

When I Die

by Lois Marie Lewis

Please play for me
 "Stood on the Banks of Jordan"
 to ease and rest my weary
 tired soul in sweet repose
 rest/from the ever guarded
 light house of living
 I stood on the storms of life
 watching the ships go sailing by
 stood there/watched them take my brother
 that "significant other" from the
 naked tips of despair
 enslaved by caves and ignorance
 to the top of high mountains,
 lush plains
 fine home, jobs—destitute minds
 watched/as they took his sister
 from unclad feet to fine hone clods
 out of raggs to riches
 diamonds, furs and jewels
 stood there/bare foot/on the corner
 shivering in the cold,
 stomach shrouded in empty/ness and pain
 stood there looking on the bank of jordan
 as that mighty hand swooped—
 swooped down/snatching up
 the tiny spark that was life
 before it faced the hungered storm of strife
 watched and stood; stood. watched...
 money rolls like water, flow like blood
 from the hand of the other
 heard you and yours are not
 meant to share the apathy
 that claims the captain's
 and mistress's of an ill/fated ship
 we all stand on the banks
 watching, waiting, looking
 for the astringent

but none, not one
 was able/or willing at least
 to apply the styptic
 he who would
 is perhaps/not yet born
 this tired, bleeding, weary soul
 stands now in sweet repose
 watching the ship come
 sailing over
 it's carrying me

it's carrying me—
 it snatched up that significant brother;
 his sister too, it hurries along—
 so here we ride, viewing the
 lackered stairs of disdain souls
 wondering why the ship, this ship,
 carries one and all
 without concern, without regard
 for well clad, skinny or fat
 they didn't have time/to grab even a hat,
 nor coat, nor shoes, nor money
 all the ships' mates/travel across
 the cold desolated planes of time
 thru wet/watery streams by design

those who watched
 Africa-starvation
 Kennedy-millions
 ghetto child-rat bit
 nigger-lynched
 King-assassinated
 Death-middle passage
 pregnant negro-beaten
 Emmett Till-whistle
 Viola Liuzzo-slain
 Fred Hampton-slaughtered
 Malcom-stopped
 intellectual-imprisoned
 yes, these too watched then—

as you! now stand! on the banks
 watching/my ship roll by.



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THE HISTORY OF BLACK PEOPLE

Black people were created to be beautiful,
 In my life, I haven't seen on pitiful.

Some say Blacks were born to be a slave,
 That's because the White man taught him how to behave.

I say Blacks were born to be free,
 Just like any other man, including you and me.

Some White people took us from Africa our only home,
 Brought us to America and made us slaves of their own.

Yes, Blacks turned out to be slaves all right
 But now we aren't because we have begun to unite.

Some White people say we ain't no good,
 But when there was a cause to fight there we stood.

We have been stomped and called names
 No matter where we have come from,
 Bat facism and prejudice in America
 This we as a whole shall overcome.

So I guess this is the end, no matter where I've been,
 'Cause we all have been struggling in a world of sin.

This poem was written by Eddie Irby II (Age 15 years).

**Grace Collins Memorial
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An open outside door is an
 invitation to waste. It creates
 a draft which cools down a
 room in a hurry.

And the effect on your
 electric bill could be a
 real blow.

Change a habit.
 Conserve your
 current and
 your currency.



Richard Allen

Within eleven years after the Bill of Rights and the Declaration of Independence were signed, Richard Allen and other free Blacks in Philadelphia realized that the terms "created equal" and "inalienable rights" did not apply. When Blacks were pulled from their knees while praying in a white Methodist church in November of 1787, they walked out and formed the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

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