

## ***First Place***

### ***American Dream***

By Gabriel Brock

i wanna live my american dream  
but that seem really hard just because i'm being me  
now in 1865 lincoln said i could be free  
i wanna have all eyes on me  
like tupac  
but that don't mean you gotta stare when i shop  
it's as if this melanin in my skin is a buy one get sale  
for handcuffs and jail cells  
for bullets and body bags  
it's like my hoodie is an express checkout lane for toe tags  
but i'm just trying to live my american dream.  
well i'm just trying to live in america really  
you see my bar is very low  
which is why i hand you my papers real slow  
but i'm gon give you the benefit  
because it's not like you have anything to tell you any different  
since i'm either selling drugs or playing ball  
but looking back at it all  
the same qualities that make me  
good at catching a football  
are the same ones that get people  
making a phone call.  
i wish i had a receipt for this pigmentation  
then I would actually be able to live in this nation  
I wouldn't have to worry about what time I got home  
which streets I went down  
the kind of people are hung around  
I wouldn't have to worry about  
saying the wrong thing and getting sent downtown  
but I'm comfortable in my skin and I'm proud of it  
the aint Goodwill  
this ain't Costco  
it's not none of it  
I'm special order  
like an Amazon package that God sent  
i'm a miracle in progress  
but oh I digress  
while I am unapologetically me  
and while i not be free  
i guess what I'm trying to say  
is that i'm getting really tired of having to pray  
hoping to see another day  
and that if this is the american dream