

A letter

Dear...

I am writing this because I remember your smile
 Your love of old Western movies with the smell of burnt popcorn and extra butter I am writing this
 because my pen and I are both black
 As is most of my wardrobe
 I am writing hoping that you will answer though I doubt you'll hear it
 I am writing
 Because yt ppl still touch me without permission
 And I cannot be their statue
 I do not belong in their museum
 And when they do
 I burn

Hoping they combust alongside me
 That their flames be enough to burn their fingerprint from my skin
 Hoping the gay white men who use AAVE tongues will swell and fall out in the same instance they
 mock black women
 Like "yas" with 3 snaps sliding syllables into laughter
 I am writing to you because I don't want to forget what it means to love someone who looks like me
 Nor to ever feel like it's too much work
 I want these yt ppl to get this work
 Catch the hands of a thousand fists
 To know what it means to have everything stolen and not called theft, not be returned

I am writing to you because it hurts to feel this much anger
 To double over from fists to my gut and my back
 To hurt so much I become used to the ache in my shoulders
 To want my hands red with their privilege
 Because when they don't say excuse me
 I will remind them of all this humanity
 All this magic they think they own
 They think they know how to use

Show them we can knuck if you buck
 That i've never Not been ready
 That I remember you and all your wisdom and all your love

I remember your smile, every black person who has dared to show me love
 My granny who stirred love in her cooking, my sister(s) whose smile made my sun an eclipse
 My grandfather whose laugh was a river of knowledge
 A bouquet of deceased tulips I keep in the vase because they are still beautiful

And Yet
It won't stop me from showing them what it means to slide thru
To show up and show out
To square up, to molly-wop
To side-swipe
To mob
To learn
To unlearn and learn again
How to live, and dance
And thizz-dance, and shoulder lean while loving someone who looks like me
To putting in the work to love all of me
I am writing this
To remind myself to breathe
That to inhale, does not mean complacency