

Black Mother Woman

By: Audre Lorde

Adapted by Fishtank Staff

- 1 I cannot recall you gentle.
Through your heavy love
I have become
an image of your once delicate flesh
- 5 split with deceitful longings.
When strangers come and compliment me
your aged spirit takes a bow
jingling with pride
but once you hid that secret
- 10 in the center of furys
hanging me
with deep breasts and wiry hair
with your own split flesh and long suffering eyes
buried in myths of no worth.
- 15 But I have peeled away your anger
down to its core of love
and look mother
I am
a dark temple where your true spirit rises
- 20 beautiful and tough as a chestnut
stanchion against your nightmares of weakness
and if my eyes conceal
squadrons of conflicting rebellions
I learned from you
- 25 to define myself
through your denials.