

Process Work #3

mom said I couldn't paint my room brown
Said it was too dark to sponge up sun
Said I would lay my head in a space that was black as backs of eyelids
And tire marks
Said there's nothing wrong with dark
But you gotta take the right dose
Said too much will sop ya up with a biscuit and eat you alive
that brown on my walls will first diffuse light
and then drain life out of my own eyes
like blood do from bodies
And Breath do from black boys
Said she's afraid I'll turn into shell
That I'll mock a door knock when she touch me
And she'll encounter an echo if to whisper in my ear
Said she knows how winter wraps around my abdomen like corset
Pinches the parts of me that lay soft and untamed
She knows how cold plays The Cat's Cradle with my waist
Cracks ribs and cuts blood cells
Twists organs out of place
Said she know how crucial the vitamin D is to me like I need it
the way I need it to complete my name
She calls me Dyl
And without the vitamin I'll just be yl(ill)
She know when the sun catches its first chill and has to cover up with clouds pieces of me go
missing
Said she's afraid I'll go missing
a brown room dark enough to swallow a child up
She asks if a black girl get snatched
And the whole world is there to witness
Will anybody make a sound?
she needs no response
64,000 girls were painted on to this country with a brush dipped in disappearing ink
She inspects my elbows everyday make sure they still scratch dark and rough
Winter makes me so pale she gotta check twice to see if I'm starting to go clear as my sisters
out here
She said the idea of my absence is too loud for her to sleep at night
Said that brown walls will carve dusk into bottomless
And days into seasonal depression that adapt like cockroach
Stay with me through all the weathers
mom said I couldn't paint my room brown
but I can't afford to look at anymore white

I am a freckle in every AP class
A stare in every space I step
sleep deprivation torture involves lights blaring so bright white is all you see
School days are parallel to tactics of the army
I've been strapped in this chair for 17 years
never had a brown skin teacher that wasn't a sub
barely see students that are black as blinks
Skin so fair everywhere I have no choice but to focus in class
Could never get any sleep

Mom said I couldn't paint my room brown
She says it's too dark but I think she means I am
At least too dark not to worry about
The world is showing its sharp parts again to people that look like me
And she needs no reminder when people trying to poach her child is all she sees
so I wrap my walls in peach
And she looks pleased as any scarred mother can really be
Says a dark room would just have made me tired
She doesn't see that tired tangles around every piece of me
but mom is white
And she tries
But she can't quite comprehend how exhausting being black and endangered can be

Process Work:

I only have three pieces of process work because the other work I edited directly and turned them into final drafts and do not have copies of the original rough drafts.