

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Denesha LaFontant: Two Poems

Denesha LaFontant · Sunday, April 23rd, 2023

dear black child

after Danez Smith's "summer, somewhere"

*i am blessed to have been given the task
to guide, nurture, and protect you*

*but before you go and face white america
i must remind you,*

*your birth was not a mistake,
a life destined to bring light in a world of darkness,
a life that matters*

*your skin is not an error,
it reflects the glory of the sun
and the strength of your ancestors*

being born black is never wrong

*

an open letter to the white boy from queens who sang the n-word in a song

after Matthew E. Henry

being the only Black girl in the room,
all eyes turned to me, in a state of breathless anticipation,
time stood still, the clock stopped ticking,
my world stopped, yet yours kept going.
skin pale as snow, eyes blue as clear skies on a summer day,
you did not stutter, the slur rolled off your tongue with ease,
it was not the first time or an accident.
singing, dancing, drinking,
your movements were drenched with privilege,
unaware, unbothered, unfazed

of how deep the word cuts
reopening scars on the backs of my ancestors.
but you are not racist,
because you are from Queens and smoke a little weed,
you're just as entitled to the word as I,
after all, you are a heterosexual white man,
and I am a Black woman, living in your world.

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