Ribbons and Rags / Sabrina Ramos-Wood

Isabel’s ribbons weave her smooth brown hair as she carefully measures la azucar and watches silently as her mother molds the special pie crust. She ignores me, her little Cuban sugar slave. My hands and back bleed. And she in company of Nobles, receives an affectionate hug while tasting her sweet pie.

Filthy rags cover my chopped black braids, while I cut away tall canes; the machete concentrates its attack. Under the sun’s yellow hair, my sweat bath begins. Blistered bare feet long towards the mansion for new life, while at night, in a dark wet shed, I carefully wash my sores and cry to see mother, whose breath lives with Yoruba Gods.