

Lightskinned
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Would you believe me if I told you both my parents are black,
Neither of them white
No, you wouldn't
my race and identity are assumed simply by how I appear on the outside
I am judged instantly upon view without a second glance
Being perceived as belonging or not belonging
I am black
Being around me is comfortable
a light face with a welcoming smile
With a smile or a twirl of my naturally tight coiled hair,
I can calm the fears of white people who surround me
Being told I am Pretty is never the end of the statement
Always followed by a
" what are you mixed with"
Like my blackness can't make up the bright face and afro-textured hair
that I keep styled to perfection
Like it can't stand on its own, almost needing
A splash of caucasian to make it "better"
Never once questioned by my own but always
Light enough to be considered one of the good ones
But
Too black for the white kids
I am black
Often times my light skin comes with privilege
Forgiven for a traffic violation
Or being excessively celebrated for being a scholar
Like those of darker skin shouldn't also be congratulated or celebrated
Or excused and forgiven for a traffic ticket
My skin with less melanin exempts me from these things
But I am black
My choice of words and ability to code-switch almost to perfection
Creates discussion and whispers
I am black
Breaking generational curses
Overcoming obstacles and building paths
I am black
Never ashamed and always empowered
I wear my yellow-tinted skin, my blackness like a sheet of diamonds
I am black
My hair not so kinky
My skin not so dark
But I am black

