

One Black Marine



The late 1950's,
racial segregation ends
in the US Marine Corps.
Imagine that
first boot camp.

Inclusion
often does not consider
the pain of participation
in this
imperfect integration.

One Black Marine,
in a room full of white.
Meeting for the first time,
in a shower room,
naked, vulnerable.

Have you considered
the pain of *this* type of pioneer?
Free from the limits of shackles and sharecropping,
yet still inside a fence
made of skin color.

We were fenced in
based on our visibility.
We were fenced in, visibly.
We were fenced.
Invisibly.

My father, Capt. Albert Williams, USMC, boot camp graduation photo - 1957. Words by Audrey T. Williams