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Dreadfull Love

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Dreadfull Love

Ayla Johnson

I spun my hair like cotton so my locs
could set me free. Escaped a white prison
of beauty on the wings of a great hawk
and saw, at last, the world with precision.
Uncoiled truth in every knot
ted strand: the snake is your old foe, not mine.
I am a goddess—Medusa rebrought
to life. I wear a crown that slithers; twines.

I praise each connection to long lost roots.
Like water, history runs down my back.
Entwined with love, these vines of mine salute
a people forever under attack.
No longer do I dread the hangman's noose—
I dread black threads and let the ropes hang loose.