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DUE NORTH

Nyrie Benton

visionyrie@gmail.com

When I think of flight, travel, and expansion, I think of the Black Femmes in my life, my grandmother especially. She was a beautiful, loving and resilient woman who recreated herself as many times as needed for herself and her family.

Nyrie Benton is a writer and photographer from Prince George's County, Maryland based in Brooklyn, New York. These mediums allow her to explore possibilities within Black Liberation through the connected nature of context and creation.

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due north

my grandmother grew wings far before heaven welcomed her home.
she prayed in the church her father built for a love she deserved to see
& sat in the back of services with her forbidden blessing.
evil names poured from unholy mouths only to scorch the ground before her
to keep from falling,
she flew north & forgot the way home.
she'd already fallen in love with a sun that shined the same way
for all pretty girls with southern accents.
& hands that clutched Bibles.
& hearts that had only known the kind of love that binds.
a sun that burnt her eyes,
so she brought hands to furrowed brows to still feel its warmth.
she flew so long, she forgot how to walk.
she forgot her name.
she forgot mine.
by the time she landed,
her memories were buried at every stop along her way.
leaving her to travel light.
I retraced her route & left fires where she fled
& found lilies where her memories rested.
she spared her love for her final flight
where she would birth herself for the last time.
taking each piece of the sun as she flew away.