

Feelin' some kinda way: *The first time my black wasn't*

Girl. Lemme *tell* you. I been black since birth. Always known what I was. My mom is black so I am too. That's it. Nothing more complicated than that, not all fucked up about my racial identity.

I say this so y'all know I ain't some tragic *mu-lat-tto*. Which don't accomplish shit to prevent other people from tryna make me one. Sammy Kidane was one of say, like, 10 black children at my elementary school, but that's a guesstimate. I just know there were four in my third grade class. Anyway, he was a bit of a' asshole from what I remember. I never got along good with boys. We went to the same elementary (from second grade on), middle and high school together. I couldn't tell you if this happened in third grade or fifth, but I guess we were talking or fighting or what-the-fuck-ever one day when he said something about me being mean to him/not liking him because he was black. I was like what the fuck.

"I'm black too."

"No you're not."

"But my mom is black."

"That doesn't make you black."

Boy, yes it does. *The child follows the condition of the mother.** Before this, it never occurred to me that people wouldn't look at me and think "Look at that cute little coony baby with green eyes!"* Not that they ever would, do or will. But in my formative years, I never learned to separate myself from other black people, I wasn't the arrogant green eyed Maureen Pearl from Toni Morrison's first book. I actually thought I was ugly—an out of place fairy-child—but that's a whole nother story. I didn't even know it was abnormal for black girl to have blue eyes (which they were until sixth grade). I realize now that everybody doesn't see me for what *I know* I am.

Girrrrrrl! *Let me tell ya!* Eighth grade. Damn that shit was rough. Bad time to be a black girl (not that there's ever been a good one) going through the first change of life—puberty. It's when the schoolkids start to get bold (if they haven't *already* learned to call everyone a fag or a pussy). The same bitch who wanted to hold my hand on the way to class in seventh grade decided the next year to call me dyke for "acting like a guy." At least she was right (although she didn't have to be a homophobic bitch about it).

She still didn't have the nerve to say "Well it's *true!*!" unlike my other blonde-haired-blue-eyed-white-girl-friend who told me

“All black people’s skin looks like shit. Even yours, it’s like watery cat shit.” Or the mexican chico Mikal (like Michael, no one every pronounced it right, probs gave his ass a fucking complex) who, was like,

“Oh so you’re only half smart?” when I told him my mother was black. *The child follows the condition of the mother.* I shoulda beat the shit out of both of them. But again, I was confused. Like what the fuck was wrong with these people? Then there was the first time I learned that black girls weren’t supposed to be pretty.

“I couldn’t date anyone darker than me.” (the pale as fuck—I’m talking paler than mayonnaise, wonder bread, raw chicken, snow, fish belly, alluh that white shit—girl who called me a dyke).

“Me neither.” (the dark skinned—not chocolate, not coffee, not cinnamon, more peat colored—mixed boy raised by a single-white-female). Back then I didn’t know colorism was a word, I just thought it was racist. I thought *they* were racist. I was surprised for two reasons: 1. Alex was paler than every white person south of the Baltic, who in the hell was she gonna date/be attracted to other than her clone or a family member? 2. DeAndre was black how the fuck could a black person be racist? Was I living in a goddamn crazy town? I didn’t know where I fit into this conversation, I felt invisible and was deeply offended. Not just for myself but for every black woman I knew. While I was darker than Alex (good thing she wasn’t one ah tha str8 girls I had a crush on), I was lighter than DeAndre so I guess I coulda been prey. But that didn’t make me feel beautiful, not even when he hit on me during Spanish class—“i like ‘em feisty!” when I told him to fuck off.

grrrl. Let. me. tell. you. The first guy I dated was a white guy* (*The child follows the condition of the mother. Amirite???*). Before that was my Taiwanese-Mandarin and white best-friend-turned-my rapist. Before that was a boy named Diamond, black, white (Italian?) and blue eyed, light to medium skin. Before (and during and after) that was car horns, whistles, and yells from men in cars, including “SHOW ME YOUR TITS” which I guess weren’t visible enough under my baggy shirt (they weren’t, I wore a 32B). Ben (the best-friend-turned-my-rapist, because a queer black girl “needs to be dominated”) mooned them in retaliation. Between and throughout (but thankfully not after) were crushes on straight girls—Chinese, Black, Mexican trans-racial adoptee, white, every color under sun—either long term or fleeting, like the earthy goth girl who almost walked off with my heart stuck under the heel of her shoe like toilet paper.

I never felt wanted. Except when I was *wanted*. Like, *bad*. Like when an “ass guy” can’t keep his hands off you. Like when yt bae tell you he prefers girls with darker skin (bless his heart, putting my pale ass into the category of darker)—it’s subtle the feeling of being objectified. But them layers of racial fetishization go on thick, like crisco. It starts with strange men in cars yelling and honking at you (even when you’re out with yt bf), then goys to boys who

don't care that you have no tits because ah that donk (not that it was nearly as glorious as ghetto booty, but a girl can dream) to unseen gropes at college parties even tho (or because?) you go to a *wimin's college*, to men calling you rubia at the beginning, middle and end of their piropos in la RD. To making you feel like you don't own your own self. To grabbing you on the street, to a fellow negra assaulting you in a club on ladies night linda apareces triste, qué pasó? To being back in therapy and learning to fight against your history, against the feeling of thotfulness*, of feeling like just another one that massa can't keep their hands offa. That your ancestors' misery is your own in a cycle of five-ever.

- From the United States legal code asserting that all children of enslaved women were to also be slaves in cases of miscegenation. In other words, a white baby daddy wasn't gonna automatically get you free children. The man who raped you would treat your children like hogs—if his wife didn't sell them away from you or you didn't kill them first.
- This is an allusion to Truman Capote's *Breakfast at Tiffany's* in which the character Holly Golightly says "What could be prettier than a quite coony baby with bright green beautiful eyes?" which I find more hilarious than offensive.
- I'll take this opportunity to clarify that my mother is married to a white man, my father. They have a good marriage because he listens to her
- I made this word up. Needed to describe feeling like a piece of meat, just anotha ho who don't own herself