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Educational Talent Search
York Technical College, SC
Category: Creative Writing

“My Shades of Brown”
My skin is brown and hers is too
My family’s skin is not the same hue
Not black and cold like genuine leather
But brown and warm like a wren’s feather
Dark like tree bark on an autumn day
Warm like molasses, not dull ashy gray
Full of history passed down through generations
Not like any other color, a special creation

With dark and light spots of ebony cream
The result of oppression then “I Have A Dream”
My skin is sun-and-chocolate-kissed
All light white pigments have been dismissed

A dark mocha foundation is all that remains
A spoonful of brown sugar every summer it gains
With oak and mahogany accents of blessed harmony
Dark ebony and light caramels make me in matrimony

My eyes are black espresso beans with coffee grain cores
My face a mud mask of mystery and lore
My limbs are short, thick pretzel skicks
My torso solid, the color of weatherworn bricks

My unusual color is the product of my contrasted roots
My father’s family is dark as chimney chutes
My mother’s side a mix of light tans to dark topes
An odd combination of shackles and ropes

That’s why my skin is infinite shades of brown
A combination of sand and dark coffee grounds
What color am I? I sometimes wonder
A million shades of beautiful, the perfect blunder

Works Cited
Photograph taken by Justen Crank