

Dorian Belle

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DORIAN. It all started with an earworm. You know how you get a song stuck in your head. And you can't get rid of it. No matter what you do, that song becomes the default sound in your mind. That's how it started. With a beat. It was just there one day...*boom. clack. boom. boom. boom. clack.*

(DORIAN creates the beat with the beat machine.)

(Underscore: boom. clack. boom. boom. boom. clack.)

It was low at first. Subtle. And like most things that change your life you have no idea where it came from. *boom. clack. boom. boom. boom. clack.* Maybe I picked it up in the French Quarter. *boom. clack.* Or maybe I caught it in that brothel in Rio. *boom. boom. boom. clack.* Or maybe it was that karaoke lounge in Japan –

(Louder: boom. clack. boom. boom. boom. clack.)

Then it started to grow. And it picked up things along the way. A little spice in Colombia. A twang in South Africa. A buzz in Jamaica. It picked up tempo in Atlanta.

(It grows. Faster: boom. clack. boom. boom. boom. clack.)

I thought if I found the source then maybe I could quiet the Hip-Hop beat in my head. *boom. clack.* So I studied. Took copious notes. And I discovered. That it was the beat of rebellion. *boom. boom. boom. clack.* It was a beat for those who were tired of being told what to say – *boom. boom. boom. clack.* and how to say it. *boom. boom. boom. clack.* The sound of taking your life and your words onto your own tongue. *boom. boom. boom. clack.* It was exactly what I needed. Exactly what I'd been searching for. It was...love.

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BLACK. (*Confessional.*) I'll be damned. I think this ***** just won me over.

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Alexand da Great

Spirit Quest

(BLACK and DORIAN upstage. Skiing.)

(ALEXAND enters. It snows.)

ALEXAND. Hello! Hello!

Damn iss quiet out here. I ain't never heard quiet like this. Snow fallin'. White flakes steady floatin'. Down. And down. And down...

Ice on my wrist. Gas in my brain. Inedible flame. Pilot light blown out. Gas turnt up. Hissin' and fillin' the spaces in my head. It's combustible. The darkness might implode.

(He flicks his Bic.)

Indestructible. And I got some fuck-it in my system. It's wishdom. I know. The confusion'll be back, fasho. But for now I'm numb... Or is it just my toes. It's cold as fuck out here.

(Brrrr.)

A forest of birch trees! Yo! This is my dream. Am I dreamin'? White trunks. Unblinking black eyes. They see me. Can't hide, 'cause they all-seein'. Unblinking. I'm scheming. And dreaming. And building up figures out of ice and stone. I'm dead cold. White alabaster tone. Frostbitten. Then the snow starts rising. Inching up my calves and my thighs then, threatening to cover up my blackness in white. Unblinking. I'm sinking. Weighed down by the ache of the weight of the fate of my entire race resting deadass on my shoulders. Driven into the white like a round peg in a round hole. I fit. I'm being consumed by the white. Findin' the solace in it. I can't take this no more. I gotta scream!

Blacky Blackerson

BLACK. (*Confessional.*) Nigga. Nigga. Nigga.

I know it's a crutch word. A hush word.

I depend on it. Heavy head crooked neck bend on it.

Check it, my pops didn't cuss. He wasn't a religious man or nothin'. Just educated. And he believe that cuss words were for triflin' Niggas. Niggas who was either too ignorant to know better words or too lazy to find 'em. This one time he caught me cussin' up a storm. I don't know why, I was showin' off, just spittin' every foul word in da hood nomenclature like: Bitch! Fuck! Dick! Pussy! Shit! Nigga! Nigga! Nigga! And my ol' dude caught me. Now, I thought I was 'bout to get my ass beat. I mean, I'd gotten my ass beat for less. But he ain't go for the belt this time. He went after a dictionary. And he sat me down at our kitchen table. And he made me find a hunnid words for every cuss I said. A hunnid words I coulda/shoulda said instead. And that's when I became a rapper. That's when I really started to appreciate the power of words. There are so many of 'em. And it's a slap in the face to all the precise words when you rely too heavily on just a coupl'a clunky vague ones. For instance there are much better ways to say "fuck you." More explicit. More cuttin'. Like: EVISCERATE. I love words like that. Words that sound like what they mean, that word sound like draggin' a razor blade across some neck skin, crooked letter crooked letter neck bend back.

Eviscerate you! Eviscerate yo' life.

But Still. In all my studies, I ain't never found a word that cuts better than: Nigga.

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