“FIRE”- by Jasmine Mans

I’ve lost all my favorite toys

Bleaches my favorite browns

And stained my only whites

I like suffering

And suffocating

My tears know patterns on my face

They are not yet ready to unlearn

Sometimes my scars cough dirt from their lungs

my stitches be unraveling

I don’t know if my skin was made

For getting comfortable with

I don’t know if grows old

Or soften in sunsets

My mirrors know their place

My place hasn’t been shaved

Or apologized to since last vacant

Tell me?

What do you want with my ashes?

My hair

My hip bones,

My breast?

My bones marrow??

Speak to me of your barbaric fascination with my skin?

How much am I worth

In your sheets,

On our alter,

Atop of your auction block?

What do you think will happen

When you set the black girl on fire?

Her ashes will decorate the lungs of all the men

who tried to take her from herself

soot will pour from their mouths

and we will watch them choke

Maybe we’ll call me karma

After how I revive myself

After the moment you realized

your shadow

was merely the spirit of a black girl

That lingers in your distance

to remind you of how the fuck you got here

today you are in the hunted and the haunted

I will prance in your darkness

I will be big and masterful in my arrival

Swift in my exit

I will glow

bare fangs

leave blood trial

I am the black girl you cannot kill

Oh what a thought?

What a bold

Handsome thought

Of the woman

Whose only supposed to speak

When spoken to

A dare in the face the righteous man

Greet me

Take my bags

Welcome me home

Get used to me

I am your mother’s sister

On her father’s side

I’m sure she never mentioned me

You can find the resemblance

In the collard greens

And if you so want to see a fire

Flesh running on fire

Be it at your own will

Be it your flesh

Be it your bones

Your bones

You will notice how sacrifice comes with a stench

You’ll have to pass down to your children

It will be

The tallest ta,e for them

To stomach

It will be the stench on your own kin

It will be poetic and colorful

Something to remember

Always