

MELANIN STRONG

By Adetola Adedipe (aloT of Poetry)

Colour is vibrant, rhythmic - mystic.

We dance in the changing shadows and glisten in the light.
Our skin is papyrus and our lives the ink that
bleeds into our children
and their children
and their children.

Our legacy etched into the ages in an hourglass
Filling with Earth -flowing through time.
I was born of the earth mother and her pigment runs through me
from rich wet earth to scorching Sahara and every tone of golden brown
in between and entwined
Every hue capable of being captured
by the human eye.

I am the strong men and women oppressed for their pigment.
Taught images of prejudice
that sits in the front of their consciousness.

The little white boy afraid of the Boogey man
Grows up to be a cop- gun at the ready.
Afraid of the unarmed hooded figure with his hands up
telling him to just... stay steady.

We are the children of colour who are gunned down
for being more than our crime.
because a little black boy running around with a toy
doesn't belong in this this world -
a world where their kids can run around killing mine.

I'm not saying it's all of you but you know it's not just me.
When have you had to be scared of what you were born into this world
What the world has already decided what you will be?

To be ashamed for your skin or you're "doing the most."
Trying to say your life matters but all they hear is "we matter most"
To be seen as human and not a different entity is all we ask.

No.

To be treated like we're human is what we demand.

We aren't weak because we still push back
Slowly regaining our confidence
Reclaiming our swag
We're not suddenly offended it's always been wrong.
We're here and we're not going away
Open your eyes:
This is Melanin Strong

We're all the same players but the rules need to change.
Don't shrug us off and call it the "race card"
because we'll play it every day
Until you realize that this isn't a game.