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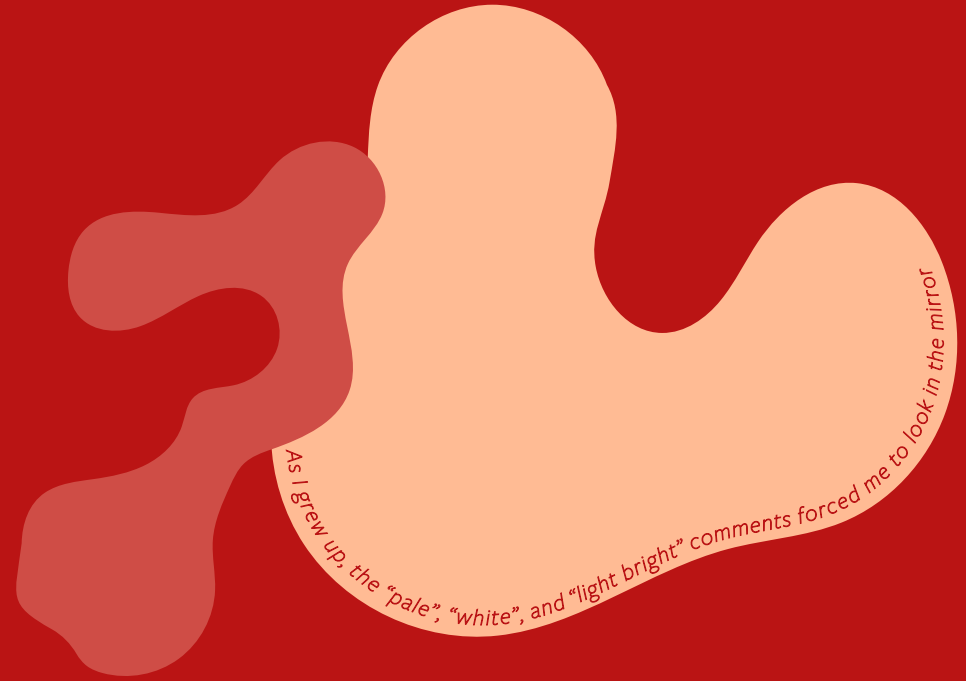
Revelations

# BLACK

within itself  
is diverse



I did not understand my position in society as a child because while my peers and I had our differences, the only thing that mattered was that we were all black



As I grew up, the "pale", "white", and "light bright" comments forced me to look in the mirror

# REDBONE

*noun*

A female or male of African American descent who is light skinned with red undertones

As a lightskinned woman who isn't mixed, white traits are a reminder of the brutal culture of slavery and the rape black women endured

MASSA

forced white  
features into our  
bloodlines

These traits did not originate from love but rather from hate

Since I was young I've heard my dad call my maternal Aunt "Red" and I never understood what it meant until I grew up

many black  
families have  
someone  
nicknamed

Red

I imagine I'll be the next "Red" in the family

The combination of being well educated, lightskinned, and having bad acne led me to hear comments like

"oh boy you're red", "you talk white", "what are you?", "acne is not a black trait"

"you're so pale", "you're basically white", "you need a tan"

"Wait, so which one of your parents is white?"

my proximity to whiteness has been used as fuel for invasive questions and

**INSULTS**

MELANIN is a beautiful gift and I yearned for more

Between the beautiful pigments, sun protection, privacy

of emotion (blushing), and normalcy as a black person melanin provides, I wished I was darker.

It is a shame society doesn't give melanin its due praise

# COLORISM

noun

A practice of discrimination by which those with lighter skin are treated more favorably than those with darker skin

Because I truly adored darker skin, I was disappointed learning about colorism

Like, racism its scarring on all accounts. A dark-skinned peer of mine who has been hurt by colorism

told me that before she knew me she assumed I was so liked due to my color

My peer's assumption wasn't outlandish because in the dating world I often did get preference over my darker friends.

sadly, when I would ask guys what they like about me, the first thing that often was said was "lightskin"

for some  
black men  
my skin color is  
nothing but a  
**FETISH**

all this  
led me to  
an identity

CRISIS

I felt the crisis of a mixed girl without the white half of the family to make sense of it

Lightskin has privilege but left me feeling excluded

At the end of the day I am a black woman and only I can validate that for myself

I've come far but  
there is more work  
to be done to be fully  
confident in who

I AM

