

Victoria Jackson

“A Black Girl, So Lovely” Poem, Performing Arts

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*A Black Girl, So Lovely* examines the strength, pain, and the importance of self-discovery among black young girls. Being a black girl in today’s society is powerful beyond measure. For me, one of the saddest things in the world is witnessing a black girl who does not know how powerful, or how beautiful, she is. She will hesitantly settle for less, even though she deserves more. She will decide other people’s definitions of her have superseded her own. She will love others without expecting love in return. Sadly, I have seen this happen on a daily basis. After taking two semester long classes revolving around Black Feminism, having multiple conversations with black women, and having lived these experiences, I know this to be true.

Self-definition, self-discovery, and self-love is key to the black girl’s power in this poem. However, the path to get to this point is a treacherous one because black women are objectified in this society. This was discussed in depth in Patricia Hill Collins’ *Black Feminist Thought*. According to Collins, bell hooks writes, “As objects, one’s reality is defined by others, one’s identity created by others, one’s history named only in ways that define one’s relationship to those who are subject” (71). There comes a time where I realized, enough is enough. No longer can our realities be defined by others and be left unchecked. At this point, I realized not only is self-definition powerful, but it is a form of resistance of the objectification process. Self-discovery is a form of rehabilitation process for women who have been objectified. Only then, I believe we can begin to understand how and what to love about our natural selves.

This piece was a healing process in regards to a chapter in my life. Not too long ago, I went to a Jamaican Parade. My friend and I could not help but notice all of the black girls, from ages 4-10 years old, rocking their afros and laughing together. It made us remember how we would have been so petrified to let our hair go like that; to be free like that when we were there age. Now, it warms my heart to see black girls feel as lovely as they look. *A Black Girl, So Lovely* tries to show that black girls are blessings in this world. We break barriers everyday and resilience is in our blood. It is not shameful to say it proudly because it is a fact. What is shameful, is that society does not say it enough. I hope *A Black Girl, So Lovely* can be relatable and inspirational for young black girls and for women of color in general. So many women of color have been through the unimaginable, yet very little has the opportunity to share their story. I do whole-heartedly believe we are moving into the right direction, but there is always work to be done and more stories to be heard. Just like Jesse Williams said, “Just because we are magic, does not mean we are not real.”