

I have an accent

Sara Aristizabal

1

I speak. I write. I think.
I speak.
'You have an accent' they say
I know.
Pause
I know what is coming next
'Where are you from' they say
Beat
Heart - beat
'Colombia'
2 Beats
Heart beats
Faster
'Oh'
3 Beats
Heart b-beats, trips
Defiant
Expectant
Fearful
'Pablo Escobar'
No beats
There it is
Resigned
Is that all they see
Is that all that matters

26

2

'I...'
Sigh
Forced laugh
Tight chest
'Yeah... Pablo Escobar'
Heart b-beats, trips, stops, starts again
Fast
Slow
Uncertain
They move on
I stay here
Uncertainty for heart beat
Scream for words unsaid
Whisper for voice
They move on
I ...
I.
Move.
On.

3

I...
can't move on
I speak. I write. I think.
Their shadows follow me
Faceless
Shapeless
Their voices follow me
Screaming
Pressuring
Booming
Stifling

I speak.
I pretend.
Not good enough.
Yet.
I pretend more.
I speak.
Almost there.
I pretend harder.
I speak.
They no longer say 'you have an accent'
They no longer ask 'where are you from'
They no longer say 'Pablo Escobar'
Like an internal joke
Like suffering to laugh about
They barely notice now
They barely say 'you have an accent'
They barely...
I pretend.
I blend.
I fade.

4

No
NO
I will not pretend.
I will not blend.
I will not fade.
I have an accent
Beautiful
Musical
Whole history in me
Whole culture in me
Whole
ME
'You have an accent' they say

'Yes, I do'
Heart - beat
Fast
Strong
Proud
A little uncertain
'Where are you from' they say
'Colombia'
Heat beats
Faster
Stronger
Prouder
Conversation goes on
They move on
I stand tall

5

My name is Sara (SAA-Raa)
Not Sarah (SAER-ah)
My name is power
My name is history
My name is culture
My name is family
My name is me
My name is Sara
And I have an accent