

The background is a textured yellow paper. Overlaid on this are several thin, black hand-drawn lines that intersect to form a complex geometric pattern of triangles and polygons. The lines are drawn in a simple, sketchy style.

BLACK
LITERARY
MAGAZINE

AN EXPERIENCE IN BLACKNESS

THE BLACK LITERARY MAGAZINE
An Experience In Blackness

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Special thanks to Jim Coleman for all of his help.

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Hot, wet and seething
Passions permeate my very soul.
A storm commences
Outside.
The hellish cry
Of the wind,
Mixes fluidly
With my passionate
Relentless energies.
Images flow.
Fingers of
Stimulating thoughts
Caress
My tender, sensitive ears.
My breath
Is warm and wet,
Sensuous.
I long for release.
My tensions mount
In
An
Inorgasmic frenzy.
I am
Unable
To express my self.
I,
Vainly,
Attempt to console
My rampant feelings.
I am devoured
By
My own emotions.
I long to be free.
"Help me Oh God,
Make me at peace
With my self,"
I cry
Frantically.
There is silence
The fire
Still remains within me,
Scorching and Searing
My internal being,
My spirit.
Escape!
Run!
Flee!
I am trapped.
I am
Unable to escape.
I wheel about
Desperately,
Facing my self,
Exploding
With shame
And anger.
I attack my self,
Brutally.
Fist fly;
Blood flows;

rain
I hate myself!
Die Kent!
Die Horribly!
Die Alone!
Rivers of tears
Surround me
As I sob
Convulsively
Over
A weak, broken heap of flesh
Upon my knees.
"Take me from my self Oh God,"
I pray
Incoherently
"Take me from my self."
My sobbing ceases.
I remain,
Alone,
Over
A shapless, bleeding hulk of flesh
Upon my knees.
My mind races.
Delusions of happiness
Flood my mind.
Illusions of love
Torment my soul.
Darkness envelops me,
Strangling me.
Yet,
I still live on.
I have
Become
A minus quantity.
Yet,
I still have substance.
I have destroyed me!
Yet,
I cannot
Kill my self.
I have not
The strength
To do such a thing.
What is God?
What is life?
What is love?
I want
None of them!
I don't
Even
Want my self.
The fire
Still remains within me.
The fire of God.
The fire of Life.
The fire of Love.
And with the fire,
Comes the pain,
The pain of living,

The pain,
Is
As intense
As,
The fire
Is all consuming.
I shall
Never
Be free!
I shall
Always
 Need
 Love...

Kent Sturges

finger, drifts of cool gray heaven
tumble thickly thru bloodless lips.

Ice silver pumps whisper dreams
along scar-torn paths of midnight's
hour - while mercury eyes scream
blind hate of CREATION to an audience
choked with do-or-die victims.

Bone-white lid tilts steadily
atop smoky rings of red, yellow,
and green lights while the traffic
of his mind crashes on...

Somewhere a curtain falls...
and the show begins
Somewhere little boy bugle blues taps...
while the darker sun rises
Somewhere what's happenin' happened...
while what's goin' on went
Somewhere what it is was,
while hip broke and cool froze over...

There is no east or west, and the
sun does not rise nor set in either of
but
in
us...

Keith Owens

COULD IT?

Niggers and Honkies
Caucasians and Negroes
Us and Them
We and You

If/and/forgetting/when/that/
what/how/because/where
home...
time... roots...
space...
blood...
freedom...
lies...
stars...
stripes...
time... roots...
home...

Could it have worked?
Shall we really see?
Have all the cards been dealt...
or did we
ever play
with a full deck?

A Silver Swan dreamed by ^{live}
crystal moons three dimensions
ago, liquid wings laughin' the rising
sun despite hell's twilight galaxy.

All is NOT said and done...
said

she.
All is NOT said and done...

Behold an age when Starchild Blue
breathed PRESENCE upon years long since
born, eyes screaming fire's blood, each hand
proclaiming hollow spheres of scorching red future.
In gentle galaxies of love-spangled echoes
he spoke of knowledge, strength, believing,
and freedom.

He spoke that what goes around,
comes around, and what comes around-
stays around.

He spoke that a palace of no purpose
is of no promise, but that an open mind
is twice fit to move a million
mountains...

He spoke that a life is as a
compass spinning in space -
totally void of direction yet totally
assured of arrival.

He spoke that liberty was not a
privilege - but an imperative - chained
to the souls, the spirits, the minds,
of the oppressed... as life chained
to death.

He spoke that he would return
when it ALL was true...

All is NOT said and done,
whispered the silver swan, all is NOT
said and done - whose liquid
wings still laughed the rising sun...

And with that she dreamed-
by the silver of mercury breeze-
back thru the three dimensions,
back past the five crystal moons, to
the end of time and space where
she rests with Starchild Blue,
viewing Too Cold Truth, who
clears his tired path of all
us blind fools.

Keith Owens

TEN YEARS FAST

Since that day ten years ago
the black man has wondered,
even worried about his future.
Echoes of "We Shall Overcome"
became lost in the
Mighty Halls of Justice.
Days of rage started the fire
that burns still-burning
to free the black man, to free him
of all oppression and hatred.
Discouraging words were heard
ever since that day ten years ago;
the black man has never measured
up to white standards.
What happens now? you ask.
But Brothers, it was time
ten years ago to ask:
Where do we go from here?

Anthony Tansimore

WHY

I wonder why it is
that you preach not
for freedom and equality.
Can you not
make these several states
united for all?

I wonder why it is
that you embrace not
the people with open arm.
Can you not
accept us Americans
with warm greetings?

I wonder why it is
that you wave
two separate flags.
Can you not
live under one flag
with but three colors?

I wonder why.

Anthony Tansimore

On our wedding day
We'll take vows to seal our love
as one.

One we are
One we shall be.
Our love is one that is tender.
Beautiful.

Fragile as a soft pink rosebud,
That bruises when you gently touch it.
But yet, somehow tough as
the hardest diamond.
No matter what is done to it,
it remains unscratched and sparkling
like it always did.

I love you
like there was no tomorrow
I treasure each moment
as if it was our last.
Hoping and praying that
you'll never leave my side.
Closing my eyes to the truth
that one day you'll no longer
be there when I awaken.
But that's o.k.
Because I'll know something
that will heal those pains.
I'll have had you a little while,
and that is all that matters.

Because I'll then realize
that I shared a little of your life
with you.

For just a moment.
Because life is only a short moment.
One that is continuously passing by you.
You reach out to grasp,
and there is nothing there,
but air.

You run to catch up, but,
you never seem to reach anything
that you go after...

After,
to hold it and re-live that particular moment
And that's how I feel
As if our lives together,
after this day
Will only be a brief moment
that is always passing by.

Cynthia Gordon

Respect me
For I am the black woman.
I am the most beautiful thing that ever existed

I'll stick by your side,
When no other will.

I need you
I want you
I love you

I'll be there,
No matter what.
When the white man strips
you of your manhood
I'll give it back yo you.

When the white man
makes you mad, frustrated and angry
I'll soothe you.
When he breaks down your mentality,
I'll tell you, "baby, that's alright, don't worry
about it."

When the white man deprives you of yourself
I'll be there
and I'll reply, "baby as long as you got me,
he ain't depriving you of nothing.
Because as long as you got me you got yourself,
so what he's saying ain't shit."

When he turns you to drugs,
Abusing you
Saying, "yeah man, this will make people look up
to you. Make ya a man, give you respect because
you can handle it."

Mis-using you
I'll be there, don't worry.
I'll help you baby,
When no other will.

When he sends you off to war
I'll be there when you get back
With your child, and he'll know that
his father is a beautiful black man.

When he confuses and mis-leads you,
I'll be in your corner
To put you on that straight, but
sometimes narrow road.

But baby, when he kills the man that I love,
The man that I need,
The man that I want,
The man who helped me become
the strong black woman that I am
I'll kill that white mothafucka.

Cynthia Gordon

And you, me too
I marvel at this thing
to turn a poet black
and bid him sing
only
if his tunes are
steady rhymes of
black being

You see
its easy to enlase
the fancy-tongued tones
that these howlies bring
with

german made
silver cased
glasses
shatter proof
wings

but you older brother
are of a special mold
speak to me of our lives

here
things not seen
memories of old

Older brother
its not their
stolen histories
their books
their summaries of
our knowledge
that you hold
its

you
a special type; thats
black gold.

Sam Coleman



BY THE DUSKY EVENING SEA

Under the darkening dusky evening sky
A thin ripple of white
beamed across the waters face,
The moon illuminated
a warm embrace.

Dark swept away the blues trailing hues
and the sky hosts twinkled,
reflecting their discussion
of opposing lover's views.

The night air heard
and rushed upon the scene,
like a harrier swooping upon its prey.
They stopped and cuddled each other.
Until such a time when the wind would wane.

As darkness gave way to the pecking
sun rays,
the birds now talked of the
sleeping refuges.
Of the joy that beamed from the
smiles of the two,
So warm and comfortable
blanketed with a summer's dew.

Sam Coleman

VIBRATIONS

This gentle tabby
brushes
arched back pressing
wherever I touch it.
Its calmness reflected in
her eclipsing eyes, is
vibrated into me as
I notice you brushing
me, my arched back pressing
wherever you touch it.
A song of feeling pours,
purring from my soul
and my eclipsing eyes
reflecting your vibrations.

Sam Coleman

DEATH

And at that moment
he saw a small naked black boy
a gingerbread baby
Kneeling and holding a
Shovel and blue-painted pail
on the shore of a deserted beach
ridden with partly buried whatever
and blowing papers tumbling,
front over back
in the late hot afternoon.
The boy's wide smile eased
As slowly as the water oozed through
the white sand
filling a once empty hole.
Consoling himself with the
Young boy's ignorance,
he laid back
folded his rough black hands
over one another
and died.

Sam Coleman

of music,
JAZZ.

It comes and
lifts me high!
I sit, floating
soaring like an eagle,
High on c's
Lower on d's.

Swaying from one side
to the other
JAMMING.

Drifting
(blow that horn)
(don't be so mean)

Flying
forgetting all my troubles
Dreaming
beautiful dreams.

Totally gone:

Where am I?
so nice
so beautiful
so loving
so unconcerning
so
freeseeee...

Flying, dying
torn
reborn...

One dream
after another
Ecstasy...

Slow it down
that's right
nice and easy
someone squeeze
me.

Climbing
coming back up
High
High
Soaring once again
a beautiful black hawk
in flight.

Swooping up and
down.

Drifting high
on the music...

Then it

I would never put
myself in the class with:
Nikki
Inamu
Don
Langston
Maya
Gwendolyn
(others I did not mention).
I even feel funny when
I refer to them by their
first names.

For they are the people I
admire and
envy.

I see myself as a
poet.
But I wouldn't dare
mention it around them,
because they ARE
what I want
to BECOME.
They have the gift
I wish for.

They are the poets,
the leaders
the writers
the parents
the preachers
the liberators
the teachers
the wise ones
the black professors (with PhD's in
blackness,
feelings,
black feelings,
feeling black.)

I am the child,
the follower
the student
the naive
the listener
the reader
the future.

Yes, I am the future
shaped by their past.
I am a lost child
awaiting guidance.

I am an extension
of them
As they are
the expressions of
the masses.

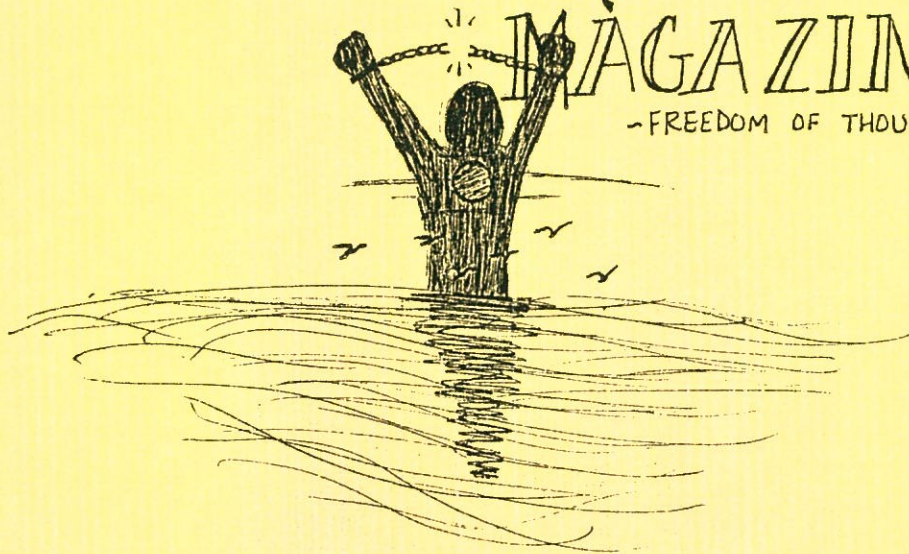
man
man has conquered
even the moon
man has conquered
everything

except
the prejudices
within
himself...

Veldree Thalley

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~FREEDOM OF THOUGHT~



FALL 1978

VOL. 2 # 1

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Staff

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Funded by the Experimental Grants Committee

This, our second Black Literary Magazine has once again been compiled and edited by members of the Black Student Union of Colorado College. We have developed this magazine in an effort to spread our black culture to people on and off of the C.C. campus. All of the poems, prose and drawings were created by black C.C. students. I, along with other members of the Colorado College Black Student Union, hope you enjoy and learn from our Black Literary Magazine.

Yours in unity,

Vellidree W. Thalley

Vellidree W. Thalley
Editor, Fall 1978
Black Literary Magazine

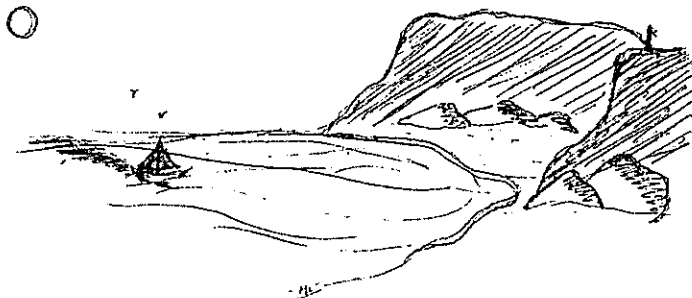
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Appearances

They say that beauty is only skin deep
and therefore the beauty
of the sea
must be deep below its surface
yet looking out
you see a beautiful horizon
which was the attraction
that furthered you
into its depths.

Rochel Coleman



I called him the teacher, with one summer about five years ago. We were window washers. I was sort of an apprentice to him.

He was a window washer because, it was in his words, "the only true art form left in New York worth paying for." He had done this sort of work for the past 23 years or so and felt that he was just beginning to fully understand window washing as just another profession. Before he had always thought that it was a way of bringing truth and beauty into peoples lives by letting as much sunshine into their lives as possible. He once told me that dirty windows made people very, very unhappy. He felt, that the responsibility of the window washer was to clean people's windows so that they could see each other as individuals, who are all basically alike. I mentioned to him once that many window washers simply did it to stare at people and act like voyeurs. He said, "Yes, that is true, and you do it for the money, why are you so different?" "Me different?" I said, "you are the one that's different, people only look out of their windows so they don't have to see the people they live with. And you wash them for money, you neither see in nor out."

He was the most peculiar window washer I had ever met; not only did he care about the windows he washed, but he cared about the people on the other side. He told me that windows often do keep people from the outside world, and that it was up to all window washers to make the window so clean that people would yearn to be on the outside; at least for a while, and then they might begin to see one another up close, learning if nothing else tolerance for one another. That is why I called him the teacher. Not because he taught me anything, but because of him I learnt for myself. Often we would spend 3 or 4 hours suspended from the 40th floor of some expensive condominium and cover many subjects. The teacher had an unbelievable repertoire on several topics ranging from the mundane to the ethereal. He usually said something that would make me angry but I never lost my respect for him.

One day while we were washing the windows of an old Cathedral I noticed that he looked very unhappy, and very uneasy. I asked him if he were ill or angry at me for something. "There is something wrong with this church," he said dryly. "What is wrong with it? It's just a building?" I stared at him for a long time for an answer. He stood up on the scaffold as if on solid ground, and sat back down quickly. I repeated my question, and he answered that the church was not any good for anybody. He spoke as if he were actually afraid for the congregation of this church. "This church is in trouble, it has got no clear windows. They are all made of coloured glass."

dows."

"Don't you see? People cannot see in or out, they cannot see clearly through the glass." He seemed to be calmer now, but there was still a grating agitation in his voice.

"I mean no matter how hard one may wash these windows, one cannot wash away the colours that distort the images on either side."

"Isn't that what church is all about anyway?"

"Perhaps, but that isn't how life is."

"How can you say that? All that life is, is one distortion after another. Nobody sees things the way they are. Everybody sees things the way they want to." I looked at him to check his reaction to what I had just said. He seemed to be weighing what I had said very carefully. His brow was wrinkled and he absently tapped his "squee-gee" against his bucket. He looked at me suddenly, squarely in the eyes. He said, "There are things in life that regardless of whether or not they are true, are harmful to people. A god must not keep his people from tolerating one another."

"What if there is no God?" I asked acidly.

"The matter remains the same, people shouldn't be kept from tolerating one another."

"How can you make judgements on a bunch of distortions?" I thought he wasn't getting my point. The teacher smiled warmly at me and told me that I was bitter, and lonely for a god.

"You are searching for your god, and you bitch because you can't find him."

I asked him to make himself clearer. He only grinned.

"Look," I demanded, "I don't believe in anything anymore, to hell with religion. I'm tired of arguing about distortions, I'm after the truth." He ignored my answer for a moment, he was staring at the sun for a long time. He seemed to be lost in whatever he was thinking. It made me angry sometimes, the way he would look as if he were giving my words the greatest of care, when actually he had "spaced" them out and just sat thinking on a different subject. It was a nice day though, and a warm breeze was blowing. I would have been content to let the whole subject drift to something less volatile. Religion wasn't one of my greatest topics. It wasn't that I was emotionally stung by the subject, it was just that I thought I knew enough about religion. I'd studied several religions as a kid in trying to decide which one was the best for me. It got to the point where they all began to look alike. The quality of "finding oneself" through religion was to me very backward. I figured that if I was ever going to get to the source of my being it would be through searching for facts and not spirits. I grew tired of his spaciness, so I spoke to him. I told the old man that I was jaded at 22, I told him that I had no beliefs. "What do you mean?" he chuckled spritely. I was embarrassed by the inflection of his tone, and his eyes looking like liquid crystals make me unable to look him in the eye, as I attempted

I'm mean..." He interrupted me, "Why if you are so insecure about life, do you not have a god?"

"What do you mean I just said..."

"I know what you said. You said you don't believe in anything. I ask you why don't you believe in something if you are so afraid?" I looked in his eyes, "I don't get you. I told you I'm just unsure, insecure, tired of spirituality, I need a rest. I just need a rest. I need truth not God."

The old man looked at me seriously for a moment. He stood up from where he had been sitting. His smallish frame sprang up cat-like; very smooth, as if he were ten years younger than myself. He was in excellent shape for his age, whatever it was. I couldn't really tell how old he was, though I made a few assumptions from the information he had given me about his personal life. I suppose the most intriguing aspect about him was his remarkable resemblance to my father. They both had what appeared to me to be a deep sense of justice, and an unlimited capacity to grow. But the most striking resemblance was in appearance. Both my father and the teacher were men of experience, and middle aged yet they looked surprisingly young and free of worry. Their eyes too, even though they are coloured differently have the same character, the same look of accessibility that expressed concern in a paradoxically detached way. And though the colours were different; my fathers eyes, a soft elusive hazzle and the teachers eyes that were a cloudy yet dramatic blue, always made me doubt myself whenever I opened my mouth to speak.

He stood and looked, and then he suddenly smiled. He began to turn away from me still smiling. He spoke with his back to me, and I felt that he was still smiling. "Don't you want solid ground to stand on?"

"Of course I do, that's what I've been trying to tell you. I want to rest. I'm tired of controversy." He turned briefly and squinted. He looked at me in disbelief. He spoke more harshly than usual, "Tired of controversy? You are tired of controversy? Now I see what you mena by rest. You not only want a god, but you want to sit up in heaven and sleep in his lap."

"Will you talk sense."

"I am talking sense."

There was then a strange bottomless silence, the sky seemed to darken. The silence lasted much longer that I could stand, his back was still directly to me. The sky grew dimmer, I started to feel as if I were becoming short of breath, I felt cold. I couldn't stand the bottomlessness any longer. I spoke.

"I just don't or just can't understand you."

The bottomless sensation left. I drew a deep breath, smiling to myself, remembering the smae bottomless feeling as a kid when I would watch a frightening movie and then try to go to sleep afterwards. I would feel so breathless sometimes that I would often have strain to bite my tongue in order to move and

beams at me and I nearly froze. "I...uh..." he had done it again, I tried like hell to sound coherent. "Well" I stammered, "you know that there are no absolute truths, right?" He stared at me with a slight grin on his face saying nothing for a while, then...

"I would agree that there are not many," he said tersely. "Ok then there aren't many for you, and I don't have or know of any myself. I mean...uh well, the thing that bothers me or, uh not really bother, uh... I mean more like disturb, or bug... that bugs me is... well you know how..."

My face felt hot. I began to feel strangely anxious. I had just caught the gist of what he was implying, and I felt in an existential way quite harmless. The teacher looked up at me benevolently. His words almost inaudible, he began to speak to me in a soothing way.

"You wish to live in heaven and dream upon God's lap. You want the world to stop and explain itself to you. Why are you so persistent on knowing everything, when you insist you have no beliefs? If you don't believe in anything there is nothing to know. So if there is nothing to know why do you search for a place to rest? Why do you search for truth? You seem to have faith in finding this truth, but if you believe in nothing you will never find it. How can you find what is not there?"

"It's there," I said limply.

"You believe in it?"

"Yes."

He turned his back once again to me. I wanted to say something more but I was afraid I would do nothing but stammer. The teacher looked at me over his shoulder and spoke.

"I believe in it too, but truth is not the matter really, the matter is really our ability to see it and our willingness to accept it.--One more window on the east side, and we shall call it day--you see, you balk because you've forgotten what truth is, you see it around you everyday but when you see it you expect it to conform to your needs. If it does not conform to your needs then you call it untrue."

"You do the same thing when you wash windows," I said. "You're complaining about is right and wrong, true and untrue..."

"I'm complaining about what is clear and what is unclear."

"What's the difference?"

"You are making the difference, I'm merely clarifying the point." His eyes were daring me to challenge him, I wasn't even sure now if we were talking about the same thing anymore, but I felt compelled to accept his challenge.

"So what you're saying," I began cautiously, "is that when I speak of untruth or truth I'm missing the point completely."

"What I am saying is that this window, we are trying to clean, should be broken in order for us to learn from it. All the colouring has been put there to keep people from approaching it and looking through it. Those who see this window are led to

"All of the colours make the world look different..."

"But," I shot out. "But... I'm saying that people see things differently to the man, why do you even bother to argue?"

"Look into that window to your left," he said pointing to a grotesque picture of a small Christian being fed to an enormous lion with teeth as big as the Christian's hands. I stood up carefully upon the scaffold and peered in through the little Christian's tunic. I could perceive mostly shadows coloured in different shades of soft light brown. I directed my eyes to the large gold plated cross as it was the most discernable object in the church. The teacher asked me what I was looking at. I told him and then he asked me to read the insignia below it. The letters were all different colours and seemed to be placed haphazardly below the cross. I read the letters allowed. The teacher was watching me out of the corner of his eyes. He stood also looking into another window to my right. I was sure he was laughing at me. I read the letters and words as clearly as possible.

"M.E...A.N.D....T.I.Z...I.N..N.A.M."

"What do you think that means" he said, obviously trying to sound coy.

"Well obviously because of the particular colour I'm looking through, I can only see some of the letters. They're different colours ya know; or haven't you noticed?"

"Well, well I guess you're right. Do you think you could find one that might help you read the whole thing?"

"Do you think so?"

"Do you have a good memory?"

"Why?"

"Perhaps you could look into a bunch of different colours and memorize the position of each letter."

I tried this but the letters were about as memorable as a pattern on a calidoscope. I told him so.

"Perhaps you could come read mine," he said.

"Yours is no better."

"Of course it is."

"Then what in the hell does it say?"

He looked at me seriously and said, "CONCAP Y NAME." He looked at me awaiting my reaction. I must have looked totally lost, for he then broke out in a loud laugh.

"So what does it mean," I said seethingly.

"I don't know. That's just the way I see it. But I'm right anyway."

"How do you know--you are right?"

"Because yellow is my favourite colour."

"What's that got to do..."

"I like yellow, so I must have the right one."

"But the other colours don't make anymore sense than your yellow."

"Of course they don't, but yellow is the right colour anyway."

"Well you're wrong..."

"Am I? Well then look into some yellow glass and you'll agree with me," he said innocently.

"Why not? We'll see things on common ground."

"Yes but we still won't know what it says."

"What difference does it make as long as we see the same thing?"

"Because what we're seeing isn't clear."

I was shocked at the conviction of my words, and shocked further that they were not my words...they were his. I stuttered a few words, "Well maybe window washing is...m-maybe uh..." But he cut me off.

"Window washing is an art. And so is the search for truth. If we could only see through clear windows we could all see the same thing but in different ways. That is truthful. It is no better to ignore the glass than to choose a colour of the glass, because the glass is not the thing, but what's beyond it is the thing. You seem to choose to ignore the glass as if it were not there, and in doing this, you ignore the truth behind it."

"But what if what's behind it is untrue?" I said weakly.

"That's for you to decide." He said, "...Once you have made your decision you are on your way to finding your truth. You cannot seek from ignorance."

We finished the last few windows in silence. Later as we were loading the truck I turned to him and asked him if I hadn't sincerely looked for the meaning of the insignia. He answered me gently, "Yes I think you did, but by the same token you searched in order to prove a point, you really didn't seek the answer. If you had really wanted to know, you would have broken the glass." He turned from me and went around to the other side of the truck. He entered the cabin, ran his small fingers through his curly hair, lit his pipe, and unlocked the door for me.

I have abandoned my
search for truth,
And am now looking
for a good fantasy...



culture:
the institutions, concepts,
arts, skills, etc. of a
given people

culture:
black culture:
does not exist
was destroyed
choked
from its people
because they put up
no resistance
humane
they were called

culture:
created when a people
come together
set-up a society
governed by its own norms

culture:
a sign of a
unified people
a strong nation
unity
solidarity

culture:
black culture:
void
sitting on a shelf
in the
lost and found
section
of your local
department store.

Velldree Thalley

Raindrops play at the doorstep of my
mind, washing away tears that are late
once again. Somewhere black love screams
desperately, her heart confined to an
iron box marked "fragile", as a gray
ribbon of blood crawls sadly around
my corner towards hell's gutter,
 unneeded...
 unnoticed...
 unwanted...

A blizzard rages in the minds of our people-
their thoughts plead numb to the truth.

A blizzard rages in the minds of our people-
as ice-ridden hopes amble aimlessly about
through coke-smoked veins.

A blizzard rages in the minds of our people-
as a fool attempts to cry over a spilt
wish never granted, a wish never granted,
 never granted...

We are a nation - we can
We are a nation - we shall
We are a nation - we must
learn the secret of one black pearl our
fathers knew as love. Children of Africa
let us come together 'neath the fertile
rays of the sun that we may give birth to
the true beauty of our people once again, that we
may shed a slave's clothing of stars and stripes...
 forever...

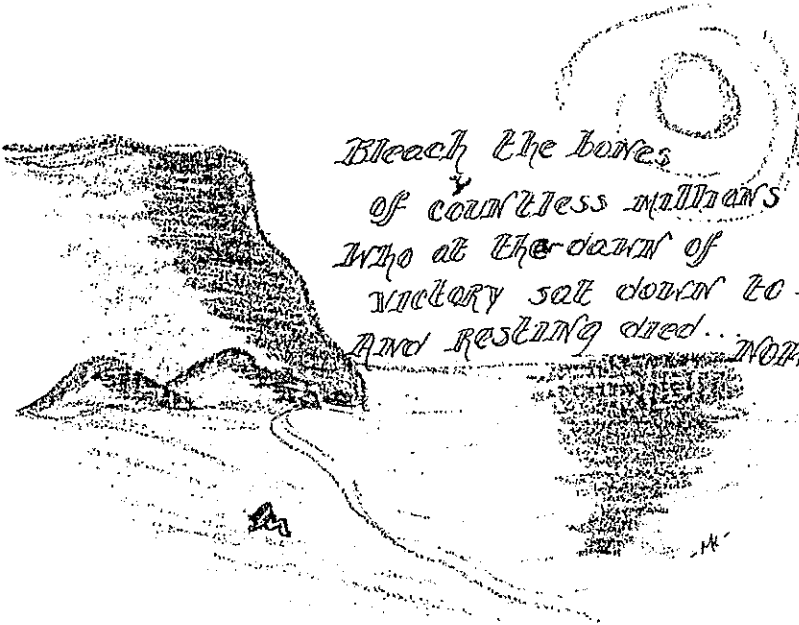
Red - Black - Green
Blood - People - Land
High shall our banner be waved
upon the dawn of the new day

The spook sits by the door-
 waiting...

We are a nation woven amidst the
fabric of a foreign cloth, yet once
free shall we fly as an ebony dream
come true astride the back of the
most beautiful black butterfly...

Seize the time
 Seize the time
 Seize the time

Africa is a freedom state of mind!



Bleach the bones
of countless millions
who at the dawn of
victory sat down to rest...
and resting died... NOW - IS THE II

THE GAME OF LIFE

There is an evil under the sun called "life", and it happens only to the living. It is an evil because it exists off of the death and destruction of its members in order that it may continue as a process. Something or someone must reach an end of itself, while another force consumes its remains or at least transforms the remains into some useable product.

Life is a game of destiny and ability because it seems that the practitioners often find themselves victims of rules and regulations. Acts of control whether God inspired (super natural force), products or events in nature (environmental changes), or man made changes (laws, various codes, traditions, customs, institutions, and technologies), carries with it a challenge to the living to survive inspite of oppositions.

I can't help feeling that the high death rate of the past and present tends to illustrate the evil under the sun called life! Furthermore, life is only a fleeting dream or illusion that appears to be real but is not. Everything and everyone seems to die or come to an end either because of its own unwise judgement or actions beyond the victim's control! Now, I ask you, can anything so unreasonable and complex as "life" be real? No, it must be a game of some kind that is so close to being real that it appears to be real even if it never happened at all.

C. J. Brown

First You Cry
(Dedicated to Ted Di Bose.)

First you cry,

Cry because you've lost someone that was important to you.

Someone that made you laugh when all things were wrong.

Someone that made you smile just because he was close to you.

First you cry,

Then you pick yourself up.

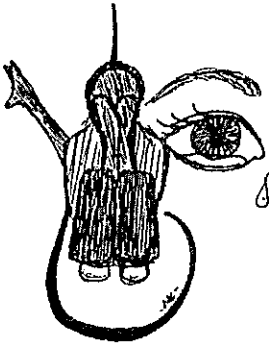
Because eventually you'll realize that life goes on.

And that you made some mistakes, but nobody is perfect.

But...

First you cry.

Cynthia Gordon



Pain ...
Like a river -
it flows, and shows
the currents of agony
and sorrow ...

Me~

Today
I cried

Tears rolled down
from my eyes
after years and years
of drought
and never realizing I was thirsty
the rains came
made the hard rock
the impregnable ground
soft and muddy
eliminated the cracks
made the earth solid
like the sea
a great unending unbroken mass

Today
I cried

The walls of Jerecho
tumbled down
for I was blind
now I could see
feel the life surrounding me
tenderness
compassion
gentleness
softness
sensitivity
reality
my stream began to run
overflow
flood the dry lands
with emotion

Today
I cried

I heard for the first time
the man a floor below me
singing
crying out
because his child died
from starvation
Blues were everywhere
I saw the young brother
up the street shot
while hearing the cries
of the sister
as she was being raped
soon another unwanted

The man raised
the rent
while the factory
laid off five-hundred more
brothers and sisters
food is priceless
uniform clothes are rare
and the little grocery
on the corner
stopped giving credit

Today
I cried

It snowed
and the temperature dropped
20° below zero
while the furnace broke down
the landlord said he couldn't
come out
or send anybody
to come fix it
because there was too much
snow and ice on the streets
Eight people in my building
alone
froze to death
one was a junky
four were elderly
one was a lady seven months pregnant
and two were
children

Today
I cried

The newscaster
on the music box
said that all "Americans"
should be happy
because the recession
was almost over
and unemployment went down 2.4%
guess she didn't
hear about my neighborhood
because we are still
in the depression
a state of deprivation

Today
I cried

marched legally
down my street
pass my house
through my neighborhood
while a brother
father of three
with another baby due
any day
got arrested and convicted
while walking home from work
because he was on
the wrong side of town
after dark

Today
I cried

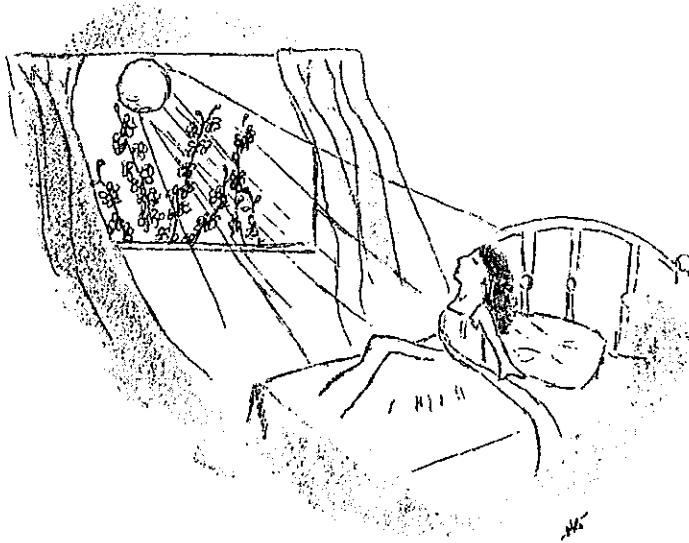
My wine bottle
was empty
and I had no one
to share my
loneliness
with
so I looked
out my window
and the rains came
water gushed forth
bringing back sight and sound
I began to see
the pain
surrounding me
I became part of the
community
Realizing that
together
we are dangerous
apart
we are paralyzed ...

Veldree Thalley

A steady her light this morning
Rising from refuge of pink blossoms,
on sun-drenched sheets.

Eyes that brave the light wearily
Possessed of a delicate air that
graces a sunny morning.
Clutching the upper sheet
to her down affections,
This heart's tranquility waterfalls
as gently as flows her hair
veiling, shyly, her shoulders to sheets
that spill,
caopied,
over knees to
feather-fell feet, barely
touching the floor.

Rochel Coleman



LITTLE BOY BLUES

Little Boy Blues go blow your horn-
for Harlem Bridge is falling down
and no Saints are marching in...

Little Boy Blues go blow your horn-
for the Chicago fire blazes on yet no
raindrops fall upon their bleeding heads...

Little Boy Blues go blow your horn-
For America the Beautiful is bursting in air
while Spanky runs for president...

People don't you know that Aunt Jemima's
waffles are gettin' cold? Or that Sambo's
butter is eatin' him alive? Brother just
hipped me the other day that Superfly pimpin'
sore dreams for a nickel and a dime 'cause
he too rich to pay for his/your/my kids
Guess he'd rather pay the price...

People don't you know that Uncle Ben's
rice is still white? Or that Uncle
Tom's cabin ain't nothin' but a shack?
Brother just hipped me the other day that
don't nobody understand Shaft but his
woman 'cause Shaft don't understand his
own damned self and his woman was his
mother who died in a coffin of tears. She
only has a five bill on her and Shaft say
"Ain't this a bitch?"
Guess we'd rather pay the price...

Little Boy Blues go blow your horn-
for Mr. Charlie fiddles while Detroit burns,
and the rats rock our babies a bye...

Little Boy Blues go blow your horn-
for Tarzan is King of the Jungle
he swings on a red, white, and blue rope
through Zimbabwe...

Little Boy Blues go blow your horn-
for we had a dream
which is buried 'neath the feet of
the saints that go marching
merrily
merrily
on...

Everything must change
The Winter turns to Spring
The Young become the Old
The Shadows stalk the Sun...

FOREWORD

This issue of the Black Magazine has been published in conjunction with this year's Black Awareness Week. This magazine illustrates the strength of the fertile, Black minds on Colorado College Campus. The literature and photographs contained within are an expression of the Black culture as seen by individual Black students on CC campus. I sincerely hope that you find this issue to be an enjoyable learning experience.

Robin Brantford

**Editor Black Literary Magazine
Vice-President BSU**

**The Colorado College
Black Student Union**


BLACK LITERARY MAGAZINE

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BLACK LITERARY MAGAZINE

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10/10/10

Reflection on the '70's

the obvious often eludes
black spirits
ignoring the lasting
desperately trying to capture
the immediate
this forever
 blissful moment
that soon fades
into the twilight
of "makin' it" dreams
as new nightmares smother
existing illusions

—velldree thalley

Imagination's End

I followed the rainbow
to imagination's end.
Crossing, insanity
released its hold

There;
colors of confusion
darkness glittering in gold.

A little girl
stood laughing.
In her eyes tears
black and cold.

Looking closer,
I laughed too
at the lies
we had both
been told.

—veronique lemelle

The Black Woman

Love,
keeps us going, and is in never ending
abundance.

Respect,
We need it so badly it hurts just to
strive ahead.

Beauty,
there is none so strong and natural.
If blinded eyes could only see.

Intervisions,
We lack the attention to keep us
going.
We will one day be on the top because
we will always try.

—alicia harris

First You Cry

First you cry.
Cry because you've lost someone that was important
to you.
Someone that made you laugh, when all things
were wrong.
Someone that made you smile, just because he
was close to you.

First you cry.
Then you pick yourself up.
Because eventually you'll realize that life goes on
And that you made some mistakes but nobody is
perfect.
But.....

First you cry.

—cynthia gordon

the flame flickers
a vision flashes by
young black boy burned
mother doesn't understand why
gun never found
gangs rumble by
hungry into August
already passed July

choking
smothering
rioting
ghetto heat

staring

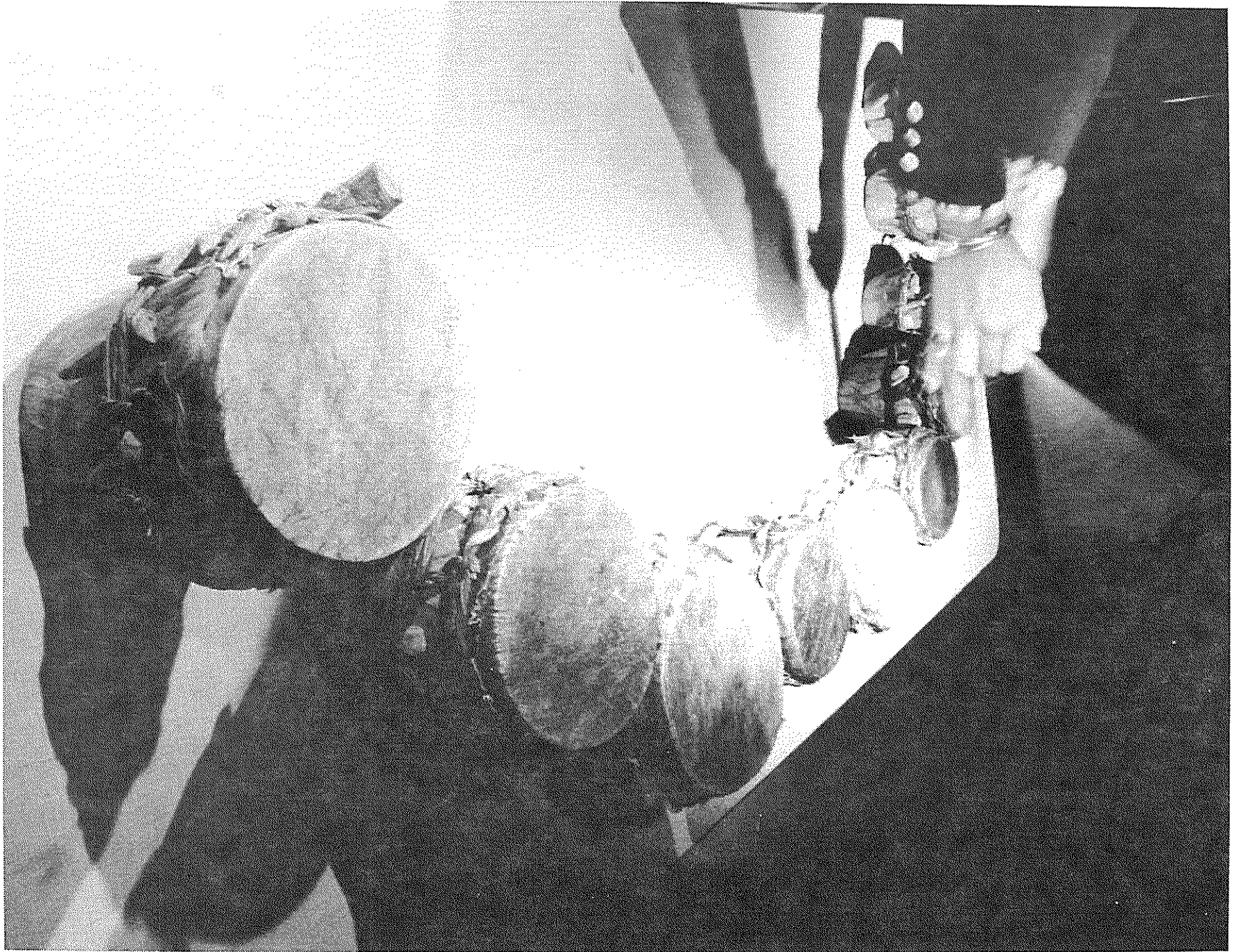
burning, black, body
cremating the whole
except those undying, guiding
molten
eyes.

—velldree thalley

Us

Why did he,
 him of all people,
Take the time to write me?
Me...
 who took him through changes purposely?
After all the hurt and pain I brought to each of us.
Him...
 claiming that we've always had a special relationship,
And that he feels that he must see me.
Me...
 wondering, why me?
Am I that special?
Him...
 not being able to understand this strange thing.
Wondering what I did to him.
Us...
 coming together and working this problem out.
Coming together and understanding we are individuals.
Us...
 realizing what we were then,
But most importantly,
realizing what we are today...
 PEOPLE!

—cynthia gordon



Appearances

They say that beauty is only skin deep
and therefore the beauty
of the sea
must be deep below its surfaces
yet looking out
you see a beautiful horizon
which was the attraction
that furthered you
into its depths.

—rochel coleman

What Ever Happened To...

culture:

the institutions, concepts,
arts, skills, etc. of a
given people

culture:

black culture:

does not exist
was destroyed
choked
from its people
because they put up
no resistance
humane
they were called

culture:

created when a people
come together
set up a society
governed by its own norms

culture:

a sign of a
unified people
a strong nation
unity
solidarity

culture:

black culture:

void
sitting on a shelf
in the lost and found
section
of your local
department store.

—velldree thalley

The Need For Black Awareness

From time immemorial, the black race has been the most unfortunate one. The Black man has been the center of torture, oppression, mockery, discrimination, and exploitation. Historically, the Black man was made a slave; politically he has been oppressed; socially he has been discriminated against and economically, the Black man is the poorest.

Thus in every sphere of human endeavor the black race is at a disadvantage. One is thus tempted to jump to the logical conclusion that to be born black is a curse.

It's a crime, the lie that has been told to generations of black men and white men both. Little innocent black children, born of parents who believed that their race had no history. Little black children seeing, before they could talk, that their parents considered themselves inferior. Innocent children growing up, living out their lives, dying of old age—and all of their lives ashamed of being black. I quote this statement from the book, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*:

"The crux and gist of this statement is not at all difficult to grasp. The Black man, be he a Panamanian, a Jamaican, an American, or an African, has been forced to believe that he is inferior to other people of different races. Substantial evidence is there to show that the Black man has erroneously been considered to have a low IQ. Again the Black man has been brainwashed to such an extent he really feels sorry to be in such a race."

Historical records show that over 115 million African blacks were murdered or enslaved during the slave trade. In addition, many Blacks have been massacred with shocking barbarity because of their race. Even at present there are Blacks who are having life really tough right in their motherland, South Africa. The majority of people living in abject poverty in the world are Blacks. The most important question of why only the black race should be in such a situation remains sadly unanswered.

I think the most important factor militating against the black race all over the world is the failure of we ourselves to be aware of our blackness. Heaven knows how many of us are hoping against hope to have an injection or lotion which can change our skin color. Since we don't want to be seen as Blacks and also hate ourselves for being black, we are simply and dangerously losing our sense of awareness as beautiful human beings.

We have slowly but effectively weakened our images and so our respect among other races is gradually eroding away. We have failed to appreciate our beauty and so we are losing a lot. There is virtually no unity among us because we hate ourselves. The Black man is beautiful but sadly enough most of us don't believe that.

I end upon this note that black is beautiful, black is attractive, and black is powerful. All we need now is to be really conscious of our

blackness, foster closer relationships in the name of black unity, and consider our race, doubtlessly, as equally advantaged. By so doing, the wrong notion that to be born black is a curse may turn out to be a baseless and fallacious one. Let us all stand up and in one great accord, happily say, "We are Black and proud." Long live the Black Student Union!

—kwaku annor

Dreaming My Life Away

Here I sit,
dreaming my life away.

Away?
But to where?
The past...

The present... the future?
No!!!

Well then, please tell me where?

Here I sit,
Wondering why,
I sit idly by

And dream my life away.

—cynthia gordon

Inner Peace

A girl sits, transfixed in the minds
of her peers.

Her skin, soft velvet to the touch,

Her face serene with the tranquility
of a new day,

Her eyes, deep and warm with a glare
of prosperity,

Her smile, that which brings forth
enlightment of the soul,

Her poise, the gracefulness that she
possesses is that of a swan.

The strain which she has gone through
doesn't show,

For her inner peace calms and
soothes all troubles.

—gary hale

Year "4005"

BEGIN PROGRAM:

In the year 4005 there will be no
niggers
negroes
blacks
coloreds
coons
spades
or jigaboos

only shadows.
Reminders of a time and space
once held by you and
me
in the year 4005

there exists a technological beast
that knows Not how to turn
its head nor how to
take
a
step
backward
in
time
to that fateful day of completed
black genocide
for that would not be progress...
for that would not be progress..
for that would not be progress...

In the year 4005 everything will be
of so perfect and white and
America the Beautiful
will take flight from the lips
of every blonde-haired blue-eyed child
as they sing allegiance to a
blood soaked white and blue rag
which used to massage the groin of some
white cracker we believed was
JESUS
wears a three-piece in the year 4005
now that the game is
over...

END PROGRAM

but never end the struggle
to reclaim your mind
never end the struggle
against the year 4005...

—keith owens

Untitled

Love, the magician knows this
little trick, whereby two
people walk in different
directions yet remain
side by side.

—gary hale

Why is it this Way?

Everybody should have someone to love.
Why are so many people lonely?
Why the fighting, why the pain?
Are smiles for children only?

Why destroy your soul, Benedict,
To pacify your so-called friends?
Why pay such a terrible price,
to please anyone but you?

How can people feel safe,
With so many others dying?
How can people turn their heads,
from the sounds of someone crying?

—gary hale

From the inside looking out

There is so much more to say,
but no more words are left...

I have so much to share with you,
but there are other things that
trouble your mind.

I have given,
and you have received...

We have loved and shared,
but now we pause to realize
Life goes on!

—alicia harris

Cycle

Little Bobby Tate

a grown man of nine years
experienced living
was raised by the sun
rocked by the moon
while Momma and Daddy watched
fully drunk
semi-amused
and somewhat confused
as to the identity of this little
nigger shadow who
slept in their home
ate their food
sometimes
asked for love...

Little Bobby Tate

a grown man of twelve years
experienced living
was stabbed in the arm
by a hypo dermic
his right hand did it to him
for kicks and also
to see what made *Daddy*
smile

Little Bobby Tate

a grown man of fifteen years
experienced living
killed his first man today
he lays sprawled in red
for all to see
at the bottom of somebody's stairs
crying upward
into the rain

Little Bobby Tate

a grown man of eighteen years
experienced living
saw his two year old boy today
for the first time
and he cried
because the baby
looked too much
like
him...

Little Bobby Tate's Boy

a grown man of nine years
experienced living
was raised by the sun
rocked by the moon
while Momma and Daddy watched
fully drunk
semi-amused
and somewhat confused
as to the identity of this
little nigger shadow
who slept in their home
ate their food
sometimes
asked for their love...

—keith owens



Sketch of a Ghetto Mother

She remembers the brown paper doll
lying sprawled
in the blood of the snow
its tiny hands
like prayers
begging the blizzard
for
a sign of warmth
begging the blizzard....
and being a black child-woman of eight
she cries
at this
broken-fragment-of-a-boy-wants-to-be-a-man
someday-before-Judgement-Day
boy

who paints gray rainbows
in the darkness of his mind
and looks for God only on Sundays.

It is for him she cries
It is for him she loves
It is for him she cries
It is for him she loves
to caress
the tiny brown hands
like prayers
outstretched to God
on a cold blue
Monday
when the sun
is
falling
down

II

Some Chicago nigger named Johnny
was beaten again today
she heard him scream
again and
again and
again and
again she cries and
again she loves
for this
withered brown paper doll
as he crashes headlong like a broken wing
into the blood of the snow

Hands no longer outstretched...

It is in his eyes
the blizzard
raging
bitter
as she searches in desperation
for a boy she once knew
wanted
to be
a man
someday
a black man
YES...
but it is in his eyes
the void of early twilight
of no sun rising
of a broken promise
she wants/needs/has to mend
before nightfall
will be
too
late

III

Johnny he such a pretty nigger
now
yeah
Johnny he a real
lady killer
now
ain't he?
and Johnny he smile at me
so nice n sweet like
make me feel kinda special
kinda somebody
kinda loved
Johnny
he kinda to me than most men
be to they woman
y'know?

Mean like
he ain't never beat me yet
least not bad....
And sometimes he give me things
cause he love me so
wants me so to be his woman
is who I want to be

so

badly...

And Momma she steady tellin me
what a good nigger
Johnny is
such a good nigger
good nigger
good nigger
good nigger
is hard to find

today
without a good nigger
what's a po' nigger bitch
like me
s'posed to do
huh?
Oh that's what Johnny call me
sometimes
but I know he don't mean nothin by it
cause Johnny he
love me
he told me so
last night
when we was doin it
up under the stairs
he say
you nigger
bitch
gonna love you
to death
LOVE
death
all they teach
me
death
all I know
in
America kill
niggers die
the
Great White Way
bitch
gonna love you
to death
a blizzard raging
then we can sit down
and watch
Good Times....

IV

Seem like these babies
they
come outta nowhere
God...
Seem like yesterday's child
was me
singing summer songs
to the wind
swept my childhood
away
and now it's
winter in my soul
and I am
freezing
somebody please
help me
get warm
God
cause it's cold
oh
so cold
down
there
inside of me....
inside of me....

Johnny?
My Johnny?
oh
the white man
he
Send my man away
to fight
the Vietnam War
on the front lines
with the rest of the niggers
but that's alright....
but that's alright....
cause when my Johnny come back
we
gonna get married
and
raise a family
yeah
everything gonna be fine
he said
before he got on that plane
and I believed him
cause
I believe
he just gonna get tired
of hurting people again
and again
and again
she cries
for a blizzard raging
in those eyes

haunting memories
of a brown paper doll
lying twisted
in the blood of the snow....
It is for him she loves....
and it seem like these babies
they just come
outta
nowhere

God....

V

But one thing I ain't never seen
is so many dead
niggers
before in my
LIFE....
death
all they teach
me
death
all I know
something strange
'bout all them bullets
fired at us
niggers
last night
called friendly fire
when wasn't nobody around
but those
White American folks
hate us niggers
hate
us niggers
hate
to love
but
love to kill
and be
AMERICAN
when
the only part of the flag
we own
is the blues....

but one thing I ain't never seen
is so many dead
niggers
in all my LIFE....
but they ain't gonna kill
this nigger
cause
this nigger
been dead
since
a blizzard raging
in my
eyes/mind/soul
and God wasn't home
on Monday
when the sun fell
down....

VI

Some white boy told me
the war
was over
he say
war's over nigger
no need to fight now
nigger
you should be peaceful
and thankful
to God
you still alive
cause if I had my way....
then he saluted the flag
but I
had the last laugh
cause I wasn't thankin
nobody
who wasn't home
on a
Monday the day
they sent me home to America
home to America
home to America?
somehow don't sound right
for a nigger
nigger?
I ain't no nigger I'm an Afri....
What you say nigger?
death
all they teach
me
death
all I know
in
America kill
niggers die
the
Great White Way
bitch
gonna love you to death
when I come home
to
America....

VII

My man Johnny
he come home today
and we
did it
did it
did it
did it have to
hurt?
God

don't tell a soul
and I
won't
neither....
war's over nigger
no need to fight now....

and my Johnny
he had hell
in his eyes
a blizzard
raging
memories
of a brown paper doll
lying twisted
in the
blood
of the snow....
in the blood
of that
God-damned
VIETNAM WAR
lies the soul
of my man
Johnny
they raped him
again
those people did
the faceless ones
and left me
with a shell
and
no care
but
my black love
will make everything better
I
know it will
know it better
cause
black love
all we got....
even if it is
black
just ain't
what it used to be
before the sun fell
down....

VIII

Before the sun fell down
we dressed in
Red
Black
Green
African Sun Songs
now
My name is Johnny

I
drink the blood
of my sores
just
to keep clean
wear
white chains
on my cracked skull
and scream
the blues
for
Mr. Charlie....
Cracker Jack....

Say you want a job nigger?
Say all you learned how to do was drive tanks
in that war?
So what I gonna do
with
a tank drivin' nigger
in my restaurant
huh boy?
Say what?
You demand your equal rights?
Martin Luther *who*?
Look boy,
a nigger don't own nothin'
better not demand nothin'
and
damned sure ain't gettin nothin'
from us
so my advice to you
is to
do *for* you
by you
and yours
and
watch out nigger
cause
it don't matter
who's in the front seat
of
no bus
it's who's drivin'
that counts....

IX

I
gonna get high
tonight
gonna get fucked up
then I
gonna go
to
My home
beat
my woman
to death

gonna make the blood run
gonna
make her pay for livin

don't
no bitch deserve to live
don't
no bitch deserve to live
kick me out
my home
just for tryin' to kill
her
in front of the kids
just for
spittin'
in the kid's food
make them eat it
make them
hate their daddy
hate
their

daddy
better
HATE
your daddy
cause
daddy hates you
hates you
daddy
hates
the world
he
dyin' in
never had no chance
to live
no chance
to be a man
no place
to be black
in America....

death
all they teach
me
death all I know
in America
kill niggers
die
the Great White Way
one day
gonna kill me a white man
one day
gonna love you black woman gonna love
you
black woman
love you
please....

get this
needle
out my arm
done had enough
of America
this time
around....

X

Some Chicago nigger named Johnny
came home again
tonight
didn't know him
used to though
back when
he had hope
back before
he was Johnny
now
he is dead
inside of me....
inside of me....
Johnny? Johnny that you?
And I thought
he wasn't never gonna stop
woulda thought
I
was the devil
way he beat me
beat my flesh into jelly
beat me
'til I was numb
just didn't care no more.
I just lay there screamin
watchin my blood rinse the floor
watchin this
crazed black thing
raise his fists
again
and again
and again
his eyes
burning
like some sorta demon
just didn't know what he was doin
no more....

gonna love you to
death
when I come home
to
America....

I say
Johnny?
what they done to you
where they take you
Johnny
huh?

where are you?
Johnny come back
please
don't leave me
like this
all alone
and
a nigger too
please
come home to
CRACK!
There go
some more
my blood
on that floor
and it
must be Monday
cause
God
He sure
ain't

Johnny?
Johnny!
Johnny where you goin with that....
now
o God no
not the children
you
leave them children
alone
you hear me?
You hear me Johnny
you
leave my children alon
they all I got in
this
world....
MOMMA!!
MOMMA!!
MOMMA!!
make him stop
Daddy he
hurtin us Momma
he hurtin
us
why
he
tryin to kill
his own
children
Momma we
love
Daddy....
Johnny
o God

Johnny please
take that butcher
knife away
from that
child's throat
Johnny and
don't
hold her up
by her hair
that way
cause it
make her scared
Johnny I
hate you
nigger bastard
you
ain't no man
ain't nothin but
a coward
you hear me?
And you woulda thought

I
was the devil
way he
beat me
beat my flesh
into jelly
beat me
til I was numb
just didn't care
no more.

I
just lay there screamin
watchin my blood rinse the floor
watchin this
crazed black thing
raise his fists
like hammers
again
and again
and again
his eyes
burning
like some sorta demon
just didn't know what he was doin
no more....

But Johnny wasn't the devil never.

naw
Johnny he
ain't always been
American....
and when I
killed him
yes
I killed him
that night

shot him dead
left him sprawled
in the stairwell
his eyes
groping upward
towards
maybe where freedom is
after all
don't know
no more
I thought back
to when Johnny
he
we
ain't always been
American....

and when my baby ask me
she say
Momma,
was that all the times you could kill Daddy
was just once?
I held her close to me
and I cried
and I remembered
the brown paper doll
lying sprawled
in the blood of the snow
his tiny hands
like prayer
begging the blizzard for a sign of warmth
begging the blizzard....
'cause it was for him I loved
even before he was
Johnny?
just want you to know....
me and the kids
we gonna build
a whole new day
whole new *nation*
ain't gonna be no niggers
just Black men
Black women
like
you and me
was meant to be.
Gonna love one another
Black Man
loving
Black Woman
loving
Black Man
loving
Black people
ain't *never* gonna forget
America
like America forgot
us....

—keith owens

