

# Rest and Fire, Black Child

Mariah Ivey

may you dance as if the fire is beneath you  
chassé your fears into plied position

scorching pavements with radical affirmation  
promising to always be kind to yourself

may you burn down broken systems tethered to Black tears  
Emmett Tills and ticking timebombs, only to ring-shout

your way into safe spaces of emotional release  
may you awaken without apology on your tongue but joy beneath your wings

laughing as if healing and resistance share one body  
may you remember your body—not as America's sacrificial lamb

but as a harmonious vessel of ancestral hymns  
singing songs of sweetness and soul

*liberation will come from a Black thing*

may your palms, as they are, blessed with golden warmth and  
grandmama's prayers, hold vinyl record memories worth replaying on Sundays

may your days feel a lot warmer there  
not as an escape of your reality but an extension of the reimagined

ease belongs to you  
ease has always belonged to you

rest and fire. rest *in* fire.  
rest and fire, Black child.