5-20-2005

Word Up Sista

Theresa Todd
Concordia University - Portland

Follow this and additional works at: http://commons.cu-portland.edu/promethean
Part of the Poetry Commons

Recommended Citation
Available at: http://commons.cu-portland.edu/promethean/vol13/iss2/19

This Poem is brought to you for free and open access by CU Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Promethean by an authorized administrator of CU Commons. For more information, please contact libraryadmin@cu-portland.edu.
AUTHOR'S STATEMENT

Theresa Todd

I decided to wrap up my time at Concord with a thesis project in the form of a poetry manuscript. My thesis project will be a compilation of 25 poems dealing with the theme of race and identity. My poems will deal with my experiences being a woman, being an African-American, and with being an African-American woman.

I took on the challenge of composing this manuscript with the hopes of sharing a bit of myself. In the process of writing, I've discovered more about myself than I could ever hope to share with readers. I walked into this project thinking it would be easy to do something I really enjoyed, but in the process realized I am my toughest critic, which has turned this project into a real challenge. But with the most simple words, I hope to share issues that have proven to be a real challenge in my life.

It would be idealistic for me to say I hope readers love all my work. So I will say, I hope readers can appreciate the work I've done. This manuscript is just a beginning for the work I will continue to do after graduating from Concordia and whatever may come next.

DANCING GIRL

Theresa Todd

Captured in the tunes and melodies
Oblivious to the damp fragrance of
100 swaying bodies lost in the same rhythm.
She struts about the dance floor
confident, beautiful and maybe even sexy.

Her black strapless dress tight where it matters
Most. But elegant, classic even.
She makes her way off the dance floor
Aware of the watchful eyes and dropped jaws.

She is gorgeous and she knows it.
Until she sees him.
The stranger she used to know.
She watches him not wanting to,
but unable to look away.

She watches him hold and kiss the girl
in the tight red dress
Bordering on trashy elegance.
He holds her close, and
Whispers in her ear.

She thinks back and can’t recall,
Can’t remember a time he held her like
That. She is angry because he matters,
Because she still cares, because she is not
the one with him in the tight red dress.

But mostly because now she feels like
nothing more than a little girl in a dress.
WORD UP SISTA

Theresa Todd

They say don’t take offense
To the ignorance you exude.

I’m not to be offended as you
Dumb down your speech,

Your words slurred and
Your vocabulary dulled

You spout off “black girl” phrases.
“Word Up Sista” and “I’m down wit that”

Flow freely in your naive attempts to relate
To the black face sitting across from you.

I’m not to be offended as I watch you
Conform and convert into the woman you think I am

You snap your fingers and swing your neck,
“Oh girl no he dinnint” you say.

I’m not to be offended as you insult my intelligence
And illustrate your picture of black women.

As I stare at the white face sitting across from me
I can’t help but be offended.

MATCH

Tabitha Jensen

Cast of Characters

JULIE, early twenties.

SAM, late twenties/early thirties.

SCENE I

AT RISE:

(A coffee shop. Sam is seated at a bench outside, waiting. Julie approaches, looking expectantly around. Sam eyes Julie; she glances at him, keeps looking around, glances back.)

SAM. Julie?

JULIE. Sam?

SAM. Hi!

JULIE. Hi! (They shake hands and laugh nervously) I hope you weren’t waiting around too long…

SAM. Nope, just got here.

JULIE. Am I late? I left really early, because I know how iffy the subway is on a Friday afternoon. It’s like there’s some weird anomaly of people that only work Fridays, because the cars on the road, the people on the bus, the jerks in the street—they multiply by a million on Fridays. I guess they must just be vapor the other six days of the week.

SAM. It’s just noon.

JULIE. Great. I’m glad you spotted me, because I can never remember a face.

(Beat) Well, wanna go inside?

SAM. Sure.

(Sam and Julie enter the coffeeshop and approach the counter.)

JULIE. Hi. I’ll have a tall Frappuccino, please.

SAM. Grande double-shot mocha, please.

(Julie opens up her purse tentatively, waiting for Sam to pull out his wallet. They awkwardly fumble around with the money for a moment, until Sam defiantly puts down his credit card.)