

# New Directions

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## Poems

Editorial Staff

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When Things Go Wrong  
Staff: Poems

When from within  
or without  
Things go wrong  
And cherished dreams  
Are shattered  
And Hope - On her last ebb  
Squats on the edge  
Of the yawning mouth  
of doom's coffin

And when time  
Sends you  
To the mercy  
Of those you once knew  
And well trusted

And when the best  
Of those you once knew  
And well trusted  
Send you back  
Naked and weaponless  
To the lonesome  
Bushes of fate

Then you think  
And bitterly lament

But before you cool  
And sharpen the spikes  
Of your time's revenge

You think . . . .  
And deeply think  
And through memories  
Labyrinth of roads  
And paths . . . .  
With your mind's eye  
You trace back  
Until you find  
The place . . . .  
And know where  
And when . . . .  
You went wrong  
And when you find  
You jump without joy

Hence you decide:  
To burn . . . .  
Those flimsy fibres  
In your soul's nest  
Where kindness  
Hatches her eggs,  
And hovers  
And watches  
The needy ones  
Like an eagle  
Above her own.

Hence you decide:  
To mould  
An iron shield  
Around your heart  
So sad sounds  
Of woe, from  
Throats and lips  
Of clan's men  
Dried, cracked,

And muted by  
Thirst and hunger  
Won't ever be heard  
And their eyes  
Hypnotically staring  
From wells  
Deep and hollow  
Won't ever penetrate  
And friends' mirth  
Once so sweet  
Like music  
Won't ever be heard

Hence you decide  
to hate man  
His colour  
His creed  
For man is bad  
And has ever been

But once again  
Before you cool  
And firmly stand  
On your judgment

You suddenly see  
Your mascot -  
The Tortoise  
No more crawling  
In your dark horizon  
But lit  
By the rising sun  
And swiftly moving

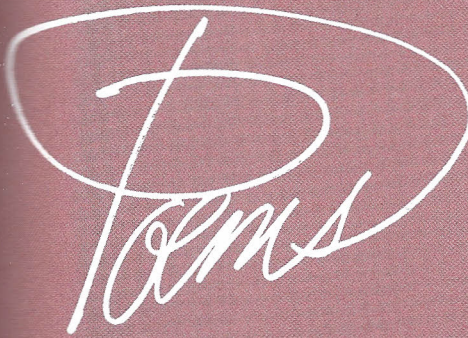
And there -  
On the tortoise back  
You read:  
Your parents' legend  
"Be kind, be kind  
To "Mankind"

Ali Said Ali  
*Mogadiscio, Somalia*

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I feel the breeze gently caress my face.  
I feel the wind.  
I feel the waves rippling at my feet.  
I feel the tide.  
I feel peace.  
I feel peace. . . .

Sandra Walker  
*Washington, D. C.*





## The Ancestral Gathering

(intoned to Congas)

David Walker  
come on down here  
Nat Turner  
come on down here  
Patrice Lumumba  
come on down here  
Denmark Vesey  
come on down here  
Edward Mondlane  
come on down here  
El Hajj Malik Shabazz  
come on down here  
Martin Luther King, Jr.,  
come on down here  
Amilcar Cabral  
come on down here  
Albert Luthuli  
come on down here  
Medgar Evers  
come on down here  
Four young sisters bombed in a church  
come on down here  
10 million lost at sea  
come on down here

Asante, M.K.  
Williamsville, N.Y.

## Time, in Black and White

(Colored People's Time)

What good is promptness in returning  
a call—

A most White thing to do—  
If the call is to say,  
No, we have no openings,  
Or, yes, that's right,  
You owe \$50 more.

The meaning of colored people's time  
Is never to be on time,  
But always to be there,  
Sometime,  
Sooner or later,  
Often-times, later.  
That's the bad part.

But at least you know,  
When colored people come,  
They most often bring,  
Not negatives,  
But positives, like,  
A kind word,  
A tender caress,  
A kiss,  
A joint,  
Good sex,  
All of these.  
That's the good part.

J. Charles Washington  
Washington, D. C.

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## Missing

You don't miss living  
until life is dead  
How can you miss memories  
when they're in your head

You don't miss having fun  
because its always there  
We do miss sharing joy  
because real love is rare

You don't miss struggling  
until you've reached the top  
then you lacked security  
because you quickly drop

You don't miss your company  
until you're all alone  
Then you missed your funeral  
because you died unknown

You don't miss a good chance  
until it slips right by  
Then you miss your effort  
because you never try

You don't miss that good health  
until you end up lame  
We take our health for granted  
once we don't feel the same

You don't miss what's given  
until it's been reclaimed  
What was yours is now missing  
and you feel ashamed

When we miss temptations  
we haven't met our needs  
To chase after possession  
means you live in greed

You shouldn't miss the ole days  
or thrive on the past  
Today must be dealt with  
and the future is vast

You need not miss a friendship  
if it was in vain  
There's no need for sadness  
since there was no gain

You don't miss acceptance  
until you've been refused  
You don't need your feelings  
if they're being used

So we don't know what's missing  
until the loss is felt  
You don't know your playing hand  
until the cards are dealt

Iley Brown Jr.  
Howard University

## Seasons

i could have caught the falling glass  
before it hit the floor shattering into  
a thousand pieces  
but my hands were immobile as the  
sunless morning.  
recalling the gleaming enebriation of  
an evening before

*i remember -*  
lifting my shadow from the depths of  
amorality  
swinging i times duality.  
sacrosanct roles escape explanation  
in the exuberance of internal affirmation  
the moon cries and soothes.

i could have said you are killing yourself  
before life fled from pain  
but my heart was silent as the napping  
afternoon.  
revealing the glaring fecundity of  
contrasting temperments

*i project -*  
spanning your shadow from the heights  
of amorality  
swinging in times duality.  
situational complexities evidence  
re-creation  
in the proponderance of external  
confirmation  
the sun smiles and challenges.

i could have disguised my demeanor  
before my soul slipped out  
merging into shared realization  
but my will stood abashed as the star  
filled night.

so appealing the free association of  
simplistic secrets  
*we unfold -*  
transcending the shadows of limitless  
amorality  
moving in times reality.  
self containment allows separate  
radiation  
in third dimensional penetration  
the earth trembles— ceaseless wonder  
of seasons— and transforms. . . .

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