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Uplifting Blackness Collection

Uplifting Blackness: A Showcase of Art by
Western's Black Student Community

2021

Children of Greatness

Kimberly Douglas

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“Children of Greatness” by Kimberly Douglas©

for all the family stories
that got buried beneath the earth with black bodies
for all the lost names
that never left mouths after their owners hung lifeless
all the history drowned beneath slave ships alongside our ancestors
we are still here

we are the pages of your history books that have been torn out
the stories that have been left untold
the descendants of the enslaved people you killed
and the ones you couldn't
the ones who kept breathing
kept dreaming
kept praying
kept living

when colonialism ripped native tongues from mouths
kidnapped doctors, lawyers, and educators from the motherland
cut down family trees
when racism cracked whips
left stripes on brown skin
and called it "patriotic"
when segregation separated a nation
diminished us to the word "coloured"
and beat my people for
simply existing within "white" spaces

what they didn't realize
is you can't murder blackness
can't wipe out ancestry
can't terminate melanin
can't lynch a lineage

though our character is not defined
by the oppression imposed on our people
but by our ability to exist unapologetically in the presence of it
we are not a product of slavery
our story did not begin in shackles
because before enslavement we were kings
before genocide we raised generations
before lynchings we owned land

so for all the family stories

that are still being told
for all the lost names
that we never forgot
all the history that kept its head above water
we are still here

we are the children of the ones who made it
for they could not kill our spirits
and we will continue to come back
despite every attack
because to be black is to have conquered death
even before you were born

Written by Kimberly Douglas©