

Sandstone

Kayla McVeigh

An index finger meeting the earth, rolling, and swirling. Our wrists draw lines in the sand. Dreaming of the pressure, the pain that shapes it into something crystalline and desired. We teach the star-struck to manifest their love through the rose quartz of this pressed sand. The forceful birth of crystal.

I'm supposed to hate the lines forming at the peeked corners of my eyes and the ones drawing down from the edges of my lips, left from a life of dynamic expression.

I'm supposed to hate the cushioned layer my body has wrapped around itself to hug my frame. Keeping my bones safe and everything in between. The runoff of blood traveling through veins, dendritic or braided, rushing to press rose coloration into the skin and soft flesh. I'm supposed to hate this softening, it opposes the tightness and resistance I'm told to crave.

I see grace in the strands of silver hair. Secrets in the folds of my skin.

My body carries fragments of history and my lifetime of loving awareness.

I do not find the *rigid stiffness* of *resistance* beautiful.

I find beauty in the softened hearts of those moved by migrating wings. In the longing for the shoreline. I see it in my oval shape complexion, spun in the likeness of my mother. I have seen her bloodied by the sickly thin hands of those starved, seeking beauty in reshaping her form.

I find beauty in the padding that cradles bone and frames the palms of my hands, a lingering reminder of soft baby pink. Plush and rose-kissed, cushioned from cruel pressures placed on matured bodies. They forget how no one thinks to correct the perfection of an infant while they attack the loveliness of a woman, a being. A being tangled in English ivy, roots binding her together as they twist through her fractures. A being called to life through moving bodies of water.

Deep, blue to black, alive.

I'm supposed to scrub away the earth from my skin, the very clay from which I was made. My shape, thrown from between the joining palms of my parents. Tangled, in a moment, their bodies brought together as the hands of Christ creating life through prayer.

If it is my nature to be sandstone then I do not wish to harden so that I fight the weathering that is just as much a part of my being as any other point in my life, as any other part of my body.

Perhaps I will meet with wandering streams where I will dissolve down to soft silty earth.

Mixing with the stirring current, breathing, alive.

I would be just as beautiful.