Thara’s (@tough-heart-and-real-art) paintings are extremely creative and highly expressive. Thara paints from the heart and each painting is like a diary, capturing how she feels in a certain moment, or about a certain situation, or person. Each work has a different story behind it, and each work holds its own emotions. Some come from very balanced places, and some are the product of societal pressure, or even self-inflicted pressure. While, some are experiments, or created through the love she has for another. Each of these paintings contain an aspect of her life in a separate way.

In these, you can see the care that Thara has made to create a positive self-image of herself. While these may not be depicted to be herself exactly, they certainly are self-portraits. Depicting the love she has for being a Black woman. She admits that this is a journey that she is undergoing, to love herself more. However, it is apparent that she has made a great deal of progress.

These sketches and this painting exhibit a similar vein of thought, with the use of the half-drawn faces. While the two sketches are simply experimental, and are just tests of the effect, the painting tells a greater story. This is one of the more expressive of her submissions, the painting depicts the pressure under which Thara was experiencing. Again, she makes no particular regard to her personal appearance, but simply depicts herself as a Black Woman. This could mean that she identifies her struggle as a struggle that many Women of her ilk experience. This painting, wahile depicting a darker moment in the artist’s life, still manages to come alive, and attract the eye’s attention, almost effortlessly.

These both seem to represent inner strength. The second, the lion, was created for her father, to show how she sees her father. She views him as a strong, patriarch, who is confident, outspoken, and a positive role model for his family. The first image seems to depict the opposite. It shows a person, who takes on the form of a lion. This is as if a person is trying to embody the qualities (aforementioned) of a lion. This could possibly her trying to be like her father, or it could be anyone simply trying to be courageous.

This piece is particularly striking to me, as it is, of all 10 of her submissions, the only work that depicts an external force, in opposed to something that is more personal or close to home. This is about the societal standards handed down to us, from those who create fashion trends. It says that the person on the cover is just as much of a slave to these standards, as they expect the viewer to be. It says that even when you are skinny, the rules, and the pressure is still being applied. It causes me to question, then, if the same rules apply to everyone involved, and there is no way to win, maybe the entire thing is pointless. This work has a certain poignant nature to it.