

I am not less of a person

When she was young
My mother used to pour lemon juice
In her eyes.

A girl in her school told her it would
make them lighter.

She told me it burned like fire
but hoped the freedom of
the newly trapped ocean would
put it out.

Girls with blue eyes married faster.
Girls with blue eyes were loved more.

My mother was put in milk
baths for long periods of time.
My grandmother thought it might
lighten her skin
She thought she could wash my mom
into privilege.

I have had guys tell me I am feisty.
Or that they have never been with
a girl like me.

I know what they mean.
They think I am some kind
of one time experience.
A phase.

Try it once and move on.

I met a girl this year,
who made me promise not to tell
anyone, she wore contacts.

I met a girl last year,
who told me not to tan.
I do not need to.
Apparently.

I wore contacts once.
To prom.
A guy asked me if they were my
real eyes.
When I told him that my tree trunk

coloured eyes were underneath
this sky, he sighed.
What a shame.
You could have been pretty.

I am made of more than just
sugar and spice.
I am a soul.
I am a translator for people who
cannot hear the words underneath
my mother's old world.

I am a lotus flower.
I am beauty growing from
shades of brown.
My eyes might not be the colour of
the ocean
but my mind is filled with depth.
Every day I grown less into
a category and more into
my own skin.