

New Directions

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Poems

Editorial Staff

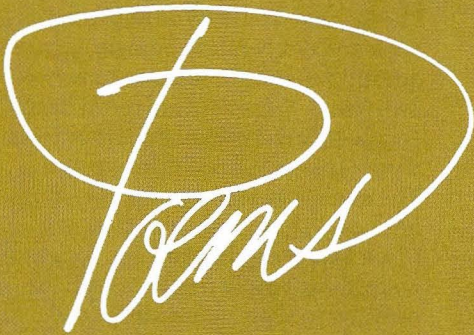
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Not for Sale

They won't go away and I'm baffled as
a clown,
'Cause my over-due-to-leave daughters
are still around.
Folks say I'm blessed and should thank
my lucky star
Mothers cryin' in their beer—don't
know there their kids are!

Well I try to be realistic and sing a song
of joy,
But they're 22 and 23 and still haven't
found the right boy.
I've prayed to all the saints—read Job
'til I'm blue,
Tho' he suffered untold misery, he ain't
been what I been thru.

They read my books and drink my
favorite tea
They cook in the same kitchen—food
more 'natural' than me.
Now you know there's a limit, and my
kitchen is my throne—
But since they've taken it over, I'm
about to leave my home.

Can't get in the bathroom—they shower
night and day
We won't install another one, it might
encourage them to stay.
My friends can never get me on my
phone—
But just last week they got their own!

Oh Lord above what else can I say,
'Cept—they're not for sale, *but I'll give
'em away!*

Annetta Elam Capdeville
Washington, D. C.

Realize Caravans

Realize caravans
 running through the deserts
 Imagine sand seas
 Flowing across a continent
 then see
 Africans on Cottage Grove
 Martin Luther King Avenues
 caught up in junk

SHAKING

Ever hear tell of Zimbabwe,
 Golden Axum, Khartoum?
 contemplate
 Dingala, Osei, Nat.
 Then see
 young knee grows

AIM

less than broken down owls
 who can't see
 any farther than their nose
 while African caravans
 ride out to sand seas

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

Black as the Night

I am black as the night
 That gives a quiet rest
 To this day my sister bright
 Has wearied in her nest

I am black as the night
 I am also blest
 Like the stone in Mecca the sun's might
 Does not burn my chest

I am black as the night
 I am the worst and the best
 I can be wrong I can be right
 To mine vice and virtues I attest

I am black as the night
 I am humble and honest
 And my mystical insight
 Yearns for technological conquest

I am black as the night
 Welcome my gentle guest
 If you're Black, Brown, Yellow or White
 Your company I request all.

Abdullahi Said Ali
 Mogadiscio, Somalia

Transcending

What are you?
 I'm a bird in human form,
 large enough to be caged
 and unfortunate enough to sing.
 I wonder why they clipped my
 beautifully
 colored, light and iridescent wings.

Where are you going?
 Into a swan dive away from my haven,
 my cage. I'm going to be just me and
 listen to the wind, the sound of its
 whispering music; all the time
 communicating
 revelations and wisdom of life.

What's your identity?
 I was poetically named because of my
 uniqueness
 and just recently discovered myself
 again for
 I've progressed to be a little bird again.

Where are you now?
 Escaping to a spiritual place inside of
 myself,
 digging very deeply for the essence of
 life
 which is within me.

Romelia Jones
 Newark, N.J.

Weather Vain

I look beyond my environment
 I view the world in a broader spectrum
 The sun over my head is a mirage
 A distant ray of light
 Sweating dreams
 My eyes gaze over the horizon
 My mind transcends artificial
 boundaries
 Suddenly my hopes are cloudy
 Rain was not in the forecast
 I am soaking wet with reality.

Larry E. Cody
 Washington, D. C.

Rich, Poor

Money has become a disease, that
 is spreading around the world.
 It is wanted by all grownups,
 little boys and girls.

Give some people money and they
 will follow through thick and thin.
 They think of it as a break,
 not knowing the trouble they're in.

If you're out to make money,
 money will instead make you.
 It's the root of all evil today,
 and it's out to get you.

Love, friendship, and peace
 are something money can't buy.
 The wealthy often commit self-
 destruction, and that's the reason why.

So, if you're out to get rich and you
 didn't
 don't worry, you shouldn't have tried.

On the back of all our currency,
 it says "In God We Trust"
 This is who we need, not the money
 that has bought us.

Always in our society, there will be
 the need for the buck.
 If all you want is money,
 you are asking for bad luck.

Iley Brown
 Howard University

32 **The Nightwatchman**

When the moon is a pearly clipper,
 And the stars are the lights of the port,
 The nightwatchman goes riding
 On the dusty roads of the fort.
 The path is old and untrodden,
 Except by his horse's hoofs,
 The ravens have long since built
 Their nests upon the moldy roofs,
 One says when the moon is shining full,
 The soldiers march once more,
 And the nightwatchman plods along
 the wall,
 To take his watch as before.
 "'Tis nights like these," the watchman
 says,
 As he keeps his watch on the port,
 "That the ships sailed in along the
 shores
 Of this now decrepit fort."
 The watch is set, the wall secure,
 The soldiers watch their guns.
 The nightwatchman yet keeps his guard,
 To sound when the enemy comes,
 But as the clipper sinks, no bell is rung
 The watchman takes his steed.
 No enemy has yet approached
 On the watchman's monthly deed.

© Deirdre Anne West
 Oxon Hill, Md.

I Dream to Sing

I have two songs that
 I dream to sing
 to perfection.
 One to the world, and
 the people in it
 Who are not satisfied.
 Who know that there is much
 more and much better and
 are in search for it.
 One to the world, and
 the people in it
 Who are satisfied
 seeing life as it seems
 Accepting what is
 as just that and
 expecting no more.

Rosalee Terry
 Alexandria, Va.

Spring

After the January thaw,
 The ice and snow erases
 Old thoughts of yesterday.
 They pass away like ages.
 All life rushes forth.

It's Spring!

We cannot hear the clamor
 beneath the ground, the stirring
 round of the silent seed giving birth.

All this is in the hands of God.
 Green growth burst free!
 The daffodil, the budding of a tree,
 green grass all around.

Spring is within the ground.

Rachel Bratton
 Washington, D. C.

To Dream, To Hope, To Live

To dream, to hope, to live,
 When all about,
 Obstacles
 To dreams, and hopes, and life
 Abound.
 It is not easy to be
 Young, gifted, and Black.
 Why pursue knowledge,
 If knowledge has lost its power?
 Why pursue justice,
 If justice is but justice in name?
 And yet we must all dare
 To dream, to hope, to live,
 Or life is not worth living.
 Our fathers dreamed,
 When their spirits
 Were fesseled with chains.
 Our fathers hoped
 When their hearts
 Were filled with despair.
 Our fathers lived,
 And forced from life
 Some meaning.
 We their children can dare
 To do no less!
 The young, gifted, and Black
 Will always dare,
 To dream, to hope, to live.

J. Charles Washington
 Washington, D. C.

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