

# What am I

## Preson Phillips

Yo I don't even know what the vibe is kid  
All these different things seperatin us  
It got me walkin this fence man  
and I don't even know what side I'ma fall on B  
Can't see it Well I'm a zebra y'all  
("Half Puerto Rican, half black, but you don't speak Spanish")  
Don't call me zebra y'all  
("Half Puerto Rican, half black...") Now how old are you? About six, on my BMX, doin tricks  
Back to Middlesex with a couple of poor white trashy brats  
Everything was coochie crunch till it was time for lunch  
They said to wait in the back, they said that Pops ain't like black  
See where I was the population's mostly white  
Ain't it?  
They wanna see you jigga boo with your  
face painted  
Be brought home by one of their daughters and their fathers  
fainted  
They want to see you a failure so I never  
became it  
Light-skinned, showed them lead, curly-headed  
Called me names, I was different, I was gifted, they made me ashamed  
Found out that I'm a different shade when I'm in the second grade  
Abe Lincoln's play, they want me to portray a slave  
My momma's face went pale she looked like she wanted to puke  
Now that I know the truth I'd rather play John Wilkes Booth  
Although my family came and bitched and in the play my role was switched  
My grandma told me I was fixed my problems wasn't fixed  
My family seen my views of the world distort  
Moms last resort, she decided we would move to Newark  
I took a deep breath leaving everything I knew behind  
The country air the green grass and my piece of mind  
Harassed by white cops on our way we're pulled out our car  
Mistook my mom for Joanne Chesimard now I'm really scarred What am I, I'm confused, can't decide  
What am I who am I what am I  
Black or white, I can't identify  
What am I who am I what am I  
I'm confused, can't decide  
What am I who am I what am I  
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What am I who am I what am I Culture shock, Newark's a far cry from Middlesex  
Broadly called projects, black eyes, regrets  
Torn lives, I've never seen so many people depressed  
My mental gets molested, physical takes violent threats  
Stress, walkin home from school's like a terrorist test  
I learned blacks could be racist too, somehow still I felt I was blessed  
Even my teachers called me half-breeds and all of that  
I was scared of livin here but also scared of movin back  
See where I was before I was the darkest thing they ever saw  
They figured that I'm black, white around  
They kick me like a soccer ball  
White people didn't accept me  
Fuck you  
Black people didn't accept me  
Fuck you  
Puerto Ricans didn't accept me  
Fuck you  
Diggin researchin my identity it gots me goin cuckoo "I'm the yellow nigga right?  
I'm tired of that. I am not passing, I am black!  
I was born black, I live black,  
and I will die, proud to be called black!" So now I'm goin "Hey niggaz" at niggaz that say Chino's not black  
They come to my house and tell my African mother that  
In fact causin crackup they said no sister would attract to me  
These same brothers got perms to get their hair like mine was naturally  
Discrimination, affects a brother's education  
Hands up in black history class, they never called on my ass  
But wait, growin at a rapid rate  
I digest their hate, it's family  
Found out my father left me when I'm three  
Dealt with felt if I knew my Spanish family they'd help  
Every mixed person I met they mostly just kept to themself  
We moved to East Orange I set it off talent shows staring  
A high yellow nigga's progression, my flavor's pouring Now how old are you? About nineteen lettin off my  
steam  
Used to be a punchin bag, but now I stomps, in hip-hop fiend  
Now I get the goya jokes, Menudo jokes, Rico Suave jokes  
But females rush me and the MC's steal up all my quotes  
See what I lacks in melanin I makes up wit adrenalin  
Your weak attempts at blemishin my mixed heritage I'm treasurin  
Don't need caucasian acceptance just that of a human being  
Laughed and spit at I don't represent cause I am not Spanish speaking  
Now how many dues must I pay to win  
You're angry and you're stressin that opression  
but you judge me by the skin I'm in when  
Adam Clayton Powell's, light-skinned and

Farrakhan the brother's, light-skinned and  
Elijah Muhammad's also, light-skinned  
Discrimination from my own peoples is making my temper go thin so  
So stop playing me slight saying my song's aight instead of hype  
Don't called me red-boned, or light and bright and damn they're white  
I ain't no zebra, ain't no half of original either  
Don't call me mulatto I stab you with a broken bottle  
Callin your brother oreo get off it yo, now Tom consider  
He could be like Chino XL, a yellow ass nigga

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