

Object, I did not / Listen, I will not
By Navina Magesh Kumar

When I was vilified for my skin
Object, I did not
As I was walking home in broad daylight
I heard a strange voice label my entire race ugly

Object, I did not
When I was told to go back to my motherland
I heard the echo of a strange voice labelling my entire race ugly
My mother lives here, I thought

When he demanded I go back to my motherland
I stared blankly
But my mother lives here
I said nothing as he passed by me

I stared at him blankly
When I was told my race should be erased
I said nothing as he walked away
As if he had the power to silence my existence

When I was told my race should be erased
When I was vilified for my skin
He knew he had the power to silence me
As we walked in broad daylight

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Though I was vilified for my skin
Listen, I will not
To the white man who decided I was a pest
That needed to leave the room or die

Listen, I will not
For I am a persistent beast
That needs to leave the room or die, but won't
Right here I will stay

Because I am a persistent beast
Fiercely beautiful to those who look closely
Right here I will stay
In whatever this place is to me, if not a motherland

Fiercely beautiful if you just open your eyes
Though I am vilified for my skin
In whatever this place is to me, I have landed
Let the white man call me a pest