

New Directions

Volume 9 | Issue 2

Article 5

1-1-1982

Poems

Editorial Staff

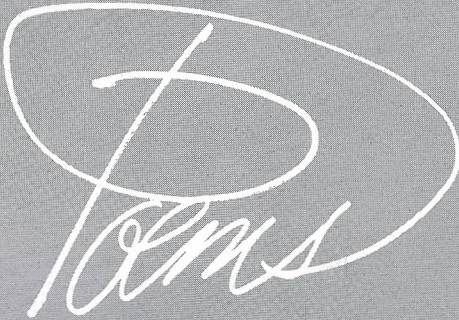
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Recommended Citation

Staff, Editorial (1982) "Poems," *New Directions*: Vol. 9: Iss. 2, Article 5.

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**A New Year's Poem
(Intermediate Thoughts)**

Now,

There is but a moment before midnight
When a New Year shall saunter in,
Where the magic of its entrance
Shall be awed by foe and friend,

And around its neck shall rest a rose
For dreams not yet fulfilled,
Where aging memories may still forget
Their past in bygone years,

It shall speak of fresh and new beginnings
And of old feelings that mustn't last,
For, what once was real may be no more
And better left in the past,

The wiser ones will listen well
They'll prosper for their sake,
The fools, of course, will listen not
And make the same mistakes,

And so, its time, to make our resolutions
And amends with Father Time,
In hopes of living the "Poetic Life"
In stanzas that all rhyme,

So in closing, I propose a toast
As the seconds cease their dance,
Here's to you, New Year, for, once again
Granting us, another chance.

M. J. Hassan
East Orange, N.J.

When A New Day Had Dawned

When will I believe that there is no
conspiracy against Blacks?
When my brother stops shooting dope
because he believes that there is hope
And he can see a new day dawning just
ahead

When will I believe that there is no
conspiracy against Blacks?
When in earnest this country begins to
halt judicial discrimination
and America's jails reflect the true color
of our population
And a new and bright day is dawning just
ahead

When will I believe that there is no
conspiracy against Blacks?
When my brothers in Namibia stop
shooting their guns
because real freedom and liberation have
come
And a new, beautiful and bright day is
dawning just ahead

When will I believe that there is no
conspiracy against Blacks?
When I no longer fear the police
and I believe they will not turn into mad
murdering beasts
And I can see that new day just ahead

When will I believe that there is no
conspiracy against Blacks?
When Black teenagers are put to work
not because America fears crime but
because everyone has the right to
work
And a new day is just ahead

When will I believe that there is no
conspiracy against Blacks?
When America is willing to feed the poor
and unfortunate
and humanity comes before profits and
dollars
And the new day is just ahead

When will I believe that there is no
conspiracy against Blacks?
When racism is dead
When South Africa and North Carolina

don't conjure up the same image
 (red, like in redneck)
 When the FBI and the CIA lose their Is
 (I like in I spy on Blacks)
 When Israel allows Black Jews to be Jews
 When Black boys and girls can dream of
 becoming doctors
 (Dr like in MD and not Dr like in Dr J or
 Dr Dunk)
 When Martin L King's birthday becomes a
 holiday
 When... When... When... When the new
 day is shining
 bright throughout the world

Joseph A. Hawkins, Jr.
 Washington, D. C.

True-Pocrisy

Shallow
 People
 I can see thru you
 I can see your
 Selfishness
 Your
 Self-Centeredness
 Shallow
 People
 Cover yourself
 You're
 Naked

© Linda Jones Malonson
 Natchez, Miss.

A Slave's Meditation

I
 When God gave me life,
 He gave me oneness.
 His force of light
 Caught in these limbs.
 One in body and mind.
 The word become flesh anew.

Fetters on my flesh.
 Fetters in my mind.

You are ours.
 Bought and paid for.
 Hear and obey
 Thou shalt scrub
 polish
 cook
 tend our babies.

Thou shalt clear
 plant
 plow
 haul
 lift
 Thou shalt come and go
 rise and lie down
 love and mourn
 at our bidding.

Thou shalt have no god before us.

Fetters on my flesh.
 Fetters fighting for my mind.

II
 Where shall I go in time of trouble?
 Where is rest?

Wait, watch, in stillness.

From within beaten flesh
 God's power incarnate —
 Soundless voice of the ages:
 "I am the way, the truth, the light."
 Whispered promptings of my silent soul
 Carried on the echoes of the drum.
 The Lord is my strength and my
 salvation.
 Of whom shall I be afraid?

III
 What God gave as one
 Must live as two.
 The body bend.

The spirit struggle to be whole.
 Though I shall weep
 for the plundered womb
 the stolen children
 dream no dreams for them
 for men unmanned, impotent in rage.
 I, witnessing, the deaths beyond
 mourning
 the losses too great for tears.

Alone

no arms to hold me
 no mother to rock me
 no fire to warm me
 no covers against the cold and dark

Fetters on my body.
 Breaking fetters in my mind.

IV

Yet though I walk through the valley of
 the shadow of death
 And shall walk again and again,
 And shall walk with my fears and
 through them
 To the dreams undreamt and dream them,
 There to lie down and rest;
 To find goodness and ease,
 To find mercy and wholeness.
 All of us, children born of sorrow,
 From generation unto generation
 All the days of our lives,
 Fettered but yet unfettered,
 To seek,
 And to dwell in the house of the Lord
 forever.

Carolyn T. Brown
 Howard University

Excerpted from the production "Goin' Home,"
 performed at the John F. Kennedy Center for the
 Performing Arts, July 3, 1981.

32 **Beauty**

Beauty as they say
is only skin deep
loveliness makes you stare
when you only wanted to peep

The best of beauty
reminds you of perfection
as it stirs up your soul
you yield to affection

Beauty can be the elite
or it can be in rain
prettiness is in everything
snow, sleet or rain

Beauty deserves respect
and gains admiration
It brings out the best
of its charmed population

To boast of brilliance is ugly
it need no explanation
loveliness is initial
and is followed by imitation

Beauty is in thought
or something you can say
beauty can be eternal
and it can rot away

When Physical beauty is judged
seeing is believing
but this is one of the areas
where it can be deceiving

It can be very challenging
trying to maintain beauty
on unnecessary burden
or a very useless duty.

Iley Brown
Howard University

Speculate

How can you speculate
When the rent's due
Talk to somebody
When the phone's cut off
How can you pray
When the house is cold
And you get on your knees
Bow your head
And begin to shiver
I remember newspaper talk
About the energy crisis
And the tax savings
For a family of four
That gets something done
Saving energy
Well, I just stay there
With my head bowed
Shivering and praying
Getting something done
With the Lord
Praying that when I get to heaven
It's warm and I don't have to shiver
And I can speculate.

Walter Ray, Jr.
Silver Spring, Md.

Below the Hemline

I hope you don't mind my telling you—
Because you'd never notice or admit it—
But your prejudice is showing
Far below your hemline
Soiled from dragging in the dirt
Of its indelible ignorance...
Be careful or you'll trip over it!
Step out of it—if you can...
Reach down and try to tear it off!
Pull it out from the roots of your being!
Walk away and leave it to die!
It will hurt a bit—perhaps a lot—
You've been accustomed to its presence—
But you'll be free of its bondage!

Valerie Parks Brown
Washington, D. C.

In the Scheme of Things

What does it matter in the scheme of
things that these babies go unborn?
Innocent babes for whom you express
scorn.

Aren't there enough babies to whom no
one gives love?
Enough who wait to claim their reward
the skies above.

What does it matter in the scheme of
things that they terminate those lives
in mid-stream?

Denying smiles on those faces to beam
Ending forever the lover's dream.

Enough of our people in crowded and
burning cities—

Raging, screaming, scratching, crying
against the never ending pain.

Enough of the crops for whom there is no
rain.

These acts could matter much in the
scheme of things.

For those babes, to whom no songs the
expectant mother sings,

Could be the seeds of a new nation—
A Black nation the womb never brings.

Wilma D. Perry
Silver Spring, Md.

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