

# I KNOW TOO MUCH OF NAPS

*free verse*

Kira Thomas | 11

I know too much of *NAPS*  
I know that when I take off my bonnet there will be knots.  
And I will never have hair that flows as the wind surrounds me,  
Learning *NAPS* is learning the language of my original home.

I know too much of *NAPS*.  
How many tears that have been shed from taming my locs,  
How I was forced to assimilate within a culture that I was shunned from,  
How the curls and coils that grow from my scalp are seen as childish and unprofessional,  
My peers constantly petting me, without hesitation or regard.

I know there's hair that is as thin as snowflakes falling in winter,

Or *NAPS* that seem to never untangle.  
These features are desired by many, none can replicate,

*NAPS* that coil, curl, and wave in amazing ways,

The versatility they withhold and my *NAPS* got a mind of  
Their own, crying to be left alone.  
WOOL, BUSH, CLOUD, SMOKE.

"It's so big and tangled, like a sheep," Becky always said.

But can't she see? This is me, in my truest form.

"I love your trim, curtain bangs or balayage. I wish you loved my new 'do!'"

I spend countless hours, thousands of dollars to maintain  
My luxurious locs,  
Wide-toothed comb and coconut oil,  
These nourish my scalp.

To have roots from Africa is to be melanated, understood,  
Light as Caribbean sand or dark as the night's sky,  
All while carrying many countries' foundations on our backs.

Strong, Long, usually Wrong:

They say, "dirty, unkempt, too ethnic;" these words they say.

I love my home, but I will never belong.

I am a dependent, in a foreign land.

I deserve to be free.

My tresses "hold these truths to be self-evident  
That all men are created equal..." this applies

As long as those hairs do not form *NAPS*.

GLORY

*digital graphic*

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