## 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, plush 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 swoopedswooped 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 becasue 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.

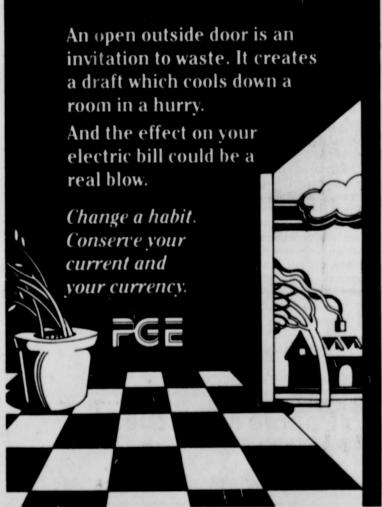
Some White people say we ain't no good, But when there was a cause to fight there we stood.

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
Center
128 N.E. Russell
281-6930



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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 "inelienable 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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