Poems

Editorial Staff

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Challenge
In reaching for that far distant goal I seek
My arm often seems too short,
But I stretch until it aches with pain
Only to find
I must stretch it again.
Marcus G. Wood
Baltimore, Md.

Life Is A Drop of Happiness
Life is a drop of happiness
A drop which sometimes turns to tears
But tears are a refreshing waterfall of wisdom
Which can wash in smiles of a truth one has learned.
Sherrie J. Calfield
Washington, D. C.

Keys to the Cage
As I walk along a street in Blacktown
Viewing foundations of buildings burnt in rage,
Old men and young men play upon life's stage,
With lightless eyes they saunter about
No longer enraged.
Defeat has them all encaged,
They move about like rats in a maze
Sometimes doped, drunken, broken, in craze,
Arrows of life, pierce them from their haze,
They are basking contently in the sun;
Dying with no fires ablaze.
Pour a sage into the holes your arrows have made;
A sage to defend them against Death
Stalking in the maze,
Death is stalking,
Shaking with rage;
Death is rattling keys to the cage!
Wilma D. Perry
Silver Spring, Md.

David They Call Him
David they call him
A foreigner among native borns
To rule by stick and whip
Painful strokes agile
David they call him
Khaki in a clad clothed
Sheer force awfully encased
In the person of turgid flesh
And a face stalkingly white and sulkily ugly
David they call him
A goblin in human mantle
Among mortals peaceful and humble
Terror of sight to child folk
A woe to every village far and near
David they call him
Prospecting gold for money
Prospecting blood for both
A marksman and a sharpshooter
A dear is now shot dead
Then a man subtly unarmed
'An African mistakenly killed'
So lukewarm an excuse
That never be venial.
Mohamed K. Salad
Mogadiscio, Somalia

Royalty
A young Nigerian queen sat at the bus stop
on a red bench
provided by the chicken place
and looked disdainfully around
at her exhaust filled kingdom
She straightened her cut off royal robe about her jeans
and stared unknowingly into the alien world.
And I watched her in amazement
at the survival of classic beauty in black.
Betty Taylor Ashe
Howard University
Negritude

Look back,
Return,
Dig Deep-
To the roots.
There is “me”!
“Me”!
That is “me”!
Truly,
don’t you see?
That is truly “me”.
Black!
Somebody!
“That’s me”!

Talking With Myself

Thoughts going through my mind . . .
Change . . . Revolutionize.

Make me what I am.
A woman . . .
luscious fruit,
a rebel,
a leader,
an idle hand,
substance of time,
sister to Remus and Romulus.

I am created unjustly.
I should be a tree willowing
or a vast mountain.
All these feelings and emotions
I have to express
and such a diminutive space I occupy.

S. Mervette Marshall
Silver Spring, Md.

Portrait of a Snake

She crawls on her grey belly
In the muck of her unstable mind . . .
Slithering, twisting, this way and
that . . .
Small, beady eyes, zooming in
On imagined foes,
To get within striking distance
Of those whose backs are turned,
But who know that she is there . . .
Hissing madly to herself, with wounded
vanity,
At their scorn, their lack of fear,
And their total awareness of
Her serpentine inhumanity.

Valerie Parks Brown
Washington, D.C.