

GENERATIONNEXT

what's your story?



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A DIGITAL MAGAZINE FOR BLACK YOUTH



A YEAR

JANUARY
2021
VOLUME 3
ISSUE 1

LIKE NO OTHER



Editor's Note

The end of the year brings us an opportunity to reflect about the past and look forward to the future. In a year in which so many unprecedented events have happened, there is comfort in knowing that the future is our own, and we still have a say in how it turns out.

I created GeneratioNext to give Black youth, such as yourself, a safe place to vent those feelings, to tell your stories, and to create your own narratives about who you are, instead of letting others do it for you.

I continue to be excited about having a platform where you can tell your stories and define your own narratives. I look forward to expanding the number of content creators as we move forward.

2020 was definitely a year like no other, and while a new year will no doubt bring new challenges, it will also bring new hope and new opportunities. I'm personally excited to continue to share your stories, and can't wait to see what this new year will bring. I look forward to a year full of new stories and connecting with you all in new and innovative ways.

Until next time...

DR. ANGELA N. PARKER
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF





A

YEAR

FULL

OF

NEW

POSSIBILITIES



THE 10% OF THE 100%

By Nykearah Redding
IG: nyuearahr

2020 has been one heck of a year, it has allowed most if not all of us time for self evaluation and hopefully some self improvement. Like many of you I can say that 2020 has been one of the hardest years for me mentally. It has challenged me in ways that I would have never thought and it has made me confront some of my deepest problems and insecurities. The truth is I could sit here and point out all the negatives because that would be so easy considering there were so many. But today I'm not going to take the easy way out I'm going to share the positives that came from this year.

The thing that I would consider the most positive would be that we got to experience 2020 together. I know some of you may not see the big deal of this but I do. 2020 has allowed us to break this unrealistic idea of perfection. We have seen some of the most "put together" people struggle and fall apart. This year has allowed us to see that everyone goes through what we go through. While it may have been only short lived, we got to witness society take a break from their obsession with perfection and embrace all the imperfections that we as a whole possess.

One thing that this past year has made me realize was that we all seem to follow this rule that I like to call the 10% of the 100%. It's where in any social setting where we have to present ourselves we take the part of ourselves that we see fit for that situation and present it and glorify it. This part that we choose to present only accounts for about 10% of who we are. We spend so much time with this 10% of us, we make sure it's "perfect" and "flawless" so that we may fit in. Now this seems like such a great idea at first until you invest so much time into this 10% of yourself that you forget that the other 90% still exist. We convert our personalities around societal expectations and as soon as we see someone who wants to break the social norm that we have created in our heads we automatically associate them with being a rebel, unique or sometimes just plain weird. The truth is we all are unique we've just convinced ourselves that we're just like everyone else.

We fail to see how truly amazing we are. Look what you've accomplished this year. Look how far you've come. If 2020 has taught you anything it should be that life goes by so quick. What are you going to do with it. How are you going to present yourself. We have got to get out of this pretend bubble and be authentically us.

The best part about us is not the 10% that we show. It's the whole 100%, the good, bad crazy, angry, emotional, boring, toxic, healing parts of ourselves. Everyday is a struggle, everybody is struggling with something no matter how big or small. So instead of focusing on perfecting this small part of us, let's focus on embracing all of us. You will spend your whole life figuring out what you want and who you are. The best part about this life here is learning and growing and we can't do that if we keep trying to hide ourselves in this closet of shame and humiliation. Embrace all of you, even if you haven't reached 100% of your personality and you're still figuring it out. Give all you have to give right now because the right people will see you for all those imperfections and they will love you not just 10% of you. They've already seen that 10% now it's time to present the rest.

LIBEST

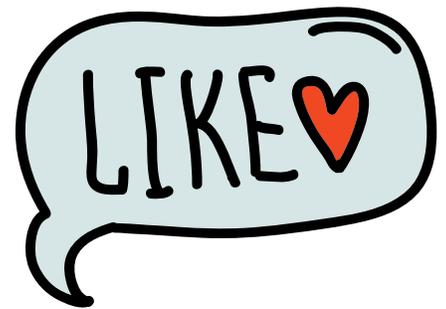
LI WORST

2020

A YEAR LIKE NO OTHER

BY LYNDSEY SANDS
IG: LINDSEYBURNEROFBREADFOLLOW

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IG: @WOAHITSVIVIAN



As the year ends, we take a look at our picks for the best and worst of 2020.

Best Songs:

WAP/Toosie Slide

Peng Black Girls Remix by Enny ft. Jorja Smith

Why: It makes an effort to uplift all Black women and the vocals are phenomenal!



Best Album

Good news/Whole Lotta Red

Ungodly Hour by Chloe x Halle

Why: Chloe x Halle discuss the trials and tribulations of being a young woman in this day and age as they explore love, self-worth, and loneliness while serving the people unearthy vocals and chords!

Best Fashion Trend

E-boy style/Dyed front hair strips

Best YouTube Star/Show

CORPSE Husband/Shane Dawson

D'Angelo Wallace

Why: He creates amazing and thought-provoking commentary on social issues and people with large platforms while using unique visuals to get his points across.

Best Movie/Show

Never Have I Ever/Outer Banks

Best Artist - Singer/Actor/ Rapper

Megan Thee Stallion/Lil Baby

Chloe x Halle

Why: They are beautiful and talented young women who have been working tirelessly in the industry since they were pre-teens and just got major recognition this year with their new album, Ungodly Hour. Not only do they have exceptional voices, but they are also creative when it comes to their fashion looks and stage presence. Though they have been constantly snubbed this year when it comes to the awards, they still remain humble.

Best Video Game / Gaming System

PS5/Xbox

Best Social Media App

Tik Tok

Why: It helped everyone to see positivity during uncertain times and worked to give a balance of fun and education.

Best Trends of 2020

Ordering Through Apps - Postmates, Uber Eats, Door Dash, etc

Thing Everyone is Doing

Tik Tok

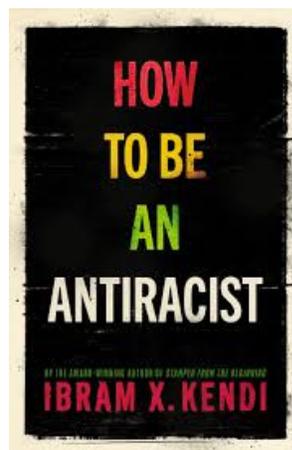
Why: It kept everyone sane during quarantine and worked to educate others on societal issues that would never be broadcasted on major news networks.



Best Book

How to Be an Anti-Racist by Ibram X. Kendi

Why: With racial injustice being at the forefront of conversation this year, this book brought everyone's biases to light, regardless if the individual is Black or white.





MAKING BEAUTIFUL MUSIC: INNER CITY YOUTH ORCHESTRA MAKES HISTORY

By Angela N. Parker

IG:ap925344

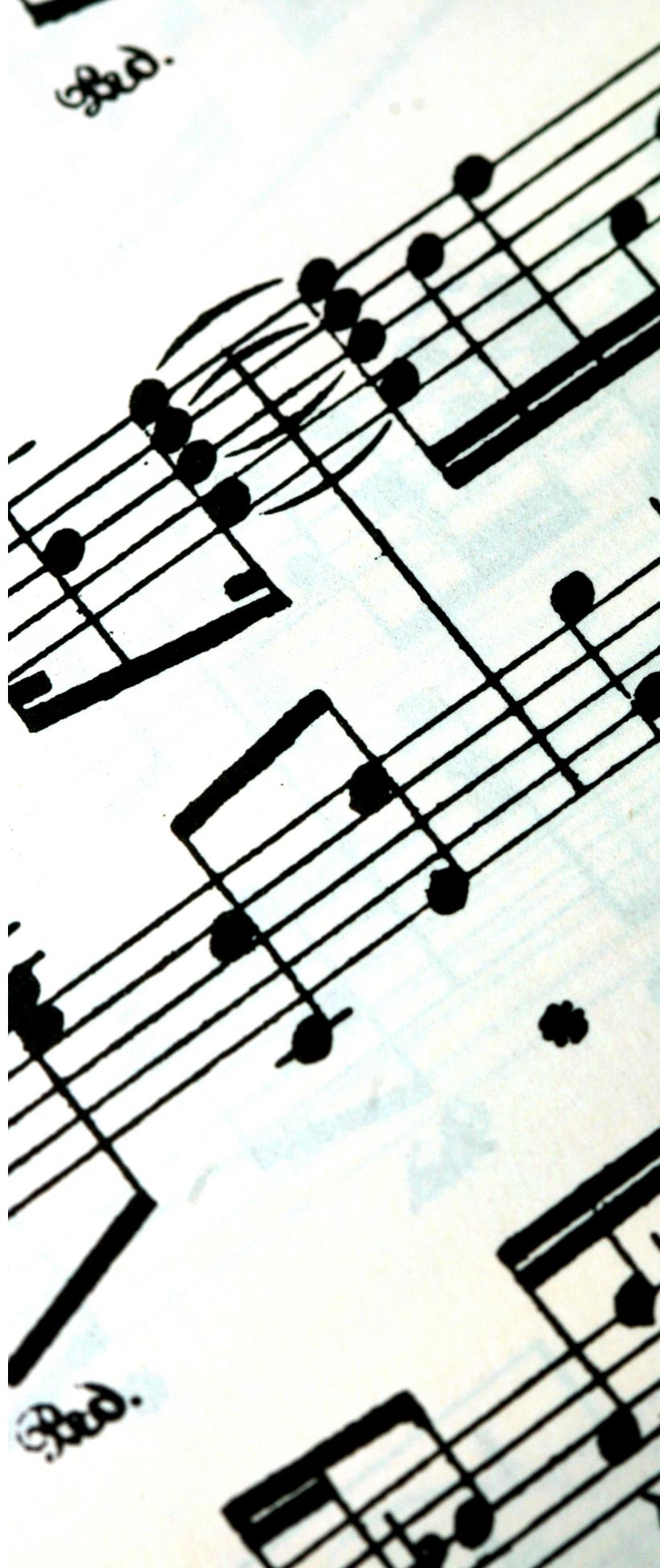
DaQuan Robinson, 15, was worried. His summer music program was canceled, and the bassists could not imagine going the entire summer without playing. Determined to not let that happen, he reached out to Charles Dickerson, who was a conductor in the program.

Dickerson agreed to do a special summer course for DaQuan, and 8 of his fellow music students, and by the time the summer was over, there were over 24 participants. At the conclusion of the program, they put on a summer recital that was very well received by the community. While Dickerson expected it to be a one-time thing, the youth had other plans.

“One of the young people invited me to come to their birthday party, and when I got there I realized I had been set up,” said Dickerson, with a chuckle. “All 24 of my students were seated in the backyard, ready to play, and they told me that they wanted the program to continue beyond the summer and I said okay, and by the end of the year we had 50- 60 young people participating.”

That was in 2009, and soon the little group was making big waves. In 2011, they were invited to play alongside the Morgan State University Chorus as part of the unveiling of the Martin Luther King Jr. statue on The National Mall in Washington D.C. Caught off guard, but thrilled, Dickerson quickly went into fundraising mode and incorporated the group, now known as the Inner City Youth Orchestra, into a 501c3. As the executive director and the conductor, Dickerson keeps expanding the reach of the organization. In 2011 - 2012, ICYOLA hosted its inaugural concert season around the city, primarily at various churches, and concluded with their first concert at Walt Disney Concert Hall.

Today, ICYOLA is the largest majority African American orchestra in America. ICYOLA offers five programs: the ICYOLA Orchestra Program, an annual concert season that features both the standard orchestral repertoire and contemporary music that resounds within the community that ICYOLA serves; the ICYOLA Academy, that teaches students at Los Angeles Unified School District elementary schools how to play an instrument; and the Los Angeles Orchestra Fellowship, which trains emerging professionals to win auditions with American orchestras, in partnership with the USC Thornton School of Music and the League of American Orchestra. The organization is also the official orchestra of California State Dominguez Hills. In 2019, The Orchestra expanded its program to reach youth worldwide with the creation of the South Side Chicago Youth Orchestra, which was first formed on the campus of Chicago State University; and The Youth Orchestra of Tsakane, South Africa first formed on the campus of the African School for Excellence in Tsakane. There is no fee or audition process to join.



While African Americans make up 13% of the population, a study done in 2016 by The League of American Orchestras found that only 1.8% of those in the American Orchestra Industry is African American. Dickerson acknowledges that the vast majority of classical musicians that are celebrated are “dead White guys,” but notes that there are brilliant Black writers and composers in this field.

“When people say that classical music is not ‘our music,’ that is bull,” Dickerson continued. “Look at Black composers such as Joseph Boulogne, Chevalier de Saint-Georges, who lived at the time of Mozart, (look at) William Grant Still... Adolphus Hailstork, Michael Abels, who composed the ‘Get Out’ soundtrack, H.B. Barnum... unfortunately a lot of our contributions in this field is not appreciated by the larger chorale community, or even by us. When we say Black people only play a certain kind of music, we limit ourselves to a certain monolithic way of thinking.”

The pride that Dickerson feels about the growth of the organization is only second to the pride he feels in the students who have come through the program, many who have used what they have learned to improve and uplift their communities for everyone.

“Our youth learn those complexities of music and are able to transfer those qualities in a way that makes them complete and whole and more competitive in every aspect of life.”

All ICYOLA performances are suspended due to COVID-19, but you can follow the organization’s social media and check the website for information about future programs.



HIGH SCHOOL

IN THE AGE OF COVID

By Angela N. Parker
IG:ap925344

According to a recent Duke University panel at the school's Samuel DuBois Cook Center on Social Equity, youth of color tend to face more challenges than their white counterparts when it comes to distance learning.

Much of the problem boils down to a lack of resources - far too many youth face economic struggles, and it is not easy for them to shelter in place or learn online. Not all students have access to computers or cameras; not all students have the Wi-Fi that is needed to log in to class; not all students have a quiet place in their household to learn; and not all students have parents who can stay at home with them and act as surrogate teachers if they need assistance.

There is a real economic and digital divide.

For students who attend Los Angeles High School, learning in the age of COVID has not been easy. Below, are some stories from students about the challenges they have faced.



Jessica

The challenges I had with remote learning was having a quiet place to do my work, not being able to complete work, and getting stressed. I live with 6 family members, so having a quiet place to do my work was rarely available unless it was night or the early morning. My schedule was a mess during these past months. As a result, I was being stressed most of the time. Thankfully, most teachers still accepted late work, so I was able to catch up on most of my work.

As I live with 6 family members, most of the time, my house is a mess and it's expected of me to clean up the mess. Sometimes when I try to do my homework, I immediately have to clean up something or help my family members with something, such as with homework. It's difficult being able to complete homework because of this problem. Staying up and waking up early to do my homework had become part of my busy schedule. My family members aren't my only problem, as I have to do other stuff during the week.

As I get stressed often, headaches occur often and feeling tired. Being busy all week doesn't allow me to have some time for myself. Having an hour to myself is nearly impossible to happen, as I'm always doing something. Thankfully, I'm passing most of my classes, and for some, I have a high grade. Although I had a rough time with online classes, I would rather have online classes than going back to campus. Although I do wish I had some quiet place to be able to do my homework, such as a library.

Alison

The challenges that I've faced this school year are home and scheduling problems. Ever since I started working at home, it's been getting more difficult because I feel like I've gotten used to working at school than at home. For example, it would only take me 1-3 hours to finish my work at school but at home, it's taking me an entire day to finish something for a certain class. Home has a lot of distractions, such as television or phones, and I feel like that's one of the main reasons why I'm having problems at the moment. Not to mention, we've been at home for 8 months, and we haven't gone back to school. Even though I am concerned for students and my health, I do wish to go back to school.



As well as for my schedule, I really don't have one because everyday, I'm constantly on my computer doing work or catching up on my classes, and I can't seem to find time for myself or take a small break for once. I get very paranoid about it. Usually, I have after school, either Adventures League or Leadership, and there, it would kind of be a break for me from school but around those times, I continue to do my work and never have time to enjoy myself!

Sebastian

One problem I faced this year was I moved units in my apartment. It caused me to have trouble balancing between schoolwork and moving, and I couldn't really focus on both things at once, which made it difficult. After I finished moving, I didn't have internet for around a week so I would have to use my phone's hotspot, which was really slow and used up my high speed data. Today, I just got internet again so it's all good.

Angel

The challenges I'm facing are trying to wake up for school because I oversleep and catch up with all of my missing work because I'm way behind. I'm also trying not to get distracted easily by surroundings.

David

The challenges I have with remote learning is that I get too many assignments for each class, and it starts to stress me out because sometimes, they won't give you the link to do the work or they won't tell you where to go. They will give me a lot of homework, and it puts a lot of pressure on me. Sometimes, it will get me mad, because the website would crash and I won't be able to do the work. My last challenge with remote learning is not being able to socialize because being in regular school helped me open up more and helped me learn faster and easier. I got to get away from my problems.



NETFLIX CUTIES: IS ACTUALLY REALLY GOOD

BY VIVIAN EBISKE
IG: @WOAHITSVIVIAN

LOS ANGELES - You're probably giving this article the side-eye because of the title, and I don't blame you. Because of the promotion poster that Netflix circulated, numerous reaction videos you've probably seen on YouTube criticizing the poster and a few scenes, or articles that you've probably read, you've already gotten a bad and unfair first impression of this film.

Well, I'm here to tell you that you should let go of everybody else's opinion on this film (from pandering Senators to view-hungry YouTubers), and watch it for yourself. Once you watch it, you'll see that there is so much more to this film than just little eleven year old girls twerking and gyrating.

The film, "Cuties" (French: Mignonnes), directed by Maimouna Doucoure is revolved around a Senegalese-French eleven-year-old, Aminita, or Amy for short, who is raised in a traditional Muslim household with her --practically single-- mother and two brothers. They are waiting for their father to return from Senegal when, all of a sudden, they find out that their father will be coming back with a new addition to the family: a new wife. In my opinion, there is a particular concept that the director wanted to highlight from this plotline, which is the idea that Black women have to be strong and lead a stable life, no matter what. We see that with Amy and her mother.

When it comes to Amy's mother, she is told by one of her aunts to "get a hold of herself" and call her extended family members so that she could get ahead of the news. Once she is left alone and finished with a phone call conveying this devastating news, she hits herself to stop from crying so she is not seen as a weakling. Not only did she have to call her family members about the news that her husband is marrying a second wife, but she also had to set up another room in the already small apartment for the new wife! Basically, the mother was expected to accept this unknown woman into her family and still remain emotionally stable.

With regard to Amy, she was expected to enthusiastically participate in the wedding by preparing food and wearing a dress that her father sent through a family member to the wedding ceremony.

To add on to the idea of Black women being expected to lead a strong and stable life, they are also expected to assume a motherly role at a young age. Like many young Black girls, as the oldest, Amy had to take care of her younger brothers. She was tasked with grocery shopping, feeding her brothers, cleaning, and doing other house chores. Because young Black girls are tasked to do adult things at young ages, they mature quicker than girls from other races. Maturation comes with sexualization, which is another concept that the director wanted to focus on and what critics paid the most attention to from a surface-level standpoint.

With the news of her father marrying a second wife and taking care of her siblings, Amy was justified in going out and engaging in an activity that makes her happy. She sees that through watching the dance group, The Cuties, in action. Though she had a terrible first encounter with them when she was caught sneaking a peek of their routine, Amy was determined to impress them and get into the group.

Amy's determination for a sense of belonging and doing something for herself is nothing different from what we did when we were her age -- or even doing now as young adults. Her determination to gain acceptance in the group entails wearing more revealing clothing and creating a new routine for an upcoming dance competition that involves some obscene dance moves that she has seen in music videos and on social media.

I'll admit that the scenes where she is teaching the other girls the routine were very uncomfortable to watch; however, those scenes are needed because it's a reflection of our reality. These dance moves are posted, duplicated, and praised on social media! Amy and the rest of the Cuties should not be persecuted for replicating these dance moves if society is giving them positive reinforcements, such as likes, comments, and shares. Plus, since they're young, they're ignorant to the sexual aspect of these dance moves.

With all of these concepts highlighted in this movie, it is important to note one central theme: Black women never have a choice concerning vital parts of their lives. Remember that Amy and her mother didn't have a choice in accepting a new woman into their family or how to react to it, and Amy didn't have a choice in assuming a motherly role and being seen as a sexual being at such a young age. This is the reality for many Black women, myself and the other women in my family included, and Maimouna Doucoure did an incredible job implementing this reality into the movie. It's a shame that many people didn't see that due to a hypersexual poster that Netflix circulated. Hopefully, you have gained a new perspective about this highly criticized film and strive to watch the movie through a new lens.



WE ARE LIVE: GENERATIONEXT LAUNCHES PODCAST

By Angela N. Parker
IG: @ap925344

GeneratioNext is pleased to announce the launch of our podcast - *GeneratioNext Nation*. Hosted by our Deputy Editor, Vivian Ebisike, the podcast focuses on hot topics, provides a more in-depth view on some of our published stories, and gives us an opportunity to spotlight some of our dynamic, young writers who are making a difference in their communities.

You can access it on Anchor, or visit our website at www.generationextonline.com.

live your
dream.





Need advice? email us aparkeronline@yahoo.com

Q: Dear Tea Spiller,

I'm really in love, but my mom thinks that I am too attached to my boyfriend and asked me to not see him for two weeks. She claims that she is worried about COVID, but I know that's a lie. I'm 17, and I think she is crazy. What should I do?

A: Okay, so COVID is real, and I hope that you are wearing your mask and practicing social distancing, but if you're with your boyfriend, you're probably not, so I can understand why your mom is worried about you, and probably the health of everyone who lives with you. With so many ways to communicate without actually being in the same room, you might want to spend less in-person time with him for everybody's safety. But if the real issue is that your mom doesn't like you being so serious, there really isn't anything you can do, but have an honest talk with her. She is probably scared that you are having sex and may get pregnant. Parents start to worry about that stuff when we get this age. If your mom is right that you and your boyfriend are intimate, it is important that you are practicing safe sex, and that you and your mom discuss boundaries as you prepare to turn 18. If you don't feel comfortable enough to do that, then maybe your mom is right and you're not ready to get into something so serious.

Q: Dear Tea Spiller,

I just brought the cutest puppy from the park, and my parents freaked out and told me that I can't keep it. I'm old enough to the care of a dog, and I can't stand the thought of giving it back. I'm starting to hate my parents because they are serious about me getting rid of it, and my mom even told me I could go with the dog if I don't like it. What should I do?

A: You're not going to like what I am about to say, but you are dead wrong. I love dogs, I have two, but I would never bring a dog home without asking my parents. Having a dog costs us a lot. We have to feed them and make sure they stay healthy. We also have to groom them. I have to get up every morning and let them use the bathroom and I have to walk them. You got this dog from a stranger in the park? Do you know if it's sick? Do you know if it's potty trained? Come on, as painful as it may be, you know what you have to do.



THROUGH
The Looking Glass

Tell me a story...

B L A C K

G I R L

M A G I C

BY VIVIAN EBISKE

Dear Black Girl

You are beautiful
More than I can describe, girl
You deserve the world



BY VIVIAN EBISKE

Autumn Leaves

There comes a time in my life when I
must decide
Whether or not I should change like
the leaves in this season

Maybe, I'll be yellow
Half green and red
Maybe a dirt brown

But, everyone will be disappointed
They'll probably rake me up
And stuff me in a bag
Never to be seen again



BY VIVIAN EBISKE

Shield

Black man, protect me
Don't always let me lead
Why must I be on the frontline fighting for you to
achieve and dream and even breathe, yet you're so
focused on the superficial things?

Black man, protect me
Let my hair continue to defy gravity
Let my skin be exponentially melanated
Let my excellence soar to the heavens
Don't use your catapult of words to ground me

Black man, protect me
Stand by me when the world has almost destroyed
me with its indignities
Treat my wounds with love and tenderness
Don't keep salt and sand handy

Black man, protect me
Don't focus on doing the bare minimum
Don't disregard my war stories because you think
you have "bigger ones"
Don't get mad at me for my disappointment
I love you, that's why me holding you accountable
is important

Black man, I'm on my knees, protect me



VIVIAN EBISKE

Brown Eyes

Look at me
Tell me what you see
Brown eyed girl
With the wonderful curls

You could be the fairest of them all if you
wanted to

But, you can't stand to look in that mirror
and tell it that you're beautiful

You could be that shiny girl you see on your
timeline

But, never have the decency to tell yourself
that the way you look is just fine

You could be that goddess you see on the
screen

But, you believe that what you have is
nothing less than a sack of dreams

You could be that other half of someone
But, you think that your love is too intense
like the brightness of the sun

New

Year

New

You!