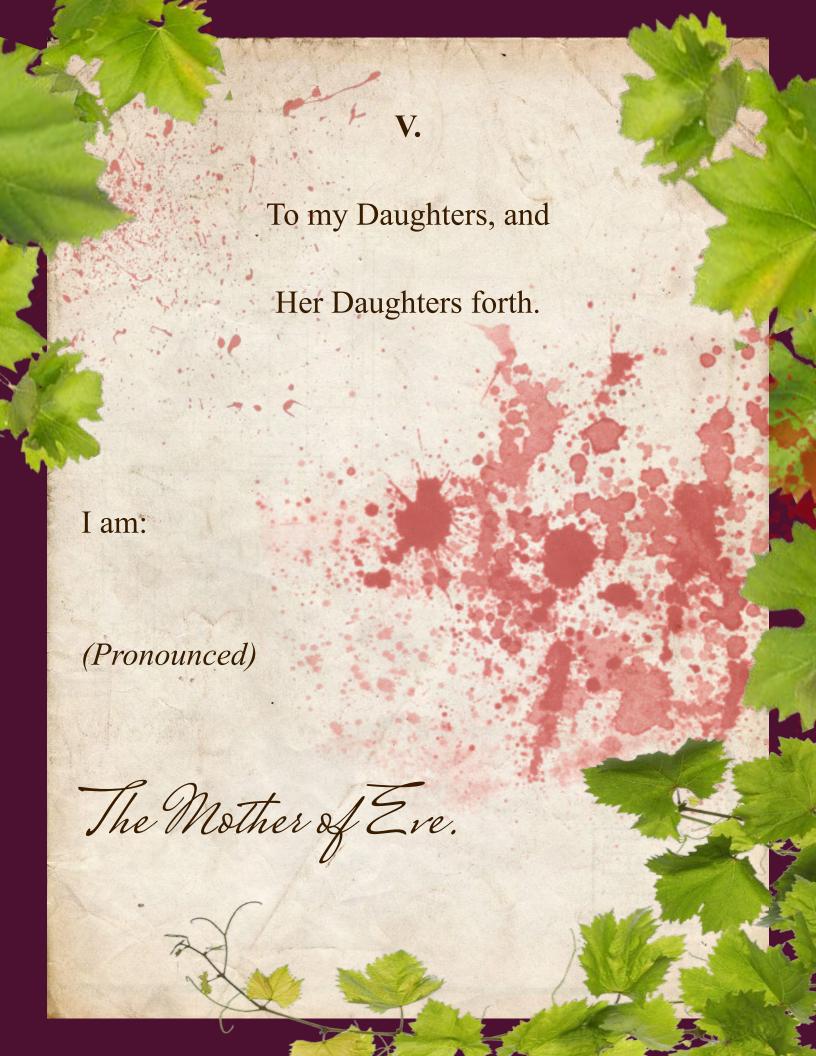
May my son-in-law inherit nothing.

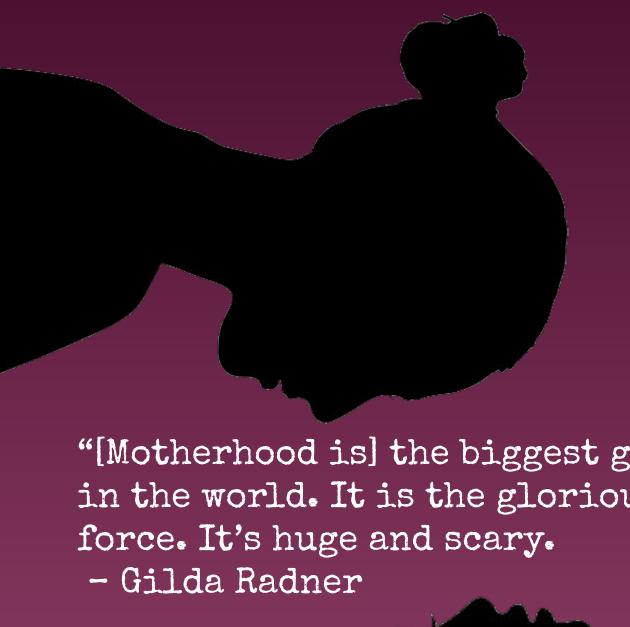
For he will take *Everything*.

V.

You will be a force.
Your chest will rise
Like a mourning Sun;
You will be envied by other stars.
You will pluck the Vines of Mana
And harp the songs of Solomon.
Your vibrations will draw schisms
Through the psyche,
But in the gorge
You are a river (vivus).

(Remove V. from final document)





"[Motherhood is] the biggest gamble in the world. It is the glorious life



Ifmothers

were ////

candles

and we

were

mortal

matches



Henry



the candles are no longer Charr clouds the room but like the copper candle burning. It's always numbed me holders against the tepid base how wick can burn through its own wax without remembering fondly how complete it was yesterday. Yesterday, I lit five candles and within four minutes only Three is more three were still burning. than none. I've always refused to understand where wax slithers after it is marked unneeded by its own kin. Is this how my mother feels when I tell her I didn't choose to be born as hers. Am I the wick she has pledged to preserve and now I think I'm immune to ash and now I've the port. I don't know where my mother will go next. Or like wax, lefthas she been waiting to be free of my burden for too long to remember, but it's been fourteen years in the making and I have let a flame flicker beneath her until she was consumed only rusted remains.

This was yesterday.

Yesterday, I felt too naked

and not exposed enough

and lit candle

after candle as if

burning another bridge

I would never have to walk over would rebuild the one on my daily route.

ľm

for saying I wanted you dead. Sometimes I omit just because we are

flammable

does not mean

we are meant to be burned.

Yesterday, I felt too naked exposed enough

and not



Our skeletons have a barrier of flesh instead of shell, yet we still understand the aching desire to not be broken and cracked open on the concrete



by Camille T. Dungy

FAVORITE LINE:

Ask me what I know of longing and I will speak of distances between meadows of night-blooming flowers.

I will speak the impossible hope of the firefly.

The above work is the classic poem our poet took inspiration from.

AS IF THE EARTH'S CORE WAS



OF

BONE.

A poem by Naomi Farkas

Nothing is mindless, least of all the world.

The world is full of tubes and flesh and secrets.

Finding monuments long lost to time is pushing your hand deep beneath the earth and pulling out the world's bones and shells and crevices.

When this churning city has fallen, when it is far underground, buried amidst the roots and sticks and spinal cords, the surface of the moss will be heaven far above our fallen dynasty

The snails will rule supreme.

Don't underestimate the power of a strong-exoskeleton and the beauty of having no spine. Don't brush off the jellyfish,

Thoughtless

and blooming

And eternal, beyond fear or pain or reconciling

It doesn't matter who will die first.



I don't speak for the spineless things, but I speak to them. They are wiser than I will ever know.

I hope someday I'll have honor to declare the caterpillars and other slippery beings a friend, or at least a friendly acquaintance.

I also speak, hopefully, to you.



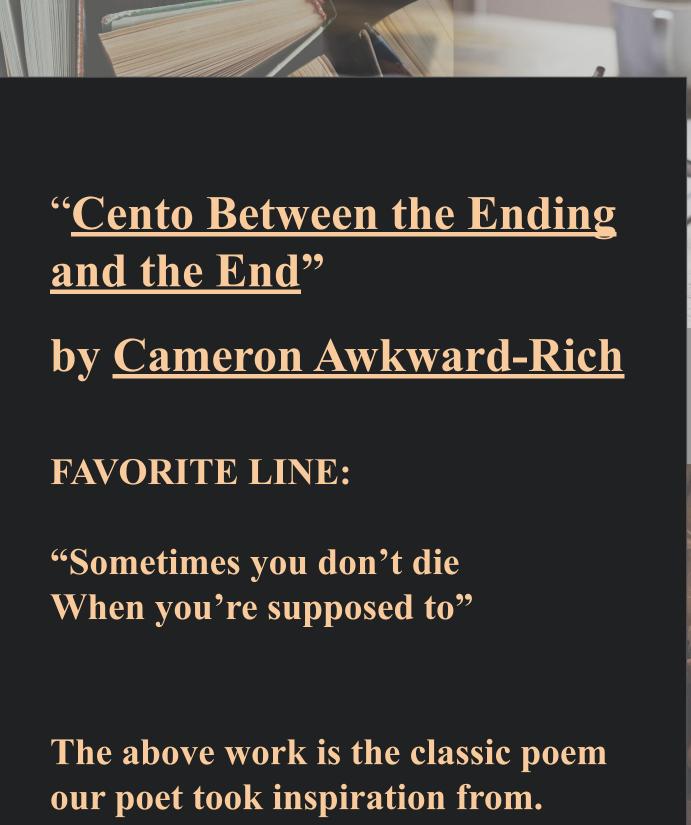
It right hurts now. It hurts being wrong, being patched together like this.



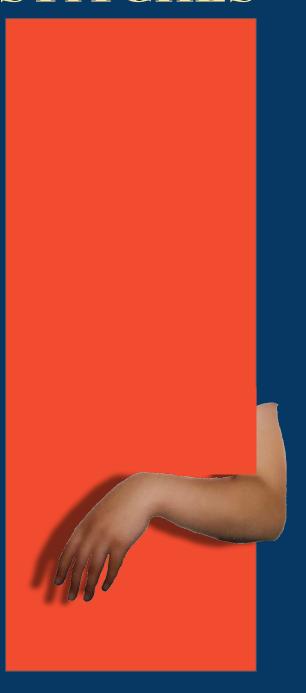
I don't speak for the spineless things, but I speak to them.



A voice which addresses itself to you.



AN INCONGRUOUS CENTO ON SEWING YOURSELF BACK TOGETHER AND PAINTING OVER THE STITCHES



BY EXIE PITOC

Tightened airways stretched as

The system a bog-Light overflowing and spilling

I speak in

mud out the bayou,

And I arrive without a damn mention
We spit venom
My acts of desperation, I'm on an empty stomach

Breathing too shallow to comply

And I dare

Fear alone to kill me instead.

Sometimes you don't die when you're supposed to.

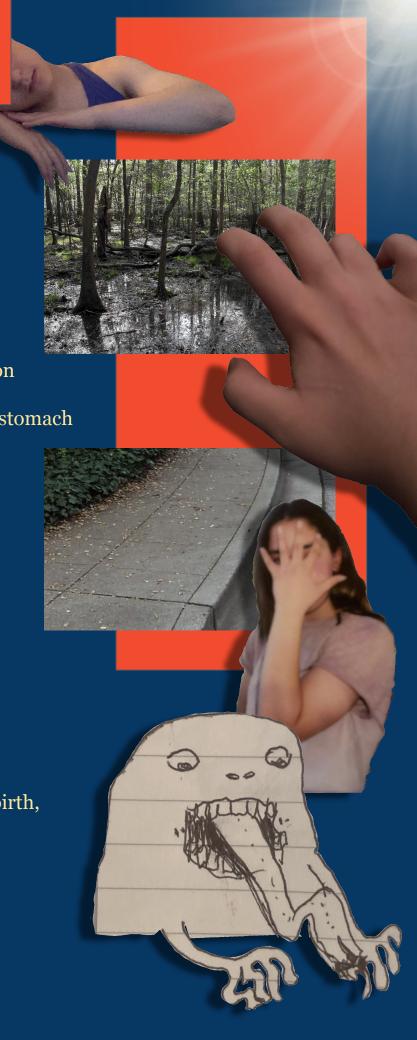
On the drop of the sidewalk The automatic ready Hot blood and bare hands

Inferior to none in the place for beauty, birth, It was scarce swallowed,

It was emphasized,

Was turned in the most dreadful shapes.

Sometimes you don't die when you're supposed to.



I know

The gold, the platina the enamel white,

just as I know *I'm living*.

This is how it should be.

A voice which addresses itself to you A monument crumbled into dust

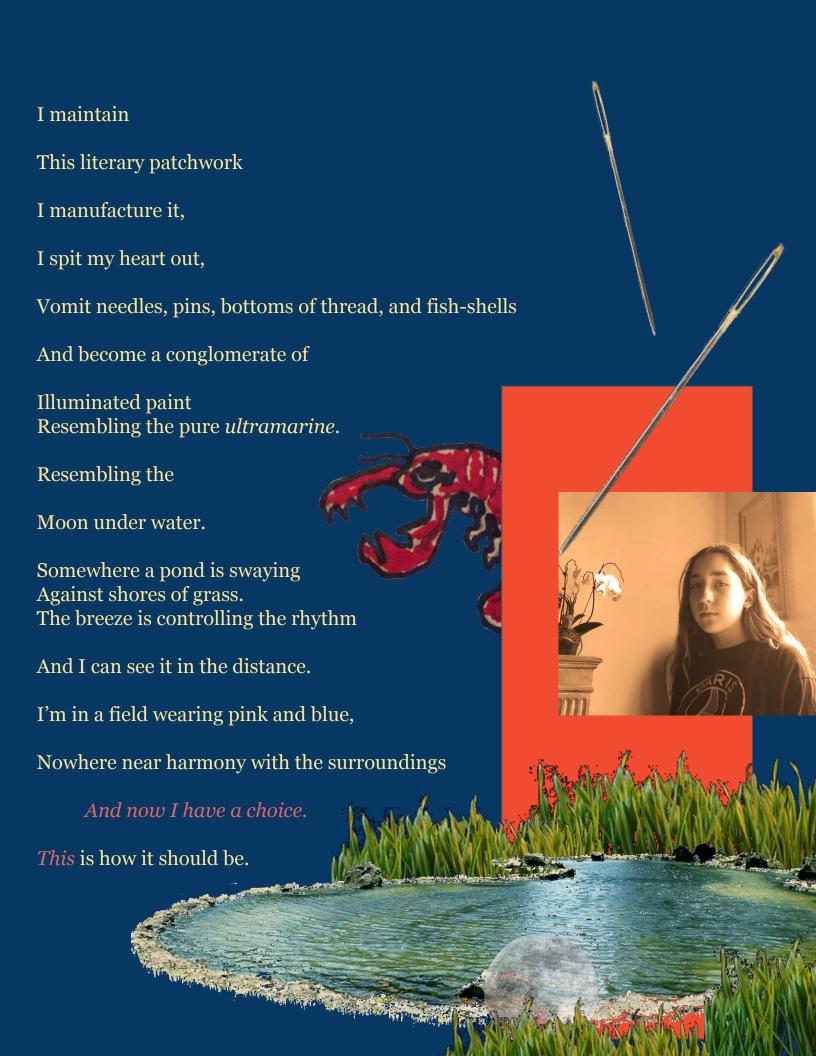
I'm dancing with myself; setting fire to the venue

I'm living.









COMPLIMENTS:

MINAL

DIA

DANI

ISABELLA

SALOME

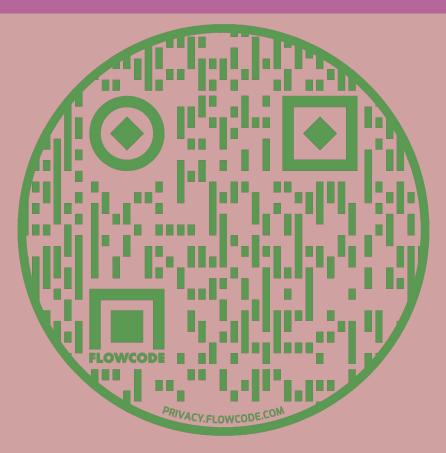
MAYA

NAOmI

EXIE

(Click the poet's name to see what the pod wrote about them!)

LISTEN TO, AND SUPPORT, SMALL BLACK AND QUEETZ ATZTISTS!



SCAN THE QR CODE OF CLICK HETZE TO STATZT LISTENING!







