

9

When I turn 10: Mamma won't be able to call me *My Baby!*
Because at 9 I simply longed to be a handful
But at 9 my hands were filled
My left would enclose the flame
My right caressing the little red *crack* lighter
My lips squeezing the plastic tip of the Black

I was 9

I wanted to be 10

Grief had bombarded my heart
It was 2003, Grandma left (for better or worse)
It was 2003; Uncle Shun snatched a purse at Food City
Smooth Black Skin + Gold Teeth + A Butter Knife = 25 years
He came to the funeral with security, an orange two piece suit, and physical chains
We just wore black, and the chains that bound us were internal
He used to rap, so I thought it cool
Tori told our stories that day (she was the poet, she was the scribe)
I was just Chardy,

he was 9

It makes me wonder: When I snuck in Boo's Crown Vic that day and found his gun...

Was it a .9?

It was cold-black and heavy (like me)
I put it to my head...

I was 9