My Mother Four

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My Mother Four

I can make out Poinciana trees miles away because of their flame red tops. I was asked who my father was and answered my grandfather. I had friends, I believe in cliques. Whitney Houston and Janet Jackson and Dirty Dancing. Single parenthood and single parent marriages. Add water, instant family. Summers in Tennessee with squirrels, a test drive for a mother. Chlorine taste in my mouth for days at a time; it must be summer. Barbie dolls are always naked. A pink and lilac bike, Cabbage Patch kids. Books in big, brown boxes. No alliteration intended. I don’t remember who cooked for me then. From brown to green. Jail-house uniforms and cute little boys. Sesame Street lunch boxes. Too much love. Spoilt baby. I could never determine if I had enjoyed my childhood. If I had made the most of it, taken advantage. My name has all this history. I could be anyone but I choose:

‘Let them eat cake’ she said.

But no one thought it was because she was happy.

‘Rich Bitch’ they cried.

And her head rolled because the poor have so little happiness.

And the rich so much cake.