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## Poems

Editorial Staff

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## THE ARTS

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### Poet: Self-Portrait

Entangled  
in your poems  
voice  
of ancestors

Your fervor  
tension  
flame that  
inspires  
ignites  
freedom from  
oppression

Entangled  
in your poems  
voice  
of ancestors

Your idea  
volcanic  
erupts-molten lava  
boom  
the struggle  
of your people

Entangled  
in your poems  
voice  
of ancestors

Your purpose  
guards our earth  
our people  
keeping  
alive all our  
struggle, hope  
for budding

Girma Tessema Wubishet  
*Howard University*

### Messages of Life

messages of life  
are red  
with  
tears and tragedies  
humanity hangs  
on absurdities  
the curtain of life  
falls daily  
with no perceptible end  
yet  
stumbling and groping  
through  
bewildering chaos  
serve  
no useful purpose  
either.

janet r. griffin  
*Howard University*

### Reclaim, Reconnect, Renew

I sat quietly  
Like a Lion in tall grass  
stalking its prey  
Then moved slowly,  
gradually  
Edging my way  
Moving almost  
motionlessly  
In complete control of  
every muscle  
Then stopped,  
Sat quietly,  
Blended into my sur-  
roundings  
With eyes fixed on the  
mark  
Then when the time was  
right I pounced on it  
Snatched it up  
Like a fisherman yanking  
his rod out of the water  
Pulled it towards me  
It's mine! Was taken from  
me

Now I've got it back  
With patience, knowl-  
edge, and enduring  
strength  
I have regained the cul-  
ture that was once  
taken  
From me and my people

The people, the riches,  
and the culture  
Were taken from Afrika  
The land of the Black  
people  
My people

The sweet fruit of Afrika  
Plucked  
Disbursed  
Made to almost rot  
By the hands of others  
Pulled from the life giving  
vine

The fruit of Afrika has not  
rotted  
Even with a new look  
It is still the fruit of Afrika  
A raisin is a grape left for  
dead  
But closer examination re-  
veals it as the same fruit  
With a new look

The fruit of Afrika will  
learn of the true vine  
And respect it for the life  
it gave  
The fruit Afrika will re-  
claim its vine  
Even though others tried  
to connect to it  
The real seeds of the fruit  
of Afrika will reconnect  
Even though birthed in  
other soil  
These seeds will form  
their own vines  
And Gradually,  
Grow, reclaim and  
reconnect  
With the mother vine  
Forming one strong uni-  
fied vine  
And the unified vine will  
grow stronger  
Fertilized by the fruit it  
produces

Wanda Winbush  
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# NEW DIRECTIONS

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