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Our Kingdom

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Angie
Bissonnette

ANGIE BISSONNETTE

Our Kingdom

Pink and purple beads sing as they bump together with my every step
Charm bracelets vie for attention as my wrists follow my words
Cheap clip-ons over your pierced ears, so we can match
Pink for you, Purple for me

Memory clings like clammy hands on monkey bars
Desperate to hold on a little longer
I place a silver rhinestone crown on your head
A coronation for the queen

This was before

Before your deep brown curls fell away
Replaced by scarves of luscious greens and royal blues
Armor of color to beat back the inevitable

You are going to war, while I watch from the battlements
Advisors in white robes speak in riddles
The king paces from room to room
A Countess brings a burnt casserole to the castle

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I gather my council, call in confident markers and clever colored pencils to plan my counterattack
Gripping a rose-colored crayon, I sketch on a smile
A shield of fiction protruding from my lips
Cross out my eyes to hide the droop in your eyelids
The slowness in your step
Plaster on a pleasant disposition, keep your eyes closed and a smile at the ready
This is how a princess helps
This is how a princess fights

But your battle was that of a queen
Your body the battleground
Once you lost, all colors retreated
Leaving a pale white flag blowing in a pitch-black sky
You lay to rest in a little black box
Dressed in a layer of dirt deep underground

My closet consumes my princess past
Packed away in a little black box
A coffin for our colorful kingdom