

Little Sister

By Julie McCurdy

little sister
hold that sneer
do you honestly believe
these hips
havent been there?
do you think
the scent of your smile
hides
the lack of laugh lines
around those beautiful eyes?
do you think
i havent felt
the fear behind the flirt?
or the desperation
in the promiscuous slide
of those arms
around his neck?
rest assured
little sister
a grown man
doesnt require
the honey
between your thighs
to grant his protection....
and he can't
be your validation
no you ain't
the next barbie doll queen...
u just another
little girl
trying to get grown...

rest assured little girl
that when
beauty was my only weapon
i was
a beautiful woman....
don't let that gaze slide
over these scars
in such a sinister fashion
hush up little one
and listen....
they rest on my skin...
because
i valued my loved ones
over vanity
they are marks of honor
not shame or sin....and i am not
gonna hide them
to ease that smile
or your comfort
back into place....
rest easy child
i own the skin i live in
its values or content
isnt contagious
you wont catch anything
by sitting next to me...
except maybe the ability to see past
those narrow little misconceptions
you seem so intent
on keeping

Blue

by Kareem Ali

Imagine
Mule deer
Grazing in blue mountains
Or sea-green grasses
Rolling in from a station of steams.

Imagine
Blue magnolias
Simmering above wooden fences
Or a lotion of light
Emerging into a locust of sun.

Imagine
Your eyes
Garnished in a soup of blue twilight
Caught in a tissure of air
Collapsed into that last fissure of night
Burning



"It feels so good when people say,
'Good morning,' and smile at me."

— Allen Bennett Jr., Street Roots vendor

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