

# Inhale

VV Brown

I rip the mask off that has been suffocating me  
As I inhale for the first time, I can finally breathe and see  
And I stretch my arms wide to a landscape of authentic horizons  
Blurred from the darkness and captured by static air in the wind  
My coils save me like parachutes  
A woman who was made into a perfect puppet of your desires  
I had once aspired for the sake of concerts and bank, balance, boom  
To modifying myself differed from the child within the womb  
Dancing in the mirrors of pop star likeness I thought it was best to mute  
Sitting in chairs of Vogue Magazine moments  
With hair prodded and scrunched up sounds acute  
And they think and they feel scared by our excellence  
Crippled by the stereotypes and unaware of the history  
That runs through the veins of their ancestors  
Veins murderously transmitting itself into institutions of power and privilege  
Hide you puppets, for intimidation is what bleeds from your mouth  
When you are open and real and bountiful and Black  
Facts, we buy blankets from white men and women  
Drape ourselves in disguises or versions  
And brittled and fragmented we carry our inner selves  
In hope not to disrupt the office protocol with our braids  
But we leap out into the sun and we strip ourselves naked and take the gun  
And shatter the delusion of the history that raped us and let us bleed  
Through our music and culture and naturally  
We scream, we scream, we give birth to ourselves  
We say we are no longer going to hide the magnificent  
Let the rays boom out from your bosom so aggressively it breaks your molecules  
And leaves you shedded like a snake with a new self  
With your real self, with your mental health intact  
No longer schismed by them in a society that makes you feel like you're not good enough  
Emancipate and break it, break the brutal conservativeness, the empire, progressiveness  
Breath out the fire, breath out the screams of the slaves that allowed you to hold the brave in you  
Walk through Northampton Town Centre, and buy your mascara and dark shaded foundation  
Be alive in your Blackness, be true in your Blackness  
Be you in your Blackness, be Black in your Blackness  
I rip the mask off that has been suffocating me

As I inhale air for the first time