

APPENDICES

“As I Grew Older”

It was a long time ago.
I have almost forgotten my dream.
But it was there then,
In front of me,
Bright like a sun-- 5
My dream.
And then the wall rose,
Rose slowly,
Slowly,
Between me and my dream. 10
Rose until it touched the sky--
The wall.
Shadow.
I am black.
I lie down in the shadow. 15
No longer the light of my dream before me,
Above me.
Only the thick wall.
Only the shadow.
My hands! 20
My dark hands!
Break through the wall!
Find my dream!
Help me to shatter this darkness,
To smash this night, 25
To break this shadow
Into a thousand lights of sun,
Into a thousand whirling dreams
Of sun!

“The Negro Mother”

Children, I come back today
To tell you a story of the long dark way
That I had to climb, that I had to know
In order that the race might live and grow.
Look at my face -- dark as the night -- 5
Yet shining like the sun with love's true light.
I am the dark girl who crossed the red sea
Carrying in my body the seed of the free.
I am the woman who worked in the field
Bringing the cotton and the corn to yield. 10
I am the one who labored as a slave,
Beaten and mistreated for the work that I gave --
Children sold away from me, I'm husband sold, too.
No safety , no love, no respect was I due.

Three hundred years in the deepest South: 15
But God put a song and a prayer in my mouth .
God put a dream like steel in my soul.
Now, through my children, I'm reaching the goal.

Now, through my children, young and free,
I realized the blessing deed to me. 20
I couldn't read then. I couldn't write.
I had nothing, back there in the night.
Sometimes, the valley was filled with tears,
But I kept trudging on through the lonely years.
Sometimes, the road was hot with the sun, 25
But I had to keep on till my work was done:
I had to keep on! No stopping for me --
I was the seed of the coming Free.
I nourished the dream that nothing could smother
Deep in my breast -- the Negro mother. 30
I had only hope then , but now through you,
Dark ones of today, my dreams must come true:
All you dark children in the world out there,
Remember my sweat, my pain, my despair.
Remember my years, heavy with sorrow -- 35
And make of those years a torch for tomorrow.
Make of my pass a road to the light
Out of the darkness, the ignorance, the night.
Lift high my banner out of the dust.
Stand like free men supporting my trust.

Believe in the right, let none push you back.
Remember the whip and the slaver's track.

Remember how the strong in struggle and strife
Still bar you the way, and deny you life --
But march ever forward, breaking down bars. 45
Look ever upward at the sun and the stars.
Oh, my dark children, may my dreams and my prayers
Impel you forever up the great stairs --
For I will be with you till no white brother
Dares keep down the children of the Negro Mother. 50

“Theme For English B”

The instructor said,

*Go home and write
a page tonight.
And let that page come out of you--
Then, it will be true.* 5

I wonder if it's that simple?
I am twenty-two, colored, born in Winston-Salem.
I went to school there, then Durham, then here
to this college on the hill above Harlem.
I am the only colored student in my class. 10
The steps from the hill lead down into Harlem,
through a park, then I cross St. Nicholas,
Eighth Avenue, Seventh, and I come to the Y,
the Harlem Branch Y, where I take the elevator
up to my room, sit down, and write this page: 15

It's not easy to know what is true for you or me
at twenty-two, my age. But I guess I'm what
I feel and see and hear, Harlem, I hear you:
hear you, hear me--we two--you, me, talk on this page.
(I hear New York, too.) Me--who? 20
Well, I like to eat, sleep, drink, and be in love.
I like to work, read, learn, and understand life.
I like a pipe for a Christmas present,
or records--Bessie, bop, or Bach.
I guess being colored doesn't make me not like 25
the same things other folks like who are other races.
So will my page be colored that I write?

Being me, it will not be white.
But it will be
a part of you, instructor. 30
You are white--
yet a part of me, as I am a part of you.
That's American.
Sometimes perhaps you don't want to be a part of me.
Nor do I often want to be a part of you. 35
But we are, that's true!
As I learn from you,
I guess you learn from me--
although you're older--and white--

and somewhat more free.
This is my page for English B

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“Dream Variations”

To fling my arms wide
In some place of the sun,
To whirl and to dance
Till the white day is done.
Then rest at cool evening 5
Beneath a tall tree
While night comes on gently,
 Dark like me—
That is my dream!

To fling my arms wide 10
In the face of the sun,
Dance! Whirl! Whirl!
Till the quick day is done.
Rest at pale evening...
A tall, slim tree... 15
Night coming tenderly
 Black like me.

BIOGRAPHY

Langston Hughes, an African American poet, was born in February 1, 1902 in Joplin Missouri. Hughes was brought up by his grandmother Mary Langston in Kansas, after his parents were separated. His grandmother always told him stories about their family and their attempts to end slavery, which made Hughes proud of himself and his race. Hughes finished his college educations at Columbia University in 1921 and at Lincoln University in Pennsylvania in 1929.

He is known as one of the leaders of Harlem Renaissance of the twenties and thirties because of his devotion to support his race. His works often spoke plainly about the life of ordinary black people. He was the first poet that used the rhythms of black music, which represents the true expressions of the black people. Some of his collections of poetry are: The Weary Blues (1926); The Negro Mother and other Dramatic Recitations (1931); Shakespeare In Harlem (1942); Fields of Wonder (1947); One Way Ticket (1947); The First Book of Jazz (1955); Tambourines To Glory (1958); Selected Poems (1959); and The Best of Simple (1961).

Hughes died in 22 May 1967 in New York due to prostate cancer. Ever after his death, Hughes was still praised as the most representative of African-American writers, and perhaps the most original of black poets.

Sources: Hayes, Jackson, Kirk