

# Black Girl Pain

Talib Kweli

I do it for the people, I do it for the love  
I do it for the poet, I do it for the thug  
This is for victory, and this is for the slaughter  
I do it for my mother, I do it for my daughter  
Promise I'll always love ya, I love to kiss and hug ya  
You and your brother should be lookin out for one another  
I'm so blessed, man, y'all the reason I got up  
Somebody put his hands on you I'm gettin locked up  
I'm not playin, that's the prayer I'm sayin for Diani  
And if I die then she'll be protected by Amani  
That's her bigger brother and I love the way he love her  
She a girly-girl, she love to imitate her mother  
But she a Gemini, so stay on her friendly side  
She'll put that look on you, it's like somebody's friend just died  
My pretty black princess smell sweet like that incense  
That you buy at the bookstore supporting black business  
Teach her what black is; the fact is her parents are thorough  
She four reading Cornrows by Camille Yarborough  
I keep her hair braided, bought her a black Barbie  
I keep her mind free; she ain't no black zombie  
This is for Aisha, this is for Kashera  
This is for Khadijah scared to look up in the mirror  
I see the picture clearer thru the stain on the frame  
She got a black girl name, she livin black girl pain  
This is for Makeba, and for my mamacita  
What's really good, ma? I'll be your promise-keeper  
I see the picture clearer thru the stain on the frame  
She got a black girl name, she livin black girl pain

My mama said life would be so hard  
Growin up days as a black girl scarred  
In so many ways though we've come so far  
They just know the name they don't know the pain  
So please hold your heads up high  
Don't be ashamed of yourself know I  
Will carry it forth til the day I die  
They just know the name they don't know the pain black girl

This is for Beatrice Bertha Benjamin who gave birth to  
Tsidi Azeeda for Lavender Hill for Kyalisha  
ALTHLONE, Mitchells Plain, Swazi girls I'm reppin for thee  
Mannesburg, Guguletu where you'd just be blessed to get thru  
For beauty shinin thru like the sun at the highest noon  
From the top of the cable car at Table Mountain; I am you  
Girls with the skyest blue of eyes and the darkest skin  
For Cape Colored allied for realizing we're African  
For all my cousins back home, the strength of mommy's backbone  
The length of which she went for raising, sacrificing her own  
The pain of not reflecting the range of our complexions  
For rubber pellet scars on Auntie Elna's back I march  
Fist raised caramel shinin in all our glory  
For Mauritius, St, Helena; my blood is a million stories  
Winnie for Joan and for Edie, for Norma, Leslie, Ndidi  
For Auntie Betty, for Melanie; all the same family  
Fiona, Jo Burg, complex of mixed girls  
For surviving thru every lie they put into us now  
The world is yours and I swear I will stand focused

Black girls, raise up your hands; the world should clap for us

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