

Still i rise by maya angelou

Literature



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" You may tread me in the very dirt But still, like dust, I'll rise." Trod is past tense for tread and should be corrected to read " tread." " Sassiness" in " Does my sassiness upset you" either is not in universal use, but " sassy" is. " Does the sassy me upset you" would make a better line?

" Did you want to see me broken Bowed head and lowered eyes" I find something missing here even as to timing? If she had inserted " With," it would sound better as in -" Did you want to see me broken With bowed head and lowered eyes"

" Shoulders falling down like teardrops. Weakened by my soulful cries." How do shoulders fall down like teardrops At least the writer should have used " bending down." Since tears do not bend down, this calls for a change of words. " Shoulders bending down from the weight of years" is a logical substitution. When you add, " Weakened by my soulful cries," the imagery is made more powerful. Poems should also be logical as messages - not just a conglomeration of words and words.

" I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide, Welling and swelling I bear in the tide." " Wide is better off as " wild" to go with leaping. Wide has no action in it to help in the welling of the tide - but " wild" has much of it. Little things like one letter make much difference. It appears that the writer has not spent some time correcting her piece and looking into the effects of her words.

The rest of the poem makes use of imagery powerfully - until again one tries to look closely into the use of contrast in the images. The writer makes a skewed juxtaposition between sassiness, haughtiness, and sexiness with oil wells pumping in my living room, gold mines

diggin' in my own back yard, and diamonds at the meeting of my thighs. The supposed strength that the poem gathers is therefore weakened by this

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seeming misaligned contest of contrasting images of a loose woman jeering at a powerful other. Stated in the perception of the feminine persona, the scorned woman now boasts of oil wells, gold mines, and diamonds - all symbols of material prosperity which she seems to equate to freedom and liberation.