

Eyes find me

My eyes carve a path away
A pot bellied man.
The skinny girl.
The lurid and grimy boy with no hat.

Their eyes find me
They always find me
But I do not look back.

I pray my silver blinders protect me,
If only...

Behind my eyes
Emotions flow
And they want me to speak

Oh, how they want me to speak.

'No, I don't want to talk' I think
'No, I do not wish to converse.' I wish

I wish my words were brave.
But they are not.
Maybe I never was.

I wish I had been brave as a child
To stand up to the man
You know him
You must know him

He had scissors
And an apron
A big black chair with a booster for me
And a loud screaming thing
It growled and ripped
Tore and swore

Oh how I wish I had been brave then
To stand my ground, and
Not come around, and
declare

My blackness does not accept this
My blackness tells me I am supposed to be different
No matter what I say or do
I will always be their image of fear

So why would I contort
To shelve **your** fears
And change my form to calm you?
Why should I reduce my height
Until I am lost like Sampson
Faced with my own Philistines.
Losing my strength

Your fears made me throw away my black fisted pick
Toss away my new green jar of Afro-Sheen
Why?
Just so **you** can feel better?

I couldn't see my adult self yet
I did not know my grown self
My stronger self
My India.Arie I-am-not-my-hair self
My Lady Gaga I-am-my-hair self
My long nappy headed self
With dreads
With beads
With braids
With locks
Whatever I want
Me being me

because I can!

And you only wish you could

In my beautiful blackness I rejoice
Where you are forced to accept me for who I am
And for what God said I should be
Not who you want me to be

I could use my hair to give me privacy
My hair-To shield my eyes
My hair-To speak for me
My hair-To announce my kingly entrance
My hair-To cause a stir
My hair could've been my trumpet wailing herald
To sing for me a long loud song
Filled with colors and waves
But no

I wasn't brave
And still I am not
So I adjust my removable silver blinds
And I just walk