You’re pretty...for a Black girl.
You’re smart...for a Black girl.

Coming home confused
Why am I pretty or smart, for a Black girl?
Aren’t I just pretty?
Can’t I just be smart?
The words permanently etched in my brain.
I’m pretty and smart...for a Black girl.

13% of women in the US are Black
And yet the beauty standard is still whack
To be fair skinned is to be white
To have pretty hair is to have straight bright hair

When will a day come when Black women
Are respected
When will a day come when Black women
Are seen
As empowering and strong.

So here’s to Harriet, Rosa, Mae.
The blessings not in disguise.
Here’s to bringing Black women honor every day.
Harriet Tubman, was the slavery era’s Moses
Who rescued from the underground
Like long-awaited roses
Rosa Parks, the one who refused
to give up her seat
Planting her feet
Firmly on the earth
Mae Jemison released the anchors
Flew up to space
We look across history
And see the mark of Black women
In every time and place

Here’s to Wilma, Flo-Jo, Jackie
Sprinting across the finish line
Wilma Rudolph, she wore braces on her legs
But that braced her for a future of overcoming
Turning her greatest weakness into her greatest strength
Florence Joyner, who was the fastest woman of all time
Breaking barriers and crossing every line
Jackie Joyner, I guess seven is her lucky number
Winning the heptathlon even in her slumber
So here’s to them
Not being *pretty* good, being the best

Important Black women aren’t just dusty figures
In our history books
They are bright empowering women in our everyday life
So here’s to my mom for pushing me further
Here’s to my sisters for keeping me on my toes
Here’s to myself, for being me
Despite being “just” a Black girl

So here’s to being a strong Black woman
Here’s to letting Black women triumph
And here’s to our Black girl magic.

Here’s to us all for being...pretty smart.