

Kortney

Kortney was what high-school fantasies are made of:
Kool-Aid colored eyes, vanilla pudding complexion,
hula-hoop size earrings, skin-tight Calvin Klein jeans
with a belt buckle that said H O T T I E.
She was a senior; I was a freshman, which meant
I'd have an easier time courting Halle Berry
than getting Kortney to give me a smile.
My English teacher Ms. Folson told me Kortney liked to write,
that I should share a few of my poems with her.
But my size 12 feet (I just grew into) and a heavy tongue
that made me sound like Zed from Police Academy
whenever I got too close to girls wouldn't let that happen.
One Monday morning she stopped by my locker,
said Ms. Folson showed her the poem I wrote for my mother,
said she liked it, said it was cool, said she wanted to write poetry too.
I wanted to do the Cabbage Patch as if I had just won
the complete Thunder Cats action figure set.
From that day on, we exchanged smiles and waves
like Christmas gifts. Our connection was silent,
intimate as the daily nods I traded with the nameless neighbor,
the toddler that lip-synched me Hi as she walked to school,
the whisky-eyed vagrant who always offered me a toothless grin
as he extended his cup..