

# Talib Kweli, For Women

[Talib Kweli] (Spoken)

Yea, so we got this tune called "For Women" right  
Originally, it was by Nina Simone  
She said it was inspired by, you know  
Down south. In the south, they used to call her Mother Antie  
She said No Mrs.  
Just Antie  
She said if anybody ever called her Antie  
she'd burn the whole goddamn place down  
I'm over past that  
Coming into the new millenium, we can't forget our elders

[Talib Kweli]

I got off the 2 train in Brooklyn on my way to a session  
Said let me help this woman up the stairs before I get to steppin'  
We got in a conversation she said she a 107  
Just her presence was a blessing and her essence was a lesson  
She had her head wrapped  
And long dreads that peeked out the back  
Like antenna to help her get a sense of where she was at, imagine that  
Livin' a century, the strenght of her memories  
Felt like an angel had been sent to me  
She lived from nigger to colored to negro to black  
To afro then african-american and right back to nigger  
You figure she'd be bitter in the twilight  
But she alright, cuz she done sseen the circle of life yo  
Her skin was black like it was packed with melanin  
Back in the days of slaves she packin' like Harriet Tubman  
Her arms are long and she moves like song  
Feet with corns, hand with callouses  
But her heart is warm and her hair is wooly  
And it attract a lot of energy even negative  
She gotta dead that the head wrap is her remedy  
Her back is strong and she far from a vagabond  
This is the back of the masters' whip used to crack upon  
Strong enough to take all the pain, that's been  
Inflicted again and again and again and again and flipped  
It to the love for her children nothing else matters  
What do they call her? They call her aunt Sara.

Woman singing in the background

[Talib Kweli] (+ Background Vocals)

I know a girl with a name as beautiful as the rain  
Her face is the same but she suffers an unusual pain  
Seems she only deals with losers who be usin' them games  
Chasin' the real brothers away like she confused in the brain  
She tried to get it where she fit in  
on that American Dream mission paid tuition  
For the receipt to find out her history was missing and started flippin  
Seeing the world through very different eyes  
People askin' her what she'll do when it comes time to chose sides  
Yo, her skin is yellow, it's like her face is blond word is bond  
And her hair is long and straight just like sleeping beauty  
See, she truly feels like she belong in 2 worlds  
And that she can't relate to other girls  
Her father was rich and white still livin' with his wife  
But he forced himself on her mother late one night  
They call it rape that's right and now she take flight  
Through life with hate and spite inside her mind  
That keep her up to the break of light a lot of times  
(I gotta find myself) (3X)  
She had to remind herself  
They called her Safronia the unwanted seed

Blood still blue in her vein and still red when she bleeds  
(Don't, don't, don't hurt me again) (8X)

[Talib Kweli] (+ Background Vocals)

Teenage lovers sit on the stoops up in Harlem  
Holdin' hands under the Apollo marquis dreamin of stardom  
Since they was born the streets is watchin' and schemin'  
And now it got them generations facin' deseases  
That don't kill you they just got problems  
and complications that get you first  
Yo, it's getting worse, when children hide the fact that they pregnant  
Cuz they scared of giving birth  
How will I feed this baby?  
How will I survive, how will this baby shine?  
Daddy dead from crack in '85, mommy dead from AIDS in '89  
At 14 the baby hit the same streets they became her master  
The children of the enslaved, they grow a little faster  
They bodies become adult  
While they keepin' the thoughts of a child her arrival  
Into womanhood was heemed up by her survival  
Now she 25, barely grown out her own  
Doin' whatever it takes strippin', workin' out on the block  
Up on the phone, talkin' about  
(my skin is tan like the front of your hand)  
(And my hair...)  
(Well my hair's alright whatever way I want to fix it,  
it's alright it's fine)  
(But my hips, these sweet hips of mine invite you daddy)  
(And when I fix my lips my mouth is like wine)  
(Take a sip don't be shy, tonight I wanna be your lady)  
(I ain't too good for your Mercedes, but first you got to pay me)  
(You better quit with all the question, sugar who's little girl am I)  
(Why I'm yours if you got enough money to buy)  
(You better stop with the compliments we running out of time,)  
(You wanna talk whatever we could do that it's your dime)  
(From Harlem's from where I came, don't worry about my name,)  
(Up on one-two-five they call me sweet thang)

Scratches + Woman singing in the background

[Talib Kweli] (+ Background Vocals)

A daughter come up in Georgia, ripe and ready to plant seeds,  
Left the plantation when she saw a sign even thought she can't read  
It came from God and when life get hard she always speak to him,  
She'd rather kill her babies than let the master get to 'em,  
She on the run up north to get across that Mason-Dixon  
In church she learned how to be patient and keep wishin',  
The promise of eternal life after death for those that God bless  
She swears the next baby she'll have will breathe a free breath  
and get milk from a free breast,  
And love beeing alive,  
otherwise they'll have to give up being themselves to survive,  
Being maids, cleaning ladies, maybe teachers or college graduates, nurses, housewives, prostitute  
Some will grow to be old women, some will die before they born,  
They'll be mothers, and lovers who inspire and make songs,  
(But me, my skin is brown and my manner is tough,)  
(Like the love I give my babies when the rainbow's enuff,)  
(I'll kill the first muthafucka that mess with me, I never bluff)  
(I ain't got time to lie, my life has been much too rough,)  
(Still running with barefeet, I ain't got nothin' but my soul,)  
(Freedom is the ultimate goal,  
life and death is small on the whole, in many ways)  
(I'm awfully bitter these days  
'cuz the only parents God gave me, they were slaves,)  
(And it crippled me, I got the destiny of a casualty,)

(But I live through my babies and I change my reality)  
(Maybe one day I'll ride back to Georgia on a train,)  
(Folks 'round there call me Peaches, I guess that's my name.)