

Ode to my brown skin babies

Brown boy
Chocolate skin
Warm and tough
Sweet to kiss
Worn like leather
Scabbed and scratched
Buzz dozer boy
Fire Trucks
Bowling through life
Running carefree
Examining bugs
Hair like wool
Eye like dark pools
Filled with bright hope and excitement
Precocious smirk
Endearing laugh
Perfect sticky lips
Unadulterated youth
Smooth hands
Dirt covered
Sweat on you brow

You will grow
Change
Reemerge a man someday
Keep your hope and joy
Soak up the sun
Unburden yourself from the pain
Feel Emote and cry
Love with your mother's love
Everyone you meet
Love without pride
Love through your father's absence
Love him when he's there
Love knowing those before you are proud
Knowing you are supported
Love knowing the suffering will wane
Love through the failure
Through the mistakes
Forgive yourself if you fall short
Forgive to heal
Always move on head held high
Tender and secure

Strength with voice
Power in silence
Walk undefined

To Nehemiah,
You are my brown boy. You are our brown boy. When you ask me where your father is someday, I will have to tell you truth. You were conceived in love, no matter how short lived it was love. I was scared and tried to protect you, but I never kept him away. I will tell you his choices where his, he made them on his own. But I know he loves you the best way he can, even if that's from far away. Know that history has a tendency to repeat itself and try not to do the same. I pray you never become resentful, rather seek to understand, and accept that you may never get the answers you seek.

Brown Girl
Caramel skin
Sweet and sour
Hair in coils wound up tight
Ebony strands dark as night
Cheeks so soft
Dimples in both
Ballerina girl
Almond eyes
Scintillating and bright
Mellifluous voice
Scared of shadow
Long fingers
Nails pink
Longer legs
With Dolls just so
Purse filled with trinkets of long ago
Dresses that twirl
Wearing my heels
Nose scrunched up
With each beaming smile

You have always been the one
As you change
Becoming a lady someday
Know that you are more than your hair
More than your hips
Keep-
Your skin
Your lips
Keep -
Your strength
Your unrelenting will
Keep the spark that makes you shine
Keep your fierce but delicate manner

Keep your cable and dainty ways
Keep your voice saying no screaming NO
Keep Going
And Pushing
And Never stop
Keep this knowledge as you grow
Be loud and determined
Take the narrow path
Carry my love
The love of your grandmothers
You come from intense women
Tenacious and decisive women
Brave resilient women

To Nyomi,
You are mine, you are yours. They will say you are your mother's daughter - but that does not mean you have to repeat my mistakes. As you learn on your own please know, men will come and men will go. Trust their actions then their words. Believe people when they show you who they are. There is no need to adapt to fit the affection of others. Soon we will not always agree or see eye to eye, and that is okay. We will fight and be enemies, because "I'm right". I will always love you and be proud of your growth and change. Know that there is only one who has more trust and faith in you. You are you mothers daughter in the best way possible. I pray you don't have to become a mother to understand.

By Christina Perault Boughton