

Woman Things

by Tawnysha Greene

On the night I get my first period, Momma takes me to the bathroom, sits me down. She runs the sink faucet until the water's hot, holds my pajama bottoms beneath, scrubs with soap until the water's pink, tells me what she calls, woman things. She says my body can have babies now, is getting ready to be a wife, mother when I'm older, but I must keep away from things that are not of God—the pill, because it won't let the baby attach to the walls of the womb and it would die—abortions, because when the doctor scrapes the baby out, he cuts out all the things that make babies, too—pregnancy before I am married, because the baby would have a different blood type than me, die when it's born. Momma scrubs hard as she talks, long after the water runs clean, looks down at the sink, her hands, herself in the mirror, but she never tells me how she knew these things.

