

“Cardi B Tells Me About Myself” by [Eboni Hogan](#)

Dear Frustrated in Flatbush,
Gurl, just go on ahead then.
You waiting for your Daddy
to give you the thumbs up?
Do what you like.
Do what makes your ass happy.
They gon’ call you all makes
and sizes of hoe anyway.
That’s how this thing been set up.
But just cuz they name a thing a thing,
don’t mean it ain’t still named God
in some other language.

Your fortune cookie say you poppin’.
You a full spread of good shit.
Your rotten wisdom tooth.
Your pockmarked shoulders.
Those eyelashes ain’t come here
to talk about the weather.
You the hottest day in July
and every fire hydrant in this city
is written out to your name.

Whatchu dead fish for?
Whatchu call that stroke?
Drowning? Baptism?
Gurl, you betta lick that
collection plate clean
and stop pretending you just
got off the first canoe from Heaven.
You ain’t nothin but
a big bowl of sweat rice.
You wring your left thigh,
they call you Vintage JuJu.
They like, “This some kind of nightmare?”
And it’s just you, smoking a blunt in the dark,
cackling like rain. Like your grandmama
at her ain’t-shit husband’s funeral.
Bitch, you been a woman.
This ain’t new skin.
Slap some Lycra on it
and call yourself a predicament.
You ain’t just somebody’s meal plan.
Pull back your hair and eat.

And look at this muhfukka,

sittin across the table,
lookin like he wanna bite you.
Tonight is tonight and tomorrow
might be somewhere else,
serenading some lesser bitch.
Throw his ass a bone and
stop worrying about your credit score.

You stay banging your tambourine
to the wrong hymnal.
I'm sure they had names
and inescapable mouths but
what your ex gotta do with this?
Why you still got his body in your linen closet?
That's nasty. Bitch, keep your house clean.
You crying over spilled dick. Gurl buh-bye.
Getchu a free refill.

You too black for indie film housewife.
You too naked for conversation like this.
Too much soft brutality,
too much bathtub depression.
Why you always got your neck swung open?
Free throat don't pay for your boy's sneakers.
You already know I don't even sigh for free.
Shit, I stroke a shallow strobe light,
inchworm down 4 feet of greasy pole,
and I still don't feel like any less than a miracle.