

# Blood

This poem writes itself.  
The biracial adolescent,  
Conflicted in deciding not who he identifies with, but fears less.  
I am what I look like  
My creator had me fooled.

21 years of neglect living in a world,  
One that foreign people created and brought me into.  
In this redesigned world of ours, I'm affluent by nature, but

If my life dispatched itself 40 or more years into the past,  
I could be blocked out for my barricaded identity,  
Hanged by my family tree branches,  
Strangled by my own roots,  
Despite my frail, neglectful pigmentation.

In a world where people who look like me,  
Walk on people like a kid walks on stones when crossing a stream,  
It's hard to believe that 100% of my lineage had been walked-on before I.  
Seldom, I do.

I walk the earth pretending that it's been mine forever.  
I've supported this country while misconstrued,  
This country's neglect of my roots unbeknownst,  
And if known not acknowledged.

Everyone in my family bleeds red, but  
0% secretes white and blue,  
0% called this foreign land home before a generation or two ago,  
And it shows in my desires.

Independence, struggle, chasing an "unlikely" promising future,

Soothes me more than gold and silver platters,  
I'd rather overcome obstacles than become one to someone else.  
That scares my parents, and I get why.

It is my privilege speaking,  
The fact that everyone to ever share my blood,  
Had a life worse than my own,  
How I would rather understand their suffering  
Than steer clear of it.  
That is selfishness. Selfishness I cannot help.

Maybe the acknowledgement my whiteness receives deters me from it.  
My eloquence, my vibrant and positive attitude,  
My motivation to shine  
Commonly attributed to "shiny" skin.

But my tendency to let emotions consume me, defy authority,  
And seek independence would be attributed to my "dark" nature?  
The biggest fabrication of my being.  
My only soul lies where the soul itself does.

Not in the chambers of heartlessness,  
My soul gives to the betterment of everyone, ahead of myself.  
If need be, I would let African-Americans, Haitians, Jamaicans, Nigerians,  
Senegalese, especially those from my home, the DR,  
any person who is my implicit self,  
Not by race but by the context which binds us all,  
Rip my limbs to shreds.

If they wanted a parade to celebrate and embrace their heritages  
Rather than hide behind them in the eyes of monotony and a colorless world,  
Full of shades but devoid of iris,  
I'd let them toss my limbs in the air like multicolored confetti.  
That's all I am anyways.

Hair coiffed like wealth, but a forehead that belongs with a lineup  
Given to me by my uncle who cuts hair next to the laundromat and ShopRite in  
New Rochelle.

Eyes greener than a golf course come spring,  
But come fall more brown than the paper bags my cousin Hector drinks a 40 out  
of.

A smile of comfortability and innocence, coupled with thick, full lips,  
Succulent as the juice from strange fruits.

Freckles on my nose like seasoning,  
Poppy and sesame seeds on a bagel at your local coffee shop,  
Countered by the wide nose they're mounted on,  
Overbearing nostrils round like the bullet holes in a glock.

My looks are as deceiving as a black boy reaching for a smoke in his jacket pocket.  
If I pull the quarter-black out of me too abruptly, it results in uproar, confusion.  
But what perturbs me and the rest of the "woke" is that it shouldn't.  
It shouldn't result in uproar because..  
African-Americans are supposedly the ones who start uproar.

The ones who seek violence; the ones who "know no other way".  
But bullets orbiting a planet of oppressed is what creates black holes.

And this is what I can recall.  
I can recall he who rapes and pillages,  
He who bombs, and massacres,  
He who launches metallic asteroids into planet's atmosphere  
With intent to penetrate the night sky.

I can recall who adopted non-violent resistance,  
To combat a current of uproar in retaliation to a shifting tide.  
I can recall he who ripples the waves.  
It is not I, but it is I.

It is he who oppressed my grandmother, but loved myself.  
It is he who views my brown skinned baby brother as less than myself.  
It is I.

It is my hair, but not my forehead.  
It is my smile, but not my lips.  
It is my freckles, but not my nose.

Despite my physical dichotomy,  
My white blood is symbolically overbearing of any blackness.  
It is only fitting that even the best part of my identity is oppressed by my genetic tropes.

It being my identity is not a choice,  
But a natural disposition to avoid all the animosity I reluctantly represent.  
To respect all about my roots that I don't understand  
And seek to embody all that it is.

To quote the cop who shot Michael Brown, "it was an accident",  
Accidental that I revive the forgotten, uncanny resemblance  
Of 1/4th of a black man in my soul.

I like pickup basketball more than golf,  
Hip hop more than classic rock,  
Step dancing more than ballroom dancing,  
Obama more than Trump,  
Chocolate ice cream more than vanilla,  
I like pain more than medicine.

Tears of joy are sweet, Poland Spring, country house in Maine,  
Lighthouse by the lake, a petite-tasting thirst quencher,  
But the bitterness and salt in the tears of pain and suffering is unmatched,  
Nothing more pungent and ripe.

It is the acute taste of your alcoholic father's whiskey on a Sunday night.

The tears are frigid like the cold heart you were given to by the world,  
As a coming of age gift.

They say seeing your dad cry is the most powerful sight one can behold.  
Others say seeing your dad is more powerful.  
I, white by skin, dark by soul will never know.

They say getting a PhD Is the greatest accomplishment one could hope for.  
Others say it could be graduating high school.  
I, college graduation bound, by the will of my parents to instill me with higher  
expectations than they  
Or their predecessors had, will never know.

They say having a child is the greatest joy one can ask for.  
Others declare it their worst nightmare.  
Perspective in a world of subjection is water in our dehydrated humanity.  
Only perspective can saturate my heart's thirst for closure.

My nocturnal heart will not rest until nights are celebrated as every day is.  
Celebrated differently, but equally in quantity and quality,  
Celebrated nonetheless.

We should applaud the sun setting just as much as it rises.  
The celestial bodies of light in a nights sky just as much  
As the heavenly clouds on a sunny mid-afternoon.  
The moon as the sun.

The association of colors light and dark to positive and negative  
Are the most ingrained form of racism there is.  
And as a man bound by white skin and privilege from birth I stray  
Almost adamantly from using that word  
As if I know what it means.

But we learn from a young age to associate positivity with lightness,  
Negativity, inversely, dances with darkness.

I am not here to dispute what this basic principle should be deemed as.

I'm merely here to mention the 2 am conversations,  
The nightlife of a vibrant city,  
A midnight blue ocean reflecting the vibrancy of all up above,  
The moon and stars painting a night sky of beautiful absence,  
The very night sky that fuels astronomy,  
All else that makes night so beautiful.

How without its presence, day is as monotonous and dreary as is anything by itself.  
Until the world sees beauty in dusk till dawn, we have yet to live a full day.  
Until I can accept who I am with respect to where my ancestry stood on the totem  
pole of inhumane history, I have yet to see with eyes, unclouded by hate.