

# SACRED FOLK

by *Christena Cleveland*

resources to nourish your soul and elevate your being

DEAR STRONG BLACK WOMAN, REMEMBER TO BREATHE. FEEL THE PLEASURE OF YOUR INHALE AS IT TICKLES THE INSIDE OF YOUR NOSE. NOTICE THE WARMTH OF YOUR EXHALE AS IT LINGERS ON YOUR TONGUE...LONG AND EASY. TASTE THE FREEDOM YOUR ANCESTORS WANTED FOR YOU...SWEET LIKE HONEY.

- *Jennifer Sterling*

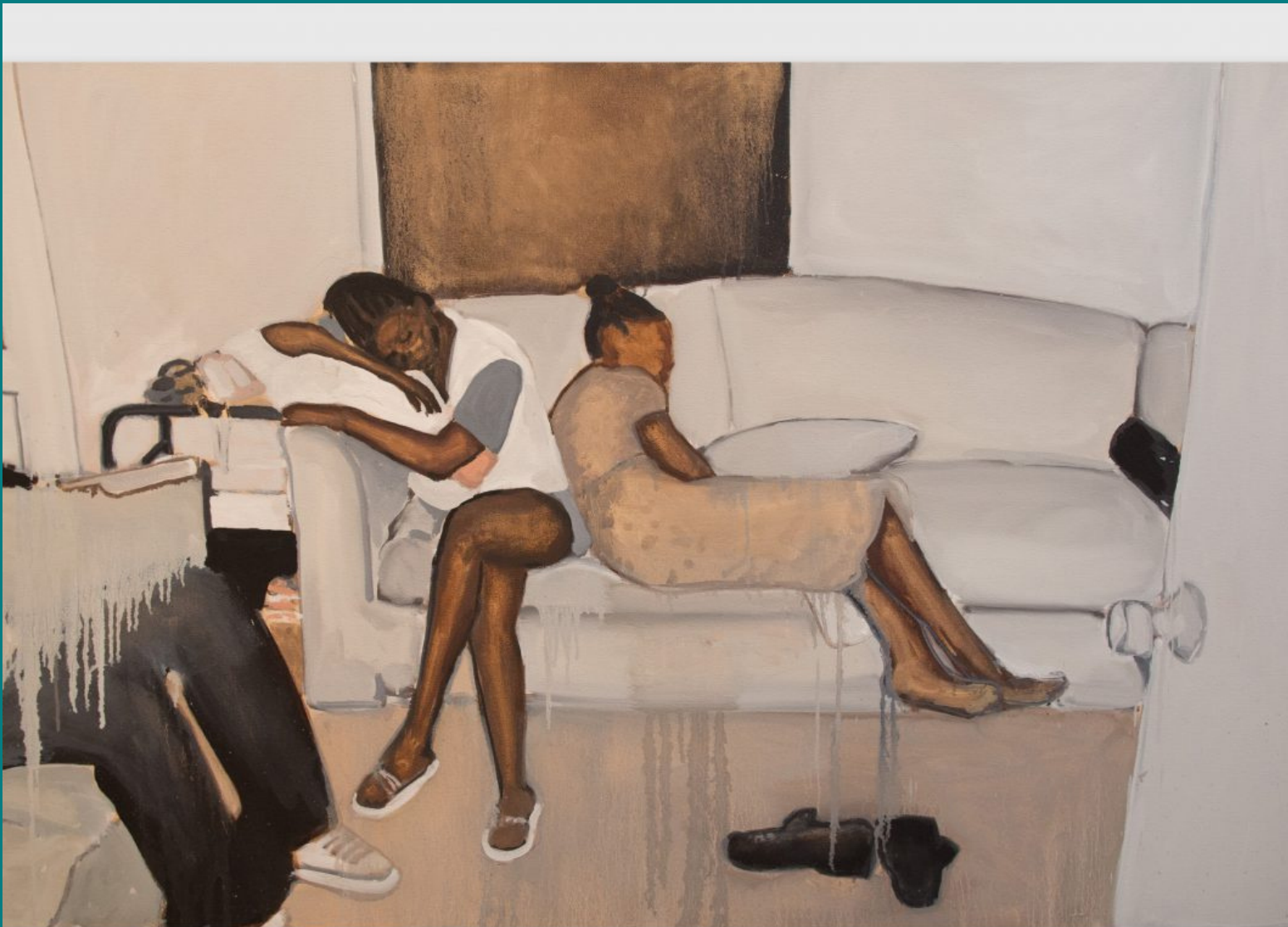


IMAGE: NOAH DAVIS

# SACRED FOLK

## FROM WRITE THIS

### SECOND

by Kira Allen

I don't need an exit strategy or a group  
plan to decide where I'm going  
I get to sleep through the night  
To dream again  
To cultivate clarity with a rested mind  
I get to know the current of laughter all  
the way to my toes  
My joy grows  
moves  
soothes  
skips  
prances  
and pirouettes  
like a sunburst  
I write to remember  
To see the brilliance of butterflies and  
luminescent beings  
Ignited in me

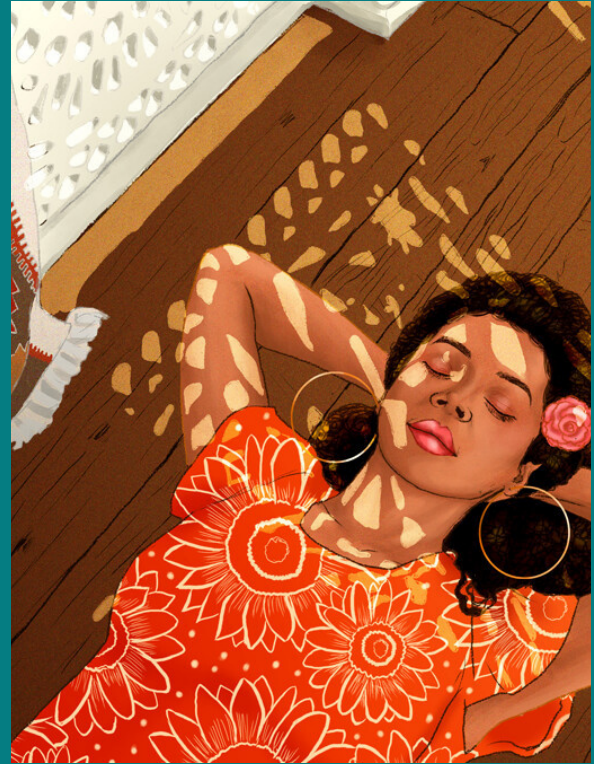


Image: Olusayo Ajetunmobi

## A NOTE FROM CHRISTENA

To me, so much of the Bible is a bully pulpit for whitemalegod. But from time-to-time I come across a translation that heals. Such was the case when I read these lines from Barbara Monda's feminist interpretation of Psalm 23: "My Mother is my shepherd and I lack nothing. She lays me down in green grass and carries fresh water to me. I can rest in her watchfulness while my soul is restored."

The thing about being a Black woman is that the world is never safe. That's why we Black women struggle to rest. We can never let our guard down. We can never just breathe because we feel responsible for our own and others' safety in this violent world. That's why believing that God is a Black Woman is so liberating for me. I can finally rest, knowing that Someone trustworthy is on the lookout. I can rest in her watchfulness while my soul is restored.

