

Observational Poems

**Black is the Black
is the Black**

Wait for It [In Five Colors] or I have a high tolerance for (to Audre Lorde)

Black

woman lay hands lay lotioned hands on lay lotioned calloused hands
on in this Black woman
I'm going to tell you to relax
Will you?
Will you try?

Brown

ridges & folds & mounds & hills &&&& knots & valleys traced lines lines & forged grooves
through breathe in &
breathe out & slow deep in & slower
shallow out
Deeper
Longer to
Nose to nose to
Nose to mouth
to Mouth to nose to
Coax it
Mold it
Glide it
Push it
Carve it
Self tools dulled & fooled
with wear
with tear
with years

I have a high tolerance for

Any cuts or bruises I should be aware of?

You can take it
You can hold it
You can collect it
You can block it
Contort it distort it knock it out
of line
off sync
But you can't you won't
release it release them
Yet

White

wooden window shutters inside the house
the same shutters in the same bathroom in the same house my entire my entire
memory life
that cover only the middle.

Caked in dust with a
new paint job every several years stray brush hair a marker of
a new layer of to the point hinges don't bend to bend to bend
hovering hovering waiting pressure pressure
Permanent curve to the spine to the cage
to will to break to will to break to break to break

Reinforced with Black iron security bars & Black netting bracing bracing from the outside
Long abandoned bees comb a home a home & then a shell
Existing in between
Solid standing still
through storms through rain
through wind through sun
Distorting outside

Red

Brick clay baked
Built a wall around around
the parameter &
reinforced it
in bone
in muscle
in fat
Hips too tight
You hold it there
Too tight you say?
But how could that be?
I'd opened them wide
& changed for it
Again
& paid for it
Again
& cried for it
Again
Drawbridge pull back pull up
Again
All right now team!
Seal it tie it pack it all all ALL in

Thursday said too open
Friday said too tight
Saturday said too closed
Good Southern lady
Keep it locked keep it tight keep it closed keep it right
Hips or head or heart?
They'd scratched it, retreated
You'd excavated, retrieved it

How loose is your goose?
How loose is your goose?
How loose is your goose?

Neck seized
Shoulders stiff
Loins shut

Release it

Ticklish doesn't isn't
always ticklish mean
When you know it's tight, you'll

Release it

Hands shaken shook
& you leave me

Blue
jazz peaks &
Cried naked underneath
Cried staring up
fluorescent lights turned off
Cried for _____ for _____ for _____ for me
Cried this year for this year for this
Gravity you remind me
My wish for thee
Take space, my love
Take care, my friend
waiting coming holding
on for in
this this new next New Year.

Two black women
Sit parallel
Starring at
Two windows
Sit parallel
Two sets of mini blinds
cut the Light
Overcoming
Come over
Coming over
Climbing over
Hang over under
Facials herbals eggs
hairs and dogs
Peel scrub smoke smoke haze
Speaker vibrations waves waves behind
lulling
them
back to
About last night about yesterday
about 12 hours ago about a
moment past
[beat]
Two black women
Sit parallel
Starring at
Starring out at
Two windows
Sit parallel
Bright too bright Beyond
Blue skies
no clouds
clouds inside
Squeal Children shrill
Play with sticks
outside.

It's time to upgrade from plastic to glass
Glass is grown woman shit

Harlem mornings (walk walk walk)
Headache pound til coffee coffee time
Sunshine kissing kissing kissing
the old the aged the young the brick the glass the marble the concrete the wood the boarded up the
framed around the revitalized the renewed and the brand spanking spanking New.

[beat]

The wide wide boulevards and avenues
of 10 20 30 shades
of chocolate
of au lait
of cream &
the early morning tour groups groups of
Walk walk walk

[beat]

view you view me view we
Walk walk walk

[beat]

Convert me
Walk walk walk
which temple which house which church
to Allah
to Black Jesus
to Jehovah
to Muhammad

[beat]

Pre-k afroed princesses
tiara-ed and carriage Pushed
by male chauffeur Black
their colors
shades of Pink.

Preteen knights Black
a line of three
staring at mirrored reflections Adjusting
do-rag helmets waving behind
their colors Orange and Teal.

Older gent Black
mayor of his block
sunglasses on On
his colors
white white White head to toe.

Walk walk walk

[beat]

Sidestreets storefronts shout Outs
From a car Aretha Call me
Aretha Call me
Call me when
you get there.

[beat]

In the stillness is when I think of you,
Sitting.

In Bed Stuy
newly Spring Sunday
Afternoon,
pausing
at an intersection
Cream Cadillac
with
Brown details
passing
with Older Black gentlemanplayapimpdandy cruising
Black shades
Cream suit
Brown fedora
styling
"All night long (I'm gonna give it to you)"
grooving
on
past Potomac Playground
with
Brown and Black kids
playing.

[MORE TO COME, SORTING THROUGH YEARS]