
Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934-
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Foreword

FOREWORD

by Paul Vangelisti

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Preface
This selection traces the almost forty-year career of a writer who, along with Ezra Pound, may be one of the most significant and least understood American poets of our century. *Transbluesency* assembles the lifework, from the 1950s to the present, of a truly innovative figure: shaping a body of poetry that is as well a body of knowledge, a passionate, often self-critical reflection on the culture and politics of his time.

As he moves from so-called "Beat" to Nationalist to Third World Socialist, Baraka remains difficult to approach, particularly for a literary establishment positioned somewhere between Anglo-American academicism and the Entertainment industry. As the anthologist M.L. Rosenthal wrote, "No American poet since Pound has come closer to making poetry and politics reciprocal forms of action." This came a decade after Rosenthal, in *The New Poets: American and British Poetry Since World War II*, had praised the early, ostensibly "Beat" poet as possessing "a natural gift for quick, vivid imagery and spontaneous humor." For a critic like Rosenthal, grounded in the Cold War university aestheticism of the fifties, an apolitical bohemianism like the Beats', keeping rebellion and art distinct from politics, would not necessarily be a threat. And, in the long run, such bohemianism would prove not unfriendly, perhaps even stimulating to the histories of established institutions. Instead, a politicized avant-garde like Baraka's, seeking an alternative form of aesthetic and social behavior, was and *is* clearly another matter.

What distinguishes Baraka from the start is a kind of lyrical realism that sounds in counterpoint to his Beat contemporaries, steeped as they were in the egocentric idealism of nineteenth-century Anglo-American literature. Like Jack Spicer, Frank O'Hara, Paul Blackburn or Gilbert Sorrentino, around but not of the Beat public relations machinery, Baraka acknowledged a clear debt to the Anglo-American modernism of Pound and W.C. Williams, while seeking to develop other more international measures throughout his career. It is, in essence, the experimental, materialist, and anti-romantic overtones of the historical avant-gardes, as they filter through Pound and Williams, that place Baraka's poetry in an international twentieth-century tradition, which is both American (i.e., African-American, of the "New World") and firmly outside Anglo-American culture.

In 1912, (the year F.T. Marinetti, flying six hundred and fifty feet above the chimneys of Milan, heard the propeller speak the death of the psychological self and the birth of a lyric obsession with the physical), Ezra Pound wrote that he was in search of a more precise, active speech, a "language to think in." Some fifty years later, after two world wars, and with imperial America clearly on the march, Baraka's first book, *Preface to a Twenty Volume Suicide Note*, underlines the urgency of a thoughtful, African-American poetic language. An early indication of this language's parameters is in "Hymn for Lanie Poo," fixing the historical ironies of the rebellious, colonial Rimbaud with the epigraph: "Vous êtes des faux Nègres." The "Hymn" finds its pulse in a parodic reliquary of the avant-garde "Saint"---who, having run off to Paris at age sixteen, clamored, in a notorious letter to his high school literature teacher, about the primal, "universal poetry" of mind and soul. Baraka's
young minstrel/bard ("schwärze bohemien" as he refers to himself and friends) opens his mock ode to the primordial in a self-conscious slapstick, playing both within and without his subject:

O, these wild trees will make charming wicker baskets, the young woman
the young black woman
the young black beautiful woman
said.
These wild-assed trees will make charming wicker baskets. (now, I'm putting words in her mouth ... tch).
In "Way Out West" (after Sonny Rollin's title composition from the 1957 Los Angeles LP), Baraka improvises upon and ultimately re-evaluates that other great Anglo-American figure, T.S. Eliot, and his monumental rhetorical powers. In the infinitude of empty Western space, the eyes of Prufrock's dream melody are made to open wide, to be shut with a certain finality at song's end:

No use for beauty collapsed, with moldy breath done in. Insidious weight of cankered dreams. Tiresias' weathered cock.
Walking into the sea, shells caught in the hair. Coarse waves tearing the tongue.
Closing the eyes. As simple an act. You float
Topography becomes even more extremely and self-consciously defined in the collage piece "Vice."
Here Baraka introduces the theme of rage in exile, from a language and culture where the poem seems an incessant reminder of a distance still to be travelled, a music still to be formed:
This is not rage. (I am not that beautiful!) Only immobile coughs & gestures towards somethings I don't understand. If I were lucky enough to still be an adolescent, I'd just attribute these weird singings in my intestine to sex, & slink off merrily to masturbate. Mosaic of disorder I own but cannot recognize. Mist in me.

In the sparse and intimate lyric of "Betancourt" (dated "30 July 1960 / Habana": the poet's pivotal visit to Cuba Libre), the exiled rage and distance is, for the moment, reversed. Baraka doesn't look out at the world from inside the poem's North American boundaries, but rather from "some / new greenness," surrounded by a braver language, where "flame / is the mind / ... on strange islands of warmth." He does in that exquisite instance gaze back, from outside, from a revolutionary island and distance, toward poem and country:

(I mean I think
I know now
what a poem
is) A
turning away ...
from what
it was
had moved
us ...
A
madness.

Back home in the U.S., at the end of *Preface to a Twenty Volume Suicide Note*, the exile is once again complete: "Notes for a Speech" beginning "African blues / does not know me. Their steps, in sands / of their own / land. A country / in black & white, newspapers / blown down pavements ...," and concluding with the reductive and terrible "democratic vista" of lower-case nationality:

They shy away. My own
dead souls, my, so called
people. Africa

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is a foreign place. You are
as any other sad man here
american.
Baraka's first book underscores how the scrutiny of poetic language compelled him to redefine the ideological stance of the poet. Some ten years later, after his Nationalist phase, this research will ultimately bring him to a kind of Internationalism, a Third World Socialist aesthetic of liberation. First and foremost, up through his most recent poems, there will remain a critical, often restless lyricism
that insists, to borrow a phrase from Baraka's *Blues People*, that the poem must "swing---from verb to noun."

Already in his second book, *The Dead Lecturer*, published in 1964 (the year *Dutchman* is produced and wins an Obie, and not long before Baraka moves from Greenwich Village to Harlem), there are several poems back-to-back at the beginning of the collection in which the lyric is turned on itself, or rather on the privileged figure of the poet ("Roi," as he signed himself until 1966). In the first, "Balboa, The Entertainer," the ironic title pushes a musical intensity, a clarity of diction and phrasing, that is quite disarming:

(The philosophers
of need, of which
I am lately
one,
will tell you. "The People,"
(and not think themselves
liable
to the same
trembling flesh). I say now, "The People,
as some lesson repeated, now,
the lights are off, to myself,
as a lover, or at the cold wind.

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The next poem, "A Contract. (For the Destruction and Rebuilding of Paterson," revisits the populist language of Williams's civic icon (also Baraka's not so idyllic home state) in order to demolish it from within. The poet finds it crucial to attack "Paterson's" imaginative and mythopoetic core, in rebuilding a secular, more democratic and demythologized city---and by extension, poetry---for those who must necessarily live within its limits:

Flesh, and cars, tar, dug holes beneath stone
a rude hierarchy of money, band saws cross out
music, feeling. Even speech, corrodes.
I came here
from where I sat boiling in my veins, cold fear
at the death of men, the death of learning, in
cold fear, at my own. Romantic vests of same death
blank at the corner, blank when they raise their fingers
Cross the hearts, in dark flesh staggered so marvelous
are their lies.
The rest of *The Dead Lecturer* is full of a lyrical multiplicity of rhythms and dictions that by decade's end will make Baraka a preeminent voice in American poetry. Accent and poetic stance, subject matter and ideological reflection are ever in the foreground as the poet is intent on clearing the air of Cold War social and cultural institutions. Along with many of his contemporaries outside the United States, Baraka continued to work from the assumptions of a highly politicized avant-garde. The ideological lucidity which generally defined the Third World and European poetries of the 1960s claimed the right of the poetic act to establish itself as the "conscience of communication." The poem was conceived as a total, linguistic act, uniquely capable of posing the problem of language: a human product critical of, and invaded by, mass media, government, etc., as well as remaining a primary symptom of reality. "The Politics of Rich Painters," for example, displays an articulate line or statement, driven by the nuances of shifting and heterogeneous cadences, often spoken, often collaged, always relentlessly material and public, that will characterize Baraka's writing throughout the rest of the decade:

Just their fingers' prints
staining the cold glass, is sufficient
for commerce, and a proper ruling on
humanity. You know the pity
of democracy, that we must sit here
and listen to how he made his money.
Tho the catalogue of his possible ignorance
roars and extends through the room
like fire. "Love," becomes the pass,
the word taken intimately to combat
all the uses of language. So that learning
itself falls into disrepute.
Thus, the leap in 1969 from *The Dead Lecturer to Black Magic*, the quintessential volume of his Nationalist period and one of the most influential publications of the 1960s' Black Arts movement, does not seem now as extreme as many in the literary establishment would have it. The ideological concern and intensity of earlier verse, such as "A Guerrilla Handbook," can hardly be dismissed as bohemian:

Silent political rain
against the speech
of friends. (we love them
trapped in life, knowing no way out
except description. Or black soil
floating in the arm.
We must convince the living
that the dead
cannot sing.
The hard-driving cadences of "Green Lantern's Solo" are not so different from the impetus of self-critical pieces in the first two sections of Black Magic, "Sabotage" and "Target Study":

No, Nigger, no, blind drunk in SantaSurreal's beard. Dead hero for our time who would advance the nation's economy by poking holes in his arms. As golden arms build a forest of loves, and find only the heavy belly breath of ladies whispering their false pregnancies through the phone.
The political knowledge and the recasting of the rhetorical figure of the poet, which Baraka had set in motion in the earlier collection, bear fruit in the clarity of later compositions such as "Letter to E. Franklin Frazier":

Those days I rose through the smoke of chilling Saturdays hiding my eyes from the shine boys, my mouth and my flesh from their sisters. I walked quickly and always alone watching the cheap city like I thought it would swell and explode, and only my crooked breath could put it together again.
The same applies to the dire, almost prosaic, reflective energy that concludes "The People Burning." The scrutiny of the poet not only embraces the poem, but questions the very self-consciousness itself of the poetic act, the difficulty of building poetry on what Walter Benjamin calls "individual renunciation":]

Sit down and forget it. Lean on your silence, breathing the dark. Forget your whole life, pop your fingers in a closed room, hopped-up witch doctor for the cowards of a recent generation. It is choice, now, like a philosphy problem. It is choice, now, and the weight is specific and personal. It is not an emotional decision. There are facts, and who was it said, that this a scientific century.
Thus, what Baraka said of his former nationalist politics as he helped, in 1973-74, transform the Congress of Afrikan Peoples into a Marxist-Leninist organization, is what might be said of his poetics from then to the present. After publically altering what he termed his "narrow nationalist and bourgeois nationalist stand," repudiating it as, in fact, "reactionary," Baraka has gone on to point out that his intentions as a Third World Socialist are fundamentally like those he held as a Nationalist:

They were similar in the sense I see art as a weapon of revolution. It's just now that I define revolution in Marxist terms. I once defined revolution in Nationalist terms. But I came to my Marxist view as a result of having struggled as a Nationalist and found certain dead ends theoretically and ideologically, as far as Nationalism was concerned and had to reach out for a communist ideology.


After the break with cultural Nationalism, Baraka has emerged as an artist in the international, progressive tradition of Cesar Vallejo, Luis Aragon, Paul Eluard, Aimé Césaire, and René Depestre. With the insistence that poetry be an active, socio-linguistic force, Baraka has pursued, since the early 1970s, a utopian Communist direction, much like what Aragon and Eluard called "lyrical communism." Within this dynamic, Baraka's writing continually seeks allegiance between what is radical or subversive politically and what is avant-garde poetically.

Moreover, as an African-American poet, his career embodies a commitment, along with poets like Césaire and Depestre, to develop a space within this internationalism for the spirit of negritude. For Baraka, negritude plays at the heart of late twentieth-century poetics, animating and transforming what remains avant-garde in the project of Socialist literature. As Depestre writes, "The new Black Orpheus will be a revolutionary or he will be nothing at all."

Many have underscored the exemplar of contemporary jazz in Baraka's work, how it has provided a model of a genuinely avant-idiom, taking from European and Third World art practices alike, to form its own singular, African-American mode. In this regard, Baraka characterizes what for him, at the close of a century, is fresh and contemporary:

If you're a modern artist who's not some kind of cultural nationalist, you understand that you can learn from anything and anybody, see that the whole of world culture is at your disposal, because no one people has created the monuments of art and culture in the world, it's been collective.

More recent work, such as the selection here from Why's/Wise, show music and history to be almost indivisible as subjects of poetry. Baraka's chronicles of African-American culture establish a new standard, a mode of composition that is, in its temporal and geographical vision, truly
"multinational." The lyricism of the early books has been challenged and extended to where it is inseparable from his thought, ideological or otherwise. It has become, as he wrote in eulogy of Miles Davis, "a prayer in the future." Baraka's is a verbal music that presages and defines what is to come.

PREFACE TO A TWENTY VOLUME SUICIDE NOTE.... [By Baraka, I. A., 1934-]

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Preface to a Twenty Volume Suicide Note

(For Kellie Jones, born 16 May 1959)

1 Lately, I've become accustomed to the way
2 The ground opens up and envelopes me
3 Each time I go out to walk the dog.
4 On the broad edged silly music the wind
5 Makes when I run for a bus ...

6 Things have come to that.

7 And now, each night I count the stars,
8 And each night I get the same number.
9 And when they will not come to be counted,
10 I count the holes they leave.
11 Nobody sings anymore.

12 And then last night, I tiptoed up
13 To my daughter's room and heard her
14 Talking to someone, and when I opened
15 The door, there was no one there ... 
16 Only she on her knees, peeking into

17 Her own clasped hands.

March 1957

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Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Hymn for Lanie Poo

Vous êtes des faux Nègres

--- Rimbaud

Poem section

1 O,
2 these wild trees
3 will make charming wicker baskets,
4 the young woman
5 the young black woman
6 the young black beautiful woman
7 said.
8 These wild-assed trees
9 will make charming
10 wicker baskets.
Poem section

11 (now, I'm putting words in her mouth ... tch)

1

1 All afternoon
2 we watched the cranes
3 humping each other
4 dropped
5 our shadows
6 onto the beach
7 and covered them over with sand.

8 Beware the evil sun ...
9 turn you black

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10 turn your hair

11 crawl your eyeballs

12 rot your teeth.

13 All afternoon
14 we sit around
15 near the edge of the city
16 hacking open
17 crocodile skulls
18 sharpening our teeth.
The god I pray to

got black boobies

got steatopygia

make faces in the moon
make me a greenpurple &
maroon winding sheet.
I wobble out to
the edge of the water

give my horny yell
& 24 elephants
stomp out of the subway
with consecrated hardons.

(watch out for that evil sun
turn you black)
My fireface

my orange

and fireface
squat by the flames.
She had her coming out party
with 3000 guests
from all parts of the country.
Queens, Richmond, Togoland, The Cameroons;
A white hunter, very unkempt,
with long hair,
whizzed in on the end of a vine.
(spoke perfect english too.)

"Throw on another goddamned Phoenecian,"
yelled, really getting with it.
John Coltrane arrived with an Egyptian lady. he played very well.

"Throw on another goddamned Phoenecian."

We got so drunk (Hulan Jack brought his bottle of Thunderbird), nobody went hunting the next morning.

o,
don't be shy honey.

we all know

these wicker baskets

would make wild-assed trees.

Monday, I spent most of the day hunting

Knocked off about six, gulped down a couple of monkey foreskins, then took in a flick. Got to bed early.

Tuesday, same thing all day. (Caught a mangy lioness with one tit.) Ate.

Watched television for awhile. Read the paper, then hit the sack.
Wednesday, took the day off.
Took the wife and kids to the games.

Thursday, we caught a goddamn ape.
Must've weighed about 600 pounds.
We'll probably eat ape meat for the rest of the month. Christ, I hate ape meat.

Friday, I stayed home with a supposed cold. Goofed the whole day trying to rethatch the roof. Had run in with the landlord.

We spent the weekend at home.
I tried to get some sculpting done, but nothing came of it. It's impossible to be an artist and a bread winner at the same time.
Sometimes I think I oughta chuck the whole business.

The firemasons parade.
(The sun is using this country as a commode.)
4 Beware the sun, my love.)

5 The firemasons are very square.
6 They are supposed to be a civic
7 and fraternal organization, but
8 all they do is have parades and
9 stay high. They also wear funny
10 looking black hats, which are
11 round and have brims. The fire-
12 masons are cornballs.

1 Each morning
2 I go down
3 to Gansevoort St.
4 and stand on the docks.
5 I stare out
6 at the horizon
7 until it gets up
8 and comes to embrace
9 me. I
10 make believe
11 it is my father.

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12 This is known
13 as genealogy.
We came into the silly little church
shaking our wet raincoats on the floor.
It wasn't water, that made the raincoats wet.
The preacher's conning eyes filed when he saw
the way I walked towards him; almost throwing my hips out
of whack.
He screamed,

*He's wet with the blood of the lamb!!*

And everybody got real happy.

*6 (die schwartze Bohemien)*

They laught,

and religion was something

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he fount in coffee ships, by God.
It's not that I got anything against cotton, nosiree, by God.

It's just that...

Man look at that blonde whewee!

I think they are not treating us like

Mr. Lincun said they should or Mr. Gandhi

For that matter. By God.

ZEN

is a bitch! Like "Bird" was, Cafe Olay

for me, Miss.

But white cats can't swing...

Or the way this guy kept patronizing me---

like he was Bach or somebody

Oh, I knew

John Kasper when he hung around with shades...
22 She's a painter, Man.

23 It's just that it's such a drag to go
24 Way uptown for Bar B Cue,

25 By God ...

26 How much?

1 About my sister.
2 (O, generation revered
3 above all others.
4 O, generation of fictitious
5 Ofays
6 I revere you ...
7 You are all so beautiful)

8 my sister drives a green jaguar
9 my sister has her hair done twice a month
10 my sister is a school teacher
11 my sister took ballet lessons
12 my sister has a fine figure: never diets
13 my sister doesn't like to teach in Newark
14 because there are too many colored
15 in her classes
16 my sister hates loud shades
17 my sister's boy friend is a faggot music teacher
who digs Tschaikovsky
my sister digs Tschaikovsky also
it is because of this similarity of interests
that they will probably get married.

Smiling & glad/in
the huge & loveless
white-anglo sun/of
benevolent step
mother America.

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : In Memory of Radio

Who has ever stopped to think of the divinity of Lamont Cranston?
(Only Jack Kerouac, that I know of: & me.
The rest of you probably had on WCBS and Kate Smith,
Or something equally unattractive.)

What can I say?
It is better to have loved and lost
Than to put linoleum in your living rooms?

Am I a sage or something?
Mandrake's hypnotic gesture of the week?
(Remember, I do not have the healing powers of Oral Roberts ...)
I cannot, like F. J. Sheen, tell you how to get saved & rich!
I cannot even order you to gaschamber satori like Hitler or
Goody Knight

& Love is an evil word.
Turn it backwards/see, see what I mean?
An evol word. & besides
who understands it?
I certainly wouldn't like to go out on that kind of limb.

Saturday mornings we listened to Red Lantern & his undersea folk.
At II, Let's Pretend/ & we did/ & I, the poet, still do, Thank God!

What was it he used to say (after the transformation, when he was safe
& invisible & the unbelievers couldn't throw stones?) ”Heh, heh, heh,
Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men? The Shadow knows.”

O, yes he does
O, yes he does.
An evil word it is,
This Love.

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934-: Look for You Yesterday, Here You Come Today

Part of my charm:
envious blues feeling
separation of church & state
grim calls from drunk debutantes

Morning never aids me in my quest.
I have to trim my beard in solitude.
I try to hum lines from ”The Poet In New York”. 
People saw metal all around the house on Saturdays. The Phone rings.

terrible poems come in the mail. Descriptions of celibate parties
torn trousers: Great Poets dying
with their strophes on. & me
incapable of a simple straightforward
anger.

It's so diffuse
being alive. Suddenly one is aware
that nobody really gives a damn.
My wife is pregnant with her child.
"It means nothing to me", sez Strindberg.

An avalanche of words
could cheer me up. Words from Great Sages.
Was James Karolis a great sage??

Why did I let Ora Matthews beat him up
in the bathroom? Haven't I learned my lesson.

I would take up painting
if I cd think of a way to do it
better than Leonardo. Than Bosch
Than Hogarth. Than Kline.

Frank walked off the stage, singing
"My silence is as important as Jack's incessant yatter."

I am a mean hungry sorehead.
Do I have the capacity for grace??
To arise one smoking spring
& find one's youth has taken off
for greener parts.

A sudden blankness in the day
as if there were no afternoon.
& all my piddling joys retreated
to their own dopey mythic worlds.

The hours of the atmosphere
grind their teeth like hags.

(When will world war two be over?)

I stood up on a mailbox
waving my yellow tee-shirt
watching the grey tanks
stream up Central Ave.

All these thots
are Flowers Of Evil
cold & lifeless
as subway rails

the sun like a huge cobblestone
flaking its brown slow rays
primititi
once, twice, . My life
seems over & done with.
Each morning I rise
like a sleep walker
& rot a little more.

All the lovely things I've known have disappeared. I have all my pubic hair & am lonely. There is probably no such place as BattleCreek, Michigan!

Tom Mix dead in a Boston Nightclub before I realized what happened.

People laugh when I tell them about Dickie Dare! What is one to do in an alien planet where the people breath New Ports? Where is my space helmet, I sent for it 3 lives ago ... when there were box tops.

What has happened to box tops??

O, God ... I must have a belt that glows green in the dark. Where is my Captain Midnight decoder?? I can’t understand what Superman is saying!

THERE MUST BE A LONE RANGER!!!

but this also is part of my charm. A maudlin nostalgia that comes on like terrible thoughts about death.
How dumb to be sentimental about anything
To call it love
& cry pathetically
into the long black handkerchief
of the years.

"Look for you yesterday
Here you come today
Your mouth wide open
But what you got to say?"

--- part of my charm

old envious blues feeling
ticking like a big cobblestone clock.

I hear the reel running out ...
the spectators are impatient for popcorn:
It was only a selected short subject

F. Scott Charon
will soon be glad-handing me
like a legionaire

My silver bullets all gone
My black mask trampled in the dust
& Tonto way off in the hills
moaning like Bessie Smith.
Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : To a Publisher ... Cut-out

1 The blight rests in your face.
2 For your unknown musiks. The care & trust
3 Undeliberate. Like an axe-murder
4 Or flat pancake. The night cold & asexual
5 A long sterile moon lapping at the dank Hudson.
6 The end of a star. The water more than any
7 Other thing. We are dibbled here. Seurat's
8 Madness. That kind of joke. Isolate
9 Land creatures in a wet unfriendly world.

10 We must be strong. (smoke Balkan Sobranie)
11 People will think you have the taste
12 In this hyar family. Some will stroke your face.
13 Better posture is another thing. Watch out for Peanuts,
14 he's gonna turn out bad/ A J.D./ A Beatnik/ A
15 Typical wise-ass N.Y. kid. "X" wanted to bet me
16 that Charlie Brown spent most of his time
17 whacking his doodle, or having weird relations
18 with that dopey hound of his (though that's
19 a definite improvement over "Arf Arf" & that
20 filthy little lesbian hes hung up with.)

21 As if any care could see us through. Could defend us.
22 Save us from you, Little Darling. Or me, which is worse.
23 "A far far worser thing I do/than I has ever done".
24 Put that in your pipe & watch out for the gendarmes.
25 They arresses people for less than that. For less
26 Than we are ever capable of. Any kind of sincerity
Guarantees complete disregard. Complete abnegation.

"Must dig with my fingers/as nobody will lend me
or sell me a pick axe." Axe the man who owns one.

Hellzapoppin. The stars might not come on tonight ...

& who the hell can do anything about that?? Eh,

Milord/ Milady/ The kind D bury wasn't. Tres slick.

But who am I to love anybody? I ride the 14th St. bus
every day ... reading Hui neng/ Raymond Chandler/ Olson ...

I have slept with almost every mediocre colored woman
On 23rd St ... At any rate, talked a good match. And

Frightened by the lack of any real communication
I addressed several perfumed notes to Uncle Don
& stuffed them into the radio. In the notes,

Of course, crude assignations, off color suggestions,

Diagrams of new methods for pederasts, lewd poems

That rime. IF ONLY HE WOULD READ THESE ON THE AIR.
(There are other things could take my mind from
this childe's play ... but none nearly as interesting.)

I long to be a mountain climber
& wave my hands up 8,000 feet.
Out of sight & snow blind/the tattered
Stars and Stripes poked in the new peak.

& come down later, Clipper by my side,
To new wealth & eternal fame. That
Kind of care. I could wear
Green corduroy coats & felt tyroleans
For the rest of my days; & belong to clubs.

Grandeur in boldness. Big & stupid as the wind.
But so lovely. Who's to understand that kind of con?
As if each day, after breakfast, someone asked you, "What do you want to be when you grow up??" & Day in, Day out, you just kept belching.

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Ostriches & Grandmothers!

Poem section

1 All meet here with us, finally: the uptown, way-west, den of inconstant moralities.
2 Faces up: all my faces turned up
to the sun.

1 Summer's mist nods against the trees
till distance grows in my head like an antique armada dangled motionless from the horizon.

5 Unbelievable changes. Restorations.
6 Each day like my niña's fan tweaking the flat air
7 back and forth till the room
8 is a blur of flowers.
Intimacy takes on human form ... & sheds it like a hide. Lips, eyes, tiny lace coughs reflected on night's stealth.

Tonight, one star. eye of the dragon. The Void signaling. Reminding someone it's still there.

It's these empty seconds I fill with myself. Each a recognition. A complete utterance.

Here, it is color; motion; the feeling of dazzling beauty Flight.

As the trapeze rider leans
with arms spread

wondering at the bar's delay

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Scenario VI

... and I come out of it
with this marvelous yellow cane
in my hand, yellow cashmere jacket
green felt pants & green boater ... & green &
black clack shoes, polished & fast, jiggling
in the wings ... till Vincente says "rolllllem"
& I jiggle out on the stage, hands in my pockets,
the cane balanced delicately under my arm, spinning
& clack clack clacking across the bare sunday clothesline
tilting the hat to avoid the sun & ginergerly missing
the dried branch I had put there yesterday.

The motion of the mind! Smooooth; I jiggle
& clack stomping one foot & the clothesline swings.
Fabulei Verwachsenes. Ripping this one off
in a series of dramatic half-turns I learned
many years ago in the orient; Baluba:
"The power to cloud men's minds" &c., which
I'm sure you must have heard about, doodle-doo.
& then I'm sitting in this red chair, humming,
feet still pecking at the marble floor, the
line motionless with only the tiniest leaf
on the dead branch waving, slowly; With a red background,
& I can't see anything, only hear this raspy 1936 voice
singing in german a very groovy love song; to me.
There's a train whistle, too. In and out like this.

When out the open window of early spring, sharp browns & greens fuzzy through the shade & a fence somehow too bleak to describe, or even be made sad by.

& I'm not even breathing hard. Tapping my feet so nicely, the cane too, on the red marble. No echo, that's distant thunder for these early summer storms, cools off the whole scene too. But waiting for my next cue, Vincente comes over, lights my cigarette, We make a date for next wednesday, at the rainbow hut, & he has a fabulous cigarette holder. & he pats my cane-hand & says, "you do it up, baby". I'm on again.

Sylvia has come out in her smashing oranges & jewelry, she has her mouth wide & I can hear her listening to my feet clackings for her deep beauty doesn't include rhythm. But we make it in great swirls out to the terrace, which overlooks Sumer ... & the Indus river, where next week probably all kinds of white trash will ride in on stolen animals we will be amazed by.

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Way Out West

(For Gary Snyder)

1 As simple an act
2 as opening the eyes. Merely
3  coming into things by degrees.

4  Morning: some tear is broken
5  on the wooden stairs
6  of my lady's eyes. Profusions
7  of green. The leaves. Their
8  constant prehensions. Like old
9  junkies on Sheridan Square, eyes
10  cold and round. There is a song
11  Nat Cole sings ... This city
12  & the intricate disorder
13  of the seasons.

14  Unable to mention
15  something as abstract as time.

16  Even so, (bowing low in thick
17  smoke from cheap incense; all
18  kinds questions filling the mouth,
19  till you suffocate & fall dead
20  to opulent carpet.) Even so,

21  shadows will creep over your flesh
22  & hide your disorder, your lies.

[Page 30 ]

23  There are unattractive wild ferns
24  outside the window
25  where the cats hide. They yowl
26  from there at nights. In heat
27  & bleeding on my tulips.

28  Steel bells, like the evil
29  unwashed Sphinx, towing in the twilight.
30 Childless old murderers, for centuries
31 with musty eyes.

32 I am distressed. Thinking
33 of the seasons, how they pass,
34 how I pass, my very youth, the
35 ripe sweet of my life; drained off ...

36 Like giant rhesus monkeys;
37 picking their skulls,
38 with ingenious cruelty
39 sucking out the brains.

40 No use for beauty
41 collapsed, with moldy breath
42 done in. Insidious weight
43 of cankered dreams. Tiresias'
44 weathered cock.

45 Walking into the sea, shells
46 caught in the hair. Coarse
47 waves tearing the tongue.

48 Closing the eyes. As
49 simple an act. You float

[Page 31]

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : The Bridge

(# for wieners & mcclure)
1. I have forgotten the head
2. of where I am. Here at the bridge.
3. bars, down the street, seeming
4. to wrap themselves around my fingers, the day,
5. screams in me; pitiful like a little girl
6. you sense will be dead before the winter
7. is over.

8. I can't see the bridge now, I've past
9. it, its shadow, we drove through, headed out
10. along the cold insensitive roads to what
11. we wanted to call "ourselves."
12. "How does the bridge go?" Even tho
13. you find yourself in its length
14. strung out along its breadth, waiting
15. for the cold sun to tear out your eyes; Enamoured
16. of its blues, spread out in the silk clubs of
17. this autumn tune. The changes are difficult, when
18. you hear them, & know they are all in you, the chords

19. of your disorder meddle with your would be disguises.
20. Sifting in, down, upon your head, with the sun & the insects.

21. (Late feeling) Way down till it barely, after that rush of
22. wind & odor reflected from hills you have forgotten the color
23. when you touch the water, & it closes, slowly, around your head.

[Page 32 ]

24. The bridge will be behind you, that music you know, that place,
25. you feel when you look up to say, it is me, & I have forgotten,
26. all the things, you told me to love, to try to understand, the
27. bridge will stand, high up in the clouds & the light, & you,

28. (when you have let the song run out) will be sliding through
29. unmentionable black.
Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Vice

1. Sometimes I feel I have to express myself.
2. and then, whatever it is I have to express
3. falls out of my mouth like flakes of ash
4. from a match book that the drunken guest
5. at the grey haired jew lady's birthday party has
6. set on fire, for fun & to ease the horrible boredom.

7. & when these flakes amass, I make serious collages
8. or empty them (feinting a gratuitous act) out the window
9. on the heads of the uncurious puerto rican passersby.

10. ACT I. The celibate bandit pees in the punch bowl.

11. (curious image) occurring friday evening, a house
12. full of middle class women & a photogenic baker.
13. Baby bear has eaten her porridge, had her bath, shit
14. & gone to sleep. Smoke rises (strange for mid-summer)
15. out of a strange little shack in the middle of the
16. torn down cathedral. Everything seems to be light green.
17. I suppose, a color of despair or wretchedness. Anyway,
18. everything is light green, even the curling little hairs
19. on the back of my hand, and the old dog scar glinting
20. in the crooked (green, light green) rays of an unshaded bulb.

21. There doesn't seem to be any act 2. The process is stopped.
22. Functional, as a whip, a strong limb broken off in the gale
23. lying twisty & rotten, unnoticed in my stone back yard.
24. All this means nothing is happening to me (in this world).
25 I suppose some people are having a ball. Organized fun.
26 Pot Smokers Institute is going on an outing tomorrow; my
27 corny sister, in her fake bohemian pants, is borrowing something
28 else. (A prestige item). *These incomprehensible dullards*

29 Asked to be special, & alive in the mornings, if they are green
30 & I am still alive, (& green) hovering above all the things I
31 seem to want to be apart of (curious smells, the high-noon idea
32 of life ... a crowded train station where they broadcast a slice,
33 *just one green slice, of some glamorous person's life*).
34 & I cant even isolate my pleasures. All the things I can talk about
35 mean nothing to me.

36 This is not rage. (I am not that beautiful!) Only immobile coughs
37 & gestures towards somethings I don't understand. If I were lucky
38 enough to still be an adolescent, I'd just attribute these weird
39 singings in my intestine to sex, & slink off merrily to mastur
40 bate. Mosaic of disorder I own but cannot recognize. Mist in me.

41 There must be some great crash in the slinky world: MYSTIC CURE ...
42 Cunning panacea of the mind. The faith of it. the singed hairs
43 of human trust, corrupt & physical as a disease. A glass stare.

44 Resolution, for the quick thrust of epee, to force your opponent
45 cringing against the wall, not in anger, but unfettered happiness
46 while your lady is watching from the vined balcony, your triumph.

47 & years after, you stand in subways watching your invincible hand
48 bring the metal to bear again & again, when you are old & the lady,
49 (o, fond memories we hide in our money belts, & will not spend)
50 the lady, you young bandits who have not yet stolen your first purse

51 the lady will be dead.
52  And if you are alone (if there is something in you so cruel)

53  You will wonder at the extravagance

54  of youth.

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Symphony Sid

1  First
2  take the first
3  thing. Blue. The mountain,
4  largest of our
5  landscape. From
6  a dark hall at
7  the bottom, the shapes
8  a shadow, without
9  hardness, or that
10  ugly smell of
11  blackening flesh.
12  The scale
13  is music, black shadow
14  from highest wild
15  fingers placing evening
16  beneath our
17  tongues.
18  A man, a woman
19  shaking the night apart. Forget
20  who you are. Forget
21  my fingers.
Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Betancourt

(For Rubi)

[1]

1 What are
2 influences?
3 A green truck
4 wet & glowing, seance
5 of ourselves, elegy for the sea
6 at night, my flesh
7 a woman's, at the fingertips
8 soft white increased coolness
9 from the dark
10 sea.
11 We sat
12 with our backs
13 to the sea. Not
14 in the gardens
15 of Spain, but some
16 new greenness, birds
17 scorching the yellow
18 rocks at the foot
19 of the sea's wall. A barrier
20 of rock, tilting backwards, damp,
21 thrown up against
22 a floating dreary
23 disgust. Even fear
24 without that self possession. The
25 night's defection. Walking all night
26 entwined inside, I mean
27 I tasted you, your real & fleshy
voice inside my head & choked as if some primitive corruption re-sat itself in full view of a puritan flame. And flame is the mind, the wet hands mark on strange islands of warmth.

Big stone nose, nigger lips, the entire head thrust from a serpents snout. Idle somehow, fire scorching the plain earth we pulled up around thinking to limit its violence. To contain even that madness (within some thrown wall of words.)

Our gestures are silence. The sea's wet feathers slowly black. (You die from mornings, looking down from that silence at the silence of roofs.Disconnected flesh. Not even cars from this distance are real.

[Page 39 ]
This is slower. Infused (somehow) with sound & distance. Slow

the cock flat on skin like a dead insect. A bee, with crushed antlers, sprawled on its side, And last night, talking to ourselves, except when some wildness cut us, ripped impossibly deep beneath black flesh to black bone. Then we loved each other. Understood the miles of dead air between our softest parts. French girl from the desert. Desert man, whose mind is some rotting country of snow.
There is more
underneath. Rotted, green
beneath hands making	heir deadly wishes
show. La casa. El edificio. La
Mar. El hombre. Without seething
tin braziers, no, those weird cups
in novels: chalices.
I was reading
some old man's poems
his morning. A lover
hid himself under
the stink of low trailing
sea birds, heavy sun, pure
distance. He had to go away,
I mean, from all of us, even
you, marvelous person
at the sea's edge. Even you
Sra. de Jimenez. Rubi.
And
I think he knew
all this would happen, that
when I dropped the book
the sky would have already
moved, turned black, and
wet grey air
would mark the windows.
That
there are fools
who hang close

to their original
thought. Elementals
of motion (Not, again,
that garden) but some
slightness
of feeling
they think is sweet
and long to die
inside.
Think about it! As even this, now, a turning away. (I mean I think I know now what a poem is) A turning away ...
from what it was had moved us ...
A madness.
Looking at the sea. And some white fast boat.

30 July 1960
Habana

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : The Insidious Dr. Fu Man Chu

1 If I think myself strong, then I am not true to the misery in my life. The uncertainty.
2 (of what I am saying, who I have chose to become, the very air pressing my skin held gently away, this woman and the one I taste continually in my nebular pallet tongue face mouth feet, standing in piles of numbers, hills, lovers.
3 If
I think myself ugly
& go to the mirror, smiling,
at the inaccuracy, or now
the rain pounds dead grass
in the stone yard, I think
how very wise I am. How very
very wise.

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : The New Sheriff

There is something
in me so cruel, so
silent. It hesitates
to sit on the grass
with the young white
virgins
of my time. The blood-
letter, clothed in what
it is. Elemental essence,
animal grace, not that, but
a rude stink of color
huger, more vast, than
this city suffocating. Red
street. Waters noise
in the ear, inside
the hard bone
of the brain. Inside
the soft white meat
of the feelings. Inside
your flat white stomach
I move my tongue
In the nature of flesh, these clown gods are words, blown in the winters, thou windows, lacking sun. In the nature, of ideas, in the nature of words, these clown god's are winter. Are blown thru our windows. The flesh & bone of the season. Each dead thing hustled across the pavement. Each dead word drowned in a winter wind. Are in the nature of flesh. These liars, clown gods

Respect the season and dance to the rattle of its bones. The flesh hung
This bizness, of dancing, how can it suit us? Old men, naked sterile women.
(our time, a cruel one. Our soul's warmth left out. Little match children, dance against the weather.
) The soul's warmth is how shall I say it,
Its own. A place of warmth, for children wd dance there, if they cd. If they left their brittle selves behind (our time’s a cruel one.

Children of winter. (I cross myself like religion

Children of a cruel time. (the wind stirs the bones & they drag clumsily thru the cold.)

These children are older than their worlds. and cannot dance.

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Notes for a Speech

African blues does not know me. Their steps, in sands of their own land. A country in black & white, newspapers blown down pavements of the world. Does not feel what I am. Strength in the dream, an oblique suckling of nerve, the wind
13 throws up sand, eyes
14 are something locked in
15 hate, of hate, of hate, to
16 walk abroad, they conduct
17 their deaths apart
18 from my own. Those
19 heads, I call
20 my "people."
21 (And who are they. People. To concern
22 myself, ugly man. Who
23 you, to concern
24 the white flat stomachs
25 of maidens, inside houses
26 dying. Black. Peeled moon
27 light on my fingers
28 move under

29 her clothes. Where
30 is her husband. Black
31 words throw up sand
32 to eyes, fingers of
33 their private dead. Whose
34 soul, eyes, in sand. My color
35 is not theirs. Lighter, white man
36 talk. They shy away. My own
37 dead souls, my, so called
38 people. Africa
39 is a foreign place. You are
40 as any other sad man here
41 american.

THE DEAD LECTURER [By Baraka, I. A., 1934-]
Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : As a Possible Lover

1 Practices
2 silence, the way of wind
3 bursting
4 its early lull. Cold morning
5 to night, we go so
6 slowly, without
7 thought
8 to ourselves. (Enough
9 to have thought
10 tonight, nothing
11 finishes it. What
12 you are, will have
13 no certainty, or
14 end. That you will
15 stay, where you are,
16 a human gentle wisp
17 of life. Ah ...)
18 practices
19 loneliness,
20 as a virtue. A single
21 specious need
22 to keep
23 what you have
24 never really
25 had.

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Balboa, the Entertainer
It cannot come except you make it from materials it is not caught from. (The philosophers of need, of which I am lately one, will tell you. "The People," (and not think themselves liable to the same trembling flesh). I say now, "The People, as some lesson repeated, now, as lesson repeated, now, the lights are off, to myself, as a lover, or at the cold wind. Let my poems be a graph of me. (And they keep to the line, where flesh drops off. You will go blank at the middle. A dead man. But die soon, Love. If what you have for yourself, does not stretch to your body's end. (Where, without preface, music trails, or your fingers slip
from my arm

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : A Contract. (For the Destruction and Rebuilding of Paterson

1 Flesh, and cars, tar, dug holes beneath stone
2 a rude hierarchy of money, band saws cross out
3 music, feeling. Even speech, corrodes.
4 I came here
5 from where I sat boiling in my veins, cold fear
6 at the death of men, the death of learning, in
7 cold fear, at my own. Romantic vests of same death
8 blank at the corner, blank when they raise their fingers

9 Criss the hearts, in dark flesh staggered so marvelous
10 are their lies. So complete, their mastery, of these
11 stupid niggers. Loud spics kill each other, and will not

12 make the simple trip to Tiffany's. Will not smash their stainless
13 heads, against the simpler effrontery of so callous a code as gain.

14 You are no brothers, dirty woogies, dying under dried rinds, in massa's
15 droopy tuxedos. Cab Calloways of the soul, at the soul's juncture, a
16 music, they think will save them from our eyes. (In back of the terminal

17 where the circus will not go. At the backs of crowds, stooped and vulgar
18 breathing hate syllables, unintelligible rapes of all that linger in
19 our new world. Killed in white fedora hats, they stand so mute at what

20 whiter slaves did to my father. They muster silence. They pray at the
21 steps of abstract prisons, to be kings, when all is silence, when all
22 is stone. When even the stupid fruit of their loins is gold, or something else they cannot eat.

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : This Is the Clearing I Once Spoke of

1 The talk scared him. Left alone, with me, at some water. (Suddenness of your mind, because you will be saved. Stand there counting deaths. My own, is what I wanted you to say, Roi, you will die soon.)

6 And it went well, till evening, and the birds fled. Their trees hanging empty at the river. All of it a creation. More than ideas. The simple elegant hand, a man will extend. More than we can lose, and still talk lovingly of "ourselves."

13 The brush sank behind its silence. This was a jungle, dead children of thought. We sat looking, and the wind changed our fire, it was blue, and sang slowly.

17 Whose mind has this here? The way love will move. I love you, I say that now evenly, without emotion. Having lost you. Or sitting, at the ruptured threads of light. Wind and birds, spurned out over the water, silent or dead.
A Poem for Neutrals

1 A japanese neon landscape blinks
2 a constant film
3 of memory. His leaves, his hills
4 change in dumb perspective. Farmers
5 and Americans,
6 say they are blue. Some natural phenomenon
7 some possible image
8 of what we shall call history. A jungle
9 of feeling. In their minds, the broken
10 tree, wet blood in the romantic's bulb. our sudden
11 and misconceived beauty. Inept tenderness. (For
12 those long girls lay in darkness under our smell.
13 Those talkers who will not shut up
14 when the dawn comes. And stand in doorways
15 letting cold air blow in.
16 It is a history of motive,
17 as secure as the economy
18 for these restless dwarfs
19 performing miracles for the blind. The wet ring
20 on their pants
21 the menace
22 of our education. It is not Dante,
23 nor Yeats. But the loud and drunken
24 pilgrim, I knew so well
25 in my youth. And grew to stone
26 waiting for the change.
The calendar is memory. The dead roots
of the poet's brain. Yellow skin, black
skin, or the formless calm of compromise. They will not come
to see, or understand you. They will call you "murderer,"
as new songs for their young. The mountains
in your country, the flat skies of mine. (Except
by the oceans, the poor hate their shadows,
and force their agony to dance.

All night blue leaves ring
in Kyoto. And the windows of 5th street
scream.

I am inside someone
who hates me; I look
out from his eyes. Smell
what fouled tunes come in
to his breath. Love his
wretched women.

Slits in the metal, for sun. Where
my eyes sit turning, at the cool air
the glance of light, or hard flesh
rubbed against me, a woman, a man,
without shadow, or voice, or meaning.
This is the enclosure (flesh,
where innocence is a weapon. An
abstraction. Touch. (Not mine.
Or yours, if you are the soul I had
and abandoned when I was blind and had
my enemies carry me as a dead man
(if he is beautiful, or pitied.

It can be pain. (As now, as all his
flesh hurts me.) It can be that. Or
pain. As when she ran from me into
that forest.
Or pain, the mind
silver spiraled whirled against the
sun, higher than even old men thought

God would be. Or pain. And the other. The
yes. (Inside his books, his fingers. They
are withered yellow flowers and were never
beautiful.) The yes. You will, lost soul, say
‘beauty.’ Beauty, practiced, as the tree. The
slow river. A white sun in its wet sentences.
Or, the cold men in their gale. Ecstasy. Flesh
or soul. The yes. (Their robes blown. Their bowls
empty. They chant at my heels, not at yours.) Flesh
or soul, as corrupt. Where the answer moves too quickly.
Where the God is a self, after all.)

Cold air blown through narrow blind eyes. Flesh;
white hot metal; Glows as the day with its sun.
It is a human love, I live inside. A bony skeleton
you recognize as words or simple feeling.

But it has no feeling. As the metal, is hot, it is not,
given to love.
It burns the thing inside it. And that thing screams.

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Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : A Poem For Willie Best

I

1 The face sings, alone
2 at the top
3 of the body. All
4 flesh, all song, aligned. For hell
5 is silent, at those cracked lips
6 flakes of skin and mind
7 twist and whistle softly
8 as they fall.
9 It was your own death
10 you saw. Your own face, stiff
11 and raw. This
12 without sound, or
13 movement. Sweet aften, the
14 dead beggar bleeds
15 yet. His blood, for a time
16 alive, and huddled in a door
17 way, struggling to sing. Rain
18 washes it into cracks. Pits
19 whose bottoms are famous. Whose sides
20 are innocent broadcasts
21 of another life.

[Page 63]
At this point, neither front nor back. A point, the dimensionless line. The top of a head, seen from Christ's heaven, stripped of history or desire. Fixed, perpendicular to shadow. (even speech, vertical, leaves no trace. Born in to death held fast to it, where the lover spreads his arms, the line he makes to threaten Gods with history. The fingers stretch to emptiness. At each point, after flesh, even light is speculation. But an end, his end, failing a beginning.

A cross. The gesture, symbol, line arms held stiff, nailed stiff, with no sign, of what gave them strength. The point, become a line, a cross, or the man, and his material, driven in the ground. If the head rolls back and the mouth opens, screamed into existence, there will be perhaps only the slightest hint of movement--- a smear; no help will come. No one will turn to that station again.
At a cross roads, sits the player. No drum, no umbrella, even though it's raining. Again, and we are somehow less miserable because ere is a hero, used to being wet.

One road is where you are standing now (reading this, the other, crosses then rushes into a wood.

5 lbs neckbones.
10 lbs hog innards.
10 bottles cheap wine.

(The contents of a paper bag, also shoes, with holes for the big toe, and several rusted knives. This is a literature, of symbols. And it is his gift, as the bag is.

(The contents again, holy savours,
300 men on horseback
75 bibles
the quietness of a field. A rich man, though wet through by the rain.

I said,
47 howitzers
7 polished horses jaws
a few trees being waved softly back under the black night

All This should be invested.
IV

1 Where
2 ever,
3 he has gone. who ever
4 mourns
5 or sits silent
6 to remember

7 There is nothing of pity
8 here. Nothing
9 of sympathy.

V

1 This is the dance of the raised
2 leg. Of the hand on the knee
3 quickly.
4 As a dance it punishes
5 speech. 'The house burned. The
6 old man killed.'
7 As a dance it
8 is obscure.

VI

1 This is the song

2 of the highest C.
3 The falsetto. An elegance
that punishes silence. This is the song
of the toes pointed inward, the arms swung, the
hips, moved, for fucking, slow, from side
to side. He is quoted
saying, "My father was
never a jockey,
but
he did teach me
how to ride."

VII

The balance.
(Rushed in, swarmed of dark, cloaks,
and only red lights pushed a message
to the street. Rub.
This is the lady,
I saw you with.
This is your mother.
This is the lady I wanted
some how to sleep with.
As a dance, or
our elegant song. Sun red and grown
from trees, fences, mud roads in dried out
river beds. This is for me, with no God
but what is given. Give me.
Something more
than what is here. I must tell you
my body hurts.

[Page 67 ]

The balance.
Can you hear? Here
I am again. Your boy, dynamite. Can
you hear? My soul is moved. The soul
you gave me. I say, my soul, and it
is moved. That soul
you gave me.
Yes, I'm sure
this is the lady. You
slept with her. Witness, your boy,
here, dynamite. Hear?
I mean
can you?

The balance.
He was tired of losing. (And
his walking buddies tired
of walking.
Bent slightly,
at the waist. Left hand low, to flick
quick showy jabs ala Sugar. The right
cocked, to complete,
any combination.
He was
tired of losing, but he was fighting
a big dumb "farmer."
Such a blue bright
afternoon, and only a few hundred yards
from the beach. He said, I'm tired
of losing.
"I got ta cut 'cha."

A renegade
behind the mask. And even
the mask, a renegade
disguise. Black skin
and hanging lip.
Lazy
Frightened
Thieving
Very potent sexually
Scars
Generally inferior
(but natural rhythms.

His head is at the window. The only part that sings.

(The word he used (we are passing St. Mark's place and those crazy jews who fuck) to provoke in neon, still useful in the rain, to provoke some meaning, where before there was only hell. I said silence, at his huddled blood.

It is an obscene invention.
A white sticky discharge.
"Jism," in white chalk on the back of Angel's garage.
Red jackets with the head of Hobbes staring into space. "Jasm"
the name the leader took, had it
stenciled on his chest.

And he sits
wet at the crossroads, remembering distinctly
each weightless face that eases by. (Sun at
the back door, and that hideous mindless grin.
(Hear?

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Joseph To His Brothers

They characterize
their lives, and I
fill up
with mine. Fill up
with what I have, with what
I see (or
need. I make
no distinction. As blind men
cannot love too quiet beauty.

These philosophers
rein up
their boats. Bring
their gifts, weapons
to my door. As if
that, in itself,
was courage, or counting
science.

The story is a long one. Why
I am here like this. Why you
should listen, now, so late, and
weary at the night. Its
heavy rain
23 pushing
24 the grass flat.

[Page 71]

25 It is here
26 somewhere. It grows
28 as stiff as silence. Silver quiet
29 beaten heavy under rains. So little
30 of this we remember. So few portions
31 of our lives, go on.

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Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Short Speech to My Friends

[1.]

1 A political art, let it be
2 tenderness, low strings the fingers
3 touch, or the width of autumn
4 climbing wider avenues, among the virtue
5 and dignity of knowing what city
6 you're in, who to talk to, what clothes
7 ---even what buttons---to wear. I address
8 / the society
9 the image, of
10 common utopia.
The perversity
of separation, isolation,
after so many years of trying to enter their kingdoms,
now they suffer in tears, these others, saxophones whining
through the wooden doors of their less than gracious homes.
The poor have become our creators. The black. The thoroughly ignorant.
Let the combination of morality and inhumanity begin.

Is power, the enemy? (Destroyer of dawns, cool flesh of valentines, among the radios, pauses, drunks of the 19th century. I see it, as any man's single history. All the possible heroes dead from heat exhaustion at the beach or hiding for years from cameras only to die cheaply in the pages of our daily lie.
One hero has pretensions toward literature one toward the cultivation of errors, arrogance, and constantly changing disguises, as trucker, boxer, valet, barkeep, in the aging taverns of memory. Making love to those speedy heroines of masturbation or kicking literal evil continually down filmy public stairs.

A compromise would be silence. To shut up, even such risk as the proper placement of verbs and nouns. To freeze the spit
in mid-air, as it aims itself

at some valiant intellectual's face.

There would be someone
who would understand, for whatever
fancy reason. Dead, lying, Roi, as your children
came up, would also rise. As George Armstrong Custer
these 100 years, has never made
a mistake.

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : The Politics of Rich Painters

1 is something like the rest
2 of our doubt, whatever slow thought
3 comes to rest, beneath the silence
4 of starving talk.
5 Just their fingers' prints
6 staining the cold glass, is sufficient
7 for commerce, and a proper ruling on
8 humanity. You know the pity
9 of democracy, that we must sit here
10 and listen to how he made his money.
11 Tho the catalogue of his possible ignorance
12 roars and extends through the room
13 like fire. "Love," becomes the pass,
14 the word taken intimately to combat
15 all the uses of language. So that learning
16 itself falls into disrepute.
1 What they have gathered into themselves
2 in that short mean trip from mother's iron tit
3 to those faggot handmaidens of the french whore
4 who wades slowly in the narrows, waving her burnt out
5 torch. There are movies, and we have opinions. There are
6 regions of compromise so attractive, we daily long
7 to filthy our minds with their fame. And all the songs
8 of our handsome generation fall clanging like stones

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9 in the empty darkness of their heads.
10 Couples, so beautiful
11 in the newspapers, marauders of cheap sentiment. So much taste
12 so little understanding, except some up and coming queer explain
13 cinema and politics while drowning a cigarette.

They are more ignorant than the poor
2 tho they pride themselves with that accent. And
3 move easily in fake robes of egalitarianism. Meaning,
4 I will fuck you even if you don't like art. And are wounded
5 that you call their italian memories petit bourgeois.
6 Whose death
7 will be Malraux's? Or the names Senghor, Price, Baldwin
8 whispered across the same dramatic pancakes, to let each eyelash flutter
9 at the news of their horrible deaths. It is a cheap game
10 to patronize the dead, unless their deaths be accountable
11 to your own understanding. Which be nothing nothing
12 if not bank statements and serene trips to our ominous countryside.
13 Nothing, if not whining talk about handsome white men. Nothing
14 if not false glamourous and static. Except, I admit, your lives
15 are hideously real.
The source of their art crumbles into legitimate history.

The whimpering pigment of a decadent economy, slashed into life as Yeats' mad girl plummeting over the nut house wall, her broken knee caps rattling in the weather, reminding us of lands our antennae do not reach.

And there are people in these savage geographies use your name in other contexts think, perhaps, the title of your latest painting another name for liar.

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : A Poem For Democrats

the city rises

in color, our sad ness, blanket this wood place, single drop of rain, blue image of someone's love. Net of rain. Crystal ice glass strings, smash (on such repertoire of memory as: baskets the long walk up harbor & the insistence, rain, as they build

City, is wicked. Not
this one, where I am, where they
still move, go to, out of
(transporting your loved one
across the line is death
by drowning.

Drowned love
hanged man, swung, cement on his feet.)
But the small filth of the small mind
short structures of newark, baltimore, cincinnati, omaha. Distress,
europe has passed we are alone. Europe
frail woman dead, we are alone

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : The Measure of Memory (The Navigator

The presence of good
is its answer (at the curb
the dead white verb, horse
breathing white steam
in the air)
Leaving, into the clocks
sad lovely lady fixed by words
her man
her rest
her fingers
her wooden house
set against the rocks
of our nation'senterprise.

That we disappear
to dance, and dance
when we do, badly.

And wield sentiment
like flesh
like the dumb man's voice
like the cold environment
of need. Or despair, a trumpet
with poison mouthpiece, blind player,
at the garden of least discernment; I

stagger, and remember / my own terrible
blankness and lies.

The boat's prow angled at the sun
Stiff foam and an invisible cargo
of captains. I buy injury, and decide
the nature of silence. Lines of speed
decay in my voice.

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Footnote To A Pretentious Book

Who am I to love
so deeply? As against
a heavy darkness, pressed
against my eyes. Wetting
my face, a constant trembling
6 rain.

7 A long life, to you. My friend. I
tell that to myself, slowly, sucking
my lip. A silence of motives / empties
the day of meaning.

8 What is intimate

9 enough? What is
beautiful?

10 It is slow unto meaning for
any life. If I am an animal, there
is proof of my living. The fawns
and calves
of my age. But it is steel that falls
as a thin mist into my consciousness. As a fine
ugly spray, I have made
some futile ethic
with.

23 "Changed my life?" As the dead man
pacing at the edge of the sea. As
the lips, closed

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26 for so long, at the sight
of motionless
birds.

29 There is no one to entrust with
meaning. (These sails go by, these small
deadly animals.)

30 And meaning? These words?

31 Were there some blue expanse
of world. Some other
flesh, resting
at the roof
of the world ...

38 you could say of me,
that I was truly
simpleminded.

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Rhythm & Blues (I

(for Robert Williams, in exile)

1 The symbols hang limply
2 in the street. A forest of objects,
3 motives,
4 black steaming christ
5 meat wood and cars
6 flesh light and stars
7 scream each new dawn for

8 whatever leaves pushed from gentle lips
9 fire shouted from the loins of history
10 immense dream of each silence grown to punctuation
11 against the grey flowers of the world.

12 I live against them, and hear them, and move
13 the way they move. Hanged against the night, so many
14 leaves, not even moving. The women scream tombs
15 and give the nights a dignity. For his heels
16 dragged in the brush. For his lips dry as brown wood. As
17 the simple motion of flesh whipping the air.

18 An incorrigible motive.
19  An action so secret it creates.
20  Men dancing on a beach.
21  Disappeared laughter erupting as the sea
22  erupts.
23  Controlled eyes seeing now all
24  there is

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25  Ears that have grown
26  to hold their new maps
27  Enemies that grow
28  in silence
29  Empty white fingers
30  against the keys (a drunken foolish stupor
31  to kill these men
32  and scream "Economics," my God, "Economics"
33  for all the screaming women drunker still, laid out to rest
34  under the tables of nightclubs
35  under the thin trees of expensive forests
36  informed of nothing save the stink of their failure
37  the peacock insolence of zombie regimes
38  the diaphanous silence of empty churches
39  the mock solitude of a spastic's art.
40  "Love." My God, (after they
41  scream "Economics," these shabby personalities
42  the pederast anarchist chants against millions of
43  Elk-sundays in towns quieter than his. Lunches. Smells
44  the sidewalk invents, and the crystal music even dumb niggers
45  hate. They scream it down. They will not hear your jazz. Or
46  let me tell of the delicate colors of the flag, the graphic blouse
47  of the beautiful Italian maiden. Afternoon spas
48  with telephone booths, Butterfingers, grayhaired anonymous trustees.
49  dying with the afternoon. The people of my life
50  caressed with a silence that only they understand. Let their sons
51  make wild sounds of their mothers for your pleasure. Or
52  drive deep wedges in flesh / screaming birds of mourning, at
53  their own. The invisible mountains of New Jersey, linger
54  where I was born And the wind on that stone
1 Street of tinsel, and the jeweled dancers
2 of Belmont. Stone royalty they tear down
3 for new buildings where fags invent jellies.

A tub, a slick head, and the pink houses waving
at the night as it approaches. A dead fish truck
full of porters I ran track with, effeminate blues singers, the wealth
of the nation transposed into the ring of my flesh's image. Grand dancers
spray noise and disorder in these old tombs. Liverwurst sandwiches dry
on brown fenced-in lawns, unfinished cathedrals tremble with our
screams.
Of the dozens, the razor, the cloth, the sheen, all speed adventure locked
in my eyes. I give you now, to love me, if I spare what flesh of yours
is left. If I see past what I feel, and call music simply "Art" and will
not take it to its logical end. For the death by hanging, for
the death by the hooded political murderer, for the old man dead in his
tired factory; election machines chime quietly his fraudulent faith.

For the well that marks the burned stores. For the deadly idiot of compromise
who shrieks compassion, and bids me love my neighbor. Even beyond the
meaning
of such act as would give all my father's dead ash to fertilize their bilious
land. Such act as would give me legend, "This is the man who saved us
Spared us from the disappearance of the sixteenth note, the destruction
of the scale. This is the man who against the black pits of despairing genius
cried, "Save the Popular Song." For them who pat me in the huddle and
do not
argue at the plays. For them who finish second and are happy they are
Chinese,
and need not run those 13 blocks.
I am not moved. I will not move to save them. There is no "melody." Only the foot stomped, the roaring harmonies of need. The hand banged on the table, waved in the air. The teeth pushed against the lip. The face and fingers sweating. "Let me alone," is praise enough for these musicians.

My own mode of conscience. And guilt, always the obvious connection. They spread you in the sun, and leave you there, one of a kind, who has no sons to tell this to. The mind so bloated at its own judgment. The railing consequence of energy given in silence. Ideas whose sole place is where they form. The language less than the act. The act so far beyond itself, meaning all forms, all modes, all voices, chanting for safety.

I am deaf and blind and lost and still not again sing your quiet verse. I have lost even the act of poetry, and writhe now for cool horizonless dawn. The shake and chant, bulled electric motion, figure of what there will be as it sits beside me waiting to live past my own meekness. My own light skin. Bull of yellow perfection, imperfectly made, imperfectly understood, except as it rises against the mountains, like sun but brighter, like flame but hotter. There will be those who will tell you it will be beautiful.
"Crow Jane, Crow Jane, don't hold your head so high, You realize, baby, you got to lay down and die."

---Mississippi Joe Williams

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : For Crow Jane
(Mama Death.

1 For dawn, wind
2 off the river. Wind
3 and light, from
4 the lady's hand. Cold
5 stuff, placed against
6 strong man's lips. Young gigolo's
7 of the 3rd estate. Young ruffians
8 without no homes. The wealth
9 is translated, corrected, a
10 dark process, like thought, tho
11 it provide a landscape
12 with golden domes.
13 'Your people
14 without love.' And life
15 rots them. Makes a silence
16 blankness in every space
17 flesh thought to be. (First light,
18 is dawn. Cold stuff
19 to tempt a lover. Old lady
20 of flaking eyes. Moon lady
21 of useless thighs.

1 Is some pilgrimage
2 to thought. Where she goes, in fairness,
3 "nobody knows." And then, without love,
4 returns to those wrinkled stomachs
5 ragged bellies / of young ladies
6 gone with seed. Crow
7 will not have. Dead virgin
8 of the mind's echo. Dead lady
9 of thinking, back now, without
10 the creak of memory.
11 Field is yellow. Fils dead
12 (Me, the last ... black lip hung
13 in dawn's gray wind. The last,
14 for love, a taker, took my kin.
15 Crow. Crow. Where
16 you leave my
17 other boys?

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1 (Wipes
2 her nose
3 on the draperies. Spills drinks
4 fondles another man's
5 life. She is looking
6 for alternatives. Openings
7 where she can lay all
this greasy talk
on somebody. Me, once. Now
I am her teller.
(And I tell
her symbols, as the grey movement
of clouds. Leave
grey movements
of clouds. Leave, always,
more.

Where is she? That she
moves without light. Even
in our halls. Even with
our laughter, lies, dead drunk
in a slouch hat famous king.
Where?

To come on so.

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Crow Jane the Crook.

[1.]
split, and burned us. We thought we were done.

Jane,
Wet lady of no image. We thought, you had left us. Dark lady, of constant promise. We thought you had gone.

My heart is cast in bitter metal. Condiments, spices all the frustration of earth, that has so much more desire than resolution. Want than pleasure.
Oh, Jane. (Her boat bumps at the ragged shore. Soul of the ocean, go out, return. Oh, Jane, we thought you had gone.

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : The Dead Lady Canonized.

(A thread of meaning. Meaning light. The quick response. To breath, or the virgins sick odor against the night.

(A trail of objects. Dead nouns, rotted faces
And what I have learned of it, to repeat, repeated as a day will repeat its color, the tired sounds run off its bones. In me, a balance.

Before that, what came easiest. From wide poles, across the greenest earth, eyes locked on, where they could live, and whatever came from there, where the hand could be offered, like Gideon's young troops on their knees at the water.

I test myself, with memory. A live bloody skeleton. Hung as softly as summer. Sways like words' melody, as ugly as any lips, or fingers stroking lakes, or flesh like a
white frightened scream.

What comes, closest, is closest. Moving, there is a wreck of spirit, a heap of broken feeling. What was only love or in those cold rooms, opinion. Still, it made color. And filled me as no one will. As, even I cannot fill myself.

I see what I love most and will not leave what futile lies I have. I am where there is nothing, save myself. And go out to what is most beautiful. What some noncombatant Greek or soft Italian prince would sing, "Noble Friends." Noble Selves. And which one is truly to rule here? And what country is this?
Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Audubon, Drafted

(for Linda)

1. It does not happen. That love, removes
2. itself. (I am leaving, Goodbye!
3. Removes
4. itself, as rain, hard iron rain
5. comes down, then stops. All those
6. eyes opened for morning, close with
7. what few hours given them. With tears,
8. or at a stone wall, shadows drag down.

9. I am what I think I am. You are what
10. I think you are. The world is the
11. one thing, that will not move. It is
12. made of stone, round, and very ugly.

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : If Into Love the Image Burdens

1. The front of the head
2. is the scarred cranium. The daisy
3. night, alone with its mills. Grumbling
4. through history, with its nest
5. of sorrow. I felt lost
6. and alone. The windows
7. sat on the street and smoked
8. in dangling winter. To autumn
9. from spring, summer's questions
10. paths, present to the head
11. and fingers. The shelf. The
12. rainbow. Cold knuckles rub against
a window. The rug. The flame. A woman
kneels against the sill. Each figure
halves silence. Each equation
sprinkles light.

Grey hats and eyes
for the photographed
trees. Grey stones and limbs
and a herd of me's.

Past, perfect.

Each correct color
not in nature, makes
us weep. Each inexpressible
idea. The fog lifts. The fog

lifts. Now falls. The fog
falls.

And nothing is done, or complete. No person
loved, or made better or beautiful. Came here
lied to, leave
the same. Dead boned talk
of history. Grandfathers skid
down a ramp of the night. Flame
for his talk, if it twists
like light on leaves.

Out past the fingers.
Out past the eyes.
Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Black Dada Nihilismus

[1]

1 . Against what light

2 is false what breath
3 sucked, for deadness.
4 Murder, the cleansed

5 purpose, frail, against
6 God, if they bring him
7 bleeding, I would not

8 forgive, or even call him
9 black dada nihilismus.

10 The protestant love, wide windows,
11 color blocked to Mondrian, and the
12 ugly silent deaths of jews under

13 the surgeon's knife. (To awake on
14 69th street with money and a hip
15 nose. Black dada nihilismus, for

16 the umbrella'd jesus. Trilby intrigue
17 movie house presidents sticky the floor.
18 B.D.N., for the secret men, Hermes, the
blacker art. Thievery (ahh, they return
those secret gold killers. Inquisitors

of the cocktail hour. Trismegistus, have

them, in their transmutation, from stone
to bleeding pearl, from lead to burning
looting, dead Moctezuma, find the West

a grey hideous space.

From Sartre, a white man, it gave
the last breath. And we beg him die,
before he is killed. Plastique, we
do not have, only thin heroic blades.
The razor. Our flail against them, why
you carry knives? Or brutaled lumps of

heart? Why you stay, where they can
reach? Why you sit, or stand, or walk
in this place, a window on a dark

warehouse. Where the minds packed in
new homes, these towers, for those
lacking money or art. A cult of death,
need of the simple striking arm under
the streetlamp. The cutters, from under
their rented earth. Come up, black dada

nihilismus. Rape the white girls. Rape
their fathers. Cut the mothers' throats.

Black dada nihilismus, choke my friends

in their bedrooms with their drinks spilling
and restless for tilting hips or dark liver
lips sucking splinters from the master's thigh.

Black scream
and chant, scream,
and dull, un
earthly
hollering. Dada, bilious
what ugliness, learned
in the dome, colored holy
shit (i call them sinned

or lost
burned masters
of the lost
nihil German killers
all our learned

art, 'member
what you said
money, God, power,
a moral code, so cruel
it destroyed Byzantium, Tenochtitlan, Commanch
(got it, Baby!

For tambo, willie best, dubois, patrice, mantan, the bronze buckaroos.

For Jack Johnson, asbestos, tonto, buckwheat, billie holiday.

For tom russ, l'overture, vessey, beau jack,

(may a lost god damballah, rest or save us against the murders we intend against his lost white children black dada nihilismus


1 In the palm
2 the seed
3 is burned up
4 in the wind.
5 In their rightness
6 the tree trunks are socialists
7 leaves murder the silence and are brown
8 and old when they blow to the sea.
9 Convinced
10 of the lyric. Convinced
11 of the man's image (since
12 he will not look at substance
other than his ego. Flowers, grapes
the shadows of weeds, as the weather
is colder, and women walk
with their heads down.
Silent political rain
against the speech
of friends. (We love them
trapped in life, knowing no way out
except description. Or black soil
floating in the arm.
*We must convince the living*
that the dead
cannot sing.

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Green Lantern's Solo

A deep echo, of open fear: the field drawn in
as if to close, and die, in the old man's eyes
as if to shut itself, as the withered mouth of
righteousness beats its gums on the cooling day.
As if to die
without knowing life.
Having lived, when
he did (an old stout God
in the spent bones
of his dignity. No screams
break his wooden lips
*His urine scatters*
as steel, which will fall
on any soft thing
you have. (Murder
is speaking of us.

I break and run, or hang back and hide
having been killed by wild beasts in my young wife's
sleep. Having been torn into small echoes of lie, or surrounded
in dim rooms by the smelly ghosts of wounded intellectuals. Old
science majors
whose mothers were brilliant understudys
or the famous mistress of a benevolent gangster.
Some mysterious comment on the world at the birth
of the word. Some mysterious jangle of intellects bent on the
crudeness

of any death so perfectly ignorant as ours.
My friend, the lyric poet,
who has never had an orgasm. My friend,
the social critic, who has never known society,
or read the great italian liars, except his father
who calls the whitehouse nightly, asking for hideous assignments.
My friend who has thrown himself against the dignity of all human flesh
yet beats at its image, as if he was the slow intellect who thought up
God.
No, Nigger, no, blind drunk in SantaSurreal's beard. Dead hero
for our time who would advance the nation's economy by poking holes
in his arms. As golden arms build a forest of loves, and find only
the heavy belly breath of ladies whispering their false pregnancies through
the
phone. The stagnant image of bats sailing out of their mouths as they
shape the syllable of revenge. Let me say it is Love, but never feeling.
It is knowledge, but never perfection, or something as stupidly callous
as beauty.
So important a silence as their lives, dwindled, rusted, corrupted away. As the port, where smoke rises for the poor French sailor and his Indian whore. There are bones, which still clog those blue soft seas, and give a human history to nature. Can you understand that nothing is free! Even the floating strangeness of the poet's head, the crafted visions of the intellect, named, controlled, beat and erected to work, and struggle under the heavy fingers of art. What valley, what mountain, what eagle or afternoon, is not fixed or changed under our feet or eyes? What man unremoved from his meat's source, can continue to believe totally in himself? Or on the littered sidewalks of his personal history, can continue to believe in his own dignity or intelligence.

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Except the totally ignorant who are our leaders.
Except the completely devious who are our lovers.
No man except a charlatan could be called "Teacher," as

big birds will run off from their young if they follow too closely, or the drowned youths at puberty who did not allow that ritual was stronger than their mother's breasts.

The completely free are the completely innocent, of which no thing I know can claim: despite the dirty feet of our wise men, their calm words hung in a line, from city to city: despite the sickening courage or useless honesty of men who claim to love each other and resolve their lives as four letter words: despite the rightness, the strength the brilliance and character, the undeniable idiocy of poets like Marx and Rousseau.
What we have created, is ourselves
as heroes, as lovers, as disgustingly evil. As Dialogues with the soul, with the self, Selves, screaming furiously to each other. As the same fingers touch the same faces, as the same mouths close on each other. The killed is the killer, the loved the lover, and the islands of mankind have grown huge to include all life, all lust, all commerce and beauty. Each idea a reflection of itself and all the ideas men have ever had. Truth, Lie, so close they defy inspection, and are built into autonomy by naïve fools, who have no wish for wholeness or strength. Who can not but yearn for the One Mind, or Right, or call it some God, a thing beyond themselves, some thing toward which all life is fixed, some static, irreducible, constantly correcting, dogmatic economy of the soul.

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : War Poem

1  The battle waxed (battle wax, good night!
2  Steep tumors of the sea's energy
3  shells, shells, gold lights under the tree's
4  cover.)

5  In spring the days explode
6  In spain old cuckolds watch their wives
7  and send their money to America.
Luxury, then, is a way of
being ignorant, comfortably
An approach to the open market
of least information. Where theories
can thrive, under heavy tarpaulins
without being cracked by ideas.

(I have not seen the earth for years
and think now possibly "dirt" is
negative, positive, but clearly
social. I cannot plant a seed, cannot
recognize the root with clearer dent
than indifference. Though I eat
and shit as a natural man (Getting up
from the desk to secure a turkey sandwich
and answer the phone: the poem undone
undone by my station, by my station,
and the bad words of Newark.) Raised up
to the breech, we seek to fill for this
crumbling century. The darkness of love, in whose sweating memory all error is forced.

Undone by the logic of any specific death. (Old gentlemen who still follow fires, tho are quieter and less punctual. It is a polite truth we are left with. Who are you? What are you saying? Something to be dealt with, as easily.

The noxious game of reason, saying, "No, No, you cannot feel," like my dead lecturer lamenting thru gipsies his fast suicide.

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Snake Eyes

That force is lost which shaped me, spent in its image, battered, an old brown thing swept off the streets where it sucked its gentle living.

And what is meat to do, that is driven to its end by words? The frailest gestures grown like skirts around breathing. We take unholy risks to prove we are what we cannot be. For instance,
Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : A Poem for Speculative Hipsters

1 He had got, finally,
2 to the forest
3 of motives. There were no
4 owls, or hunters. No Connie Chatterleys
5 resting beautifully
6 on their backs, having casually
7 brought socialism
8 to England.
9 Only ideas,
10 and their opposites.
11 Like,
12 he was really
13 nowhere.

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Dichtung

1 A torn body, correspondent

2 of extreme cold. Altitude
3 or thought, colliding as an image
4 of
5 moving water, time, the slip

6 of simple life. It is matter, after all,
that is corrupted, not
spirit. After all, it is spirit
that is corrupted
not matter.
The role given,
mashed into protein
grace. A lifted arm
in shadow. A lifted thinking
banging silently
in the darkness.
I fondle what
I find
of myself. Of you
what I understand.
Trumpets of slow weather.
Love blends
in season.

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Valéry As Dictator

Sad. And it comes
tomorrow. Again, gray, the streaks
of work
shedding the stone
of the pavement, dissolving
with the idea
of singular endeavor. Herds, the
herds
of suffering intelligences
bunched,
and out of
hearing. Though the day
come to us
in waves,
sun, air, the beat
of the clock.
Though I stare at the radical
18 world,
19 wishing it would stand still.
20 Tell me,
21 and I gain at the telling.
22 Of the lie, and the waking
23 against the heavy breathing
24 of new light, dawn, shattering
25 the naive cluck
26 of feeling
27 What is tomorrow
28 that it cannot come
29 today?

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : The Liar

1 What I thought was love
2 in me, I find a thousand instances
3 as fear. (Of the tree’s shadow
4 winding around the chair, a distant music
5 of frozen birds rattling
6 in the cold.
7 Where ever I go to claim
8 my flesh, there are entrances
9 of spirit. And even its comforts
10 are hideous uses I strain
11 to understand.
12 Though I am a man
13 who is loud
14 on the birth
15 of his ways. Publicly redefining
16 each change in my soul, as if I had predicted
17 them,
18 and profited, biblically, even tho
19 their chanting weight,
20 erased familiarity
21 from my face.
A question I think, an answer, whatever sits counting the minutes till you die.

When they say, "It is Roi who is dead?" I wonder who will they mean?

BLACK MAGIC [By Baraka, I. A., 1934-]

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Three Modes of History and Culture

1 Chalk mark sex of the nation, on walls we drummers know as cathedrals. Cathedra, in a churning meat milk.

4 Women glide through looking for telephones. Maps weep and are mothers and their daughters listening to

7 music teachers. From heavy beginnings. Plantations, learning America, as speech, and a common emptiness. Songs knocking
inside old women's faces. Knocking through cardboard trunks.

Trains
leaning north, catching hellfire in windows, passing through

the first ignoble cities of missouri, to illinois, and the panting
Chicago.
And then all ways, we go where flesh is cheap. Where factories
sit open, burning the chiefs. Make your way! Up through fog and
history
Make your way, and swing the general, that it come flash open

and spill the innards of that sweet thing we heard, and gave theory
to.
Breech, bridge, and reach, to where all talk is energy. And there's

enough, for anything singular. All our lean prophets and rhythms.
Entire
we arrive and set up shacks, hole cards, Western hearts at the edge

of saying. Thriving to balance the meanness of particular skies.
Race
of madmen and giants.

Brick songs. Shoe songs. Chants of open weariness.
Knife wiggle early evenings of the wet mouth. Tongue
dance midnight, any season shakes our house. Don't
tear my clothes! To doubt the balance of misery
ripping meat hug shuffle fuck. The Party of Insane
Hope. I've come from there too. Where the dead told lies
about clever social justice. Burning coffins voted
and staggered through cold white streets listening
to Willkie or Wallace or Dewey through the dead face
of Lincoln. Come from there, and belched it out.

I think about a time when I will be relaxed.
When flames and non-specific passion wear themselves away. And my eyes and hands and mind can turn and soften, and my songs will be softer and lightly weight the air.

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : A Poem Welcoming Jonas Mekas to America

This night's first star, hung high up over a factory. From my window, a smile held my poetry in. A tower, where I work and drink, vomit, and spoil myself for casual life.

Looking past things, to their meanings. All the pretensions of consciousness. Looking out, or in, the precise stare of painful reference. (Saying to the pretty girl, "Pain has to be educational.") Or so I thought, riding down in the capsule, call it elevator lady, speedless forceless profile thrust toward the modern lamp, in lieu of a natural sun. Our beings are here. (Take this chance to lick yourself, the salt and stain of memory history and object.) Shit! Love!

Things we must have some use for. Old niggers in time on the dreary street. Man, 50 ... woman, 50, drunk and falling in the street. I could say, looking at their lot, a poet has just made a note of your hurt. First star, high over the factory. I could say, if I had any courage but my own. First star, high over the factory. Get up off the ground, or
just look at it, calmly, where you are.

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : A Poem Some People Will Have to Understand

1 Dull unwashed windows of eyes
2 and buildings of industry. What
3 industry do I practice? A slick
4 colored boy, 12 miles from his
5 home. I practice no industry.
6 I am no longer a credit
7 to my race. I read a little,
8 scratch against silence slow spring
9 afternoons.
10 I had thought, before, some years ago
11 that I'd come to the end of my life.
12 Watercolor ego. Without the preciseness
13 a violent man could propose.
14 But the wheel, and the wheels,
15 wont let us alone. All the fantasy
16 and justice, and dry charcoal winters
17 All the pitifully intelligent citizens
18 I've forced myself to love.
19 We have awaited the coming of a natural
20 phenomenon. Mystics and romantics, knowledgeable
21 workers
22 of the land.
23 But none has come.
24 ( Repeat )
25 but none has come.
26 Will the machinegunners please step forward?
Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Letter to E. Franklin Frazier

1 Those days when it was all right
2 to be a criminal, or die, a postman's son,
3 full of hallways and garbage, behind the hotdog store
4 or in the parking lots of the beautiful beer factory.

5 Those days I rose through the smoke of chilling Saturdays
6 hiding my eyes from the shine boys, my mouth and my flesh
7 from their sisters. I walked quickly and always alone
8 watching the cheap city like I thought it would swell
9 and explode, and only my crooked breath could put it together
10 again.

11 By the projects and small banks of my time. Counting my steps
12 on tar or new pavement, following the sun like a park. I imagined
13 a life, that was realer than speech, or the city's anonymous
14 fish markets. Shuddering at dusk, with a mile or so up the hill

15 to get home. who did you love
16 then, Mussolini? What were you thinking,
17 Lady Day? A literal riddle of image
18 was me, and my smell was a continent
19 of familiar poetry. Walking the long way,
20 always the long way, and up the steep hill.

21 Those days like one drawn-out song, monotonously
22 promising. The quick step, the watchful march march,
23 All were leading here, to this room, where memory
24 stifles the present. And the future, my man, is long
25 time gone.
Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : The People Burning

May-Day! May-Day!

---Pilot talk

1 They now gonna make us shut up. Ease
2 thru windows in eight dollar hats
3 sharpening their pencils on match books. List
4 our errors and lies, stumbling over our souls
5 in the dark, for the sake of unnatural advantage.

6 They now gonna line you up, ask you about God. Nail
7 your answers on the wall, for the bowling alley owners
8 to decide. They now gonna pretend they flowers. Snake stalked
9 large named vegetables, who have, if nothing else,
10 the title: World's Vilest Living Things.

11 The Dusty Hearts of Texas, whose most honest world
12 is the long look into darkness, sensing the glittering
13 affront of reason or faith or learning. Preferring
14 fake tiger smells rubbed on the balls, and clothes
15 the peasants of no country on earth would ever be
16 vulgar enough to wear. The legacy of diseased mediocrity.

17 Become an Italian or Jew. Forget the hatred of natural
18 insolence. The teetering sense of right, as balance, each
19 natural man must have. Become a Jew, and join the union,
20 forget about Russia or any radicalism past a hooked grin.
21 Become an Italian quietist in some thin veneer of reasonable
22 gain. Lodi, Metuchen, Valley Stream, welcomes you into its
leather ridiculousness. Forget about any anarchy except the understandable urge to be violent, or flashy, or fast, or heavy fisted. Sing at Radio City, but never rage at the chosen, for they have given you the keys to their hearts. Made you the Fridays and Saturdays of the regime, clothed you in promise and utility, and banned your thinkers to worship the rags of your decline.

For the Reconstruction, for the march into any anonymous America, stretches beyond hills of newsprint, and dishonorable intention. Forget any dignity, but that that is easily purchased. And recognized by Episcopalians as they pay their garbage bills. The blueprint's sound. And the nation is smaller and the loudest mouths are recognized and stunned by the filth of their hopeless truths. (I've got to figure this all out. Got to remember just where I came in. Freedom Suite, some five six years ago, Rollins cradling the sun, as it rose, and we dreamed then, of becoming, unlike our fathers, and the other cowboys, strong men in our time, raging and clawing, at fools of any persuasion.)

Now they ask me to be a jew or italian, and turn from the moment disappearing into the shaking clock of treasonable safety, like reruns of films, with sacred coon stars. To retreat, and replay; throw my mind out, sit down and brood about the anachronistic God, they will tell you is real. Sit down and forget it. Lean on your silence, breathing the dark. Forget your whole life, pop your fingers in a closed room, hopped-up witch doctor for the cowards of a recent generation. It is choice, now, like a philosophy problem. It is choice, now, and the weight is specific and personal. It is not an emotional decision.

There are facts, and who was it said, that this is a scientific century.
I hunt
the black puritan.
(Half-screamer
in dull tones
of another forest.

Respecter of power. That it transform, and enlarge
Hierarchy crawls over earth (change exalting space
Dried mud to mountain, cape and whip, swirled
Walkers, and riders and flyers.
Language spread into darkness. Be Vowel
and value
Consonant
and direction.
Rather the lust of the thing
than across to droop at its energies. In melted snows
the leather cracks, and pure men claw at their bodies.
Women laugh delicately, delicately rubbing their thighs.

And the dead king laughs, looking out the hole
in his tomb. Seeing the poor
singing his evil songs.

Among things with souls, find me.
Picking thru the alphabet 
or leaning out the window. (Lives 
and magic.) Old witch city, the 
lights and roads (floating) up near the tops 
of buildings. Electric names, which are not 
love's. A rolling Eastern distress. Water cutting 
the coast, lulling the mysterious classes.

Murderers humming under the window.

A strutting long headed Negro. Beneath the red silk 
of unique social fantasy. Shore invisible under tenements.

The Jew who torments Hitler in Paradise, wiping thick fingers 
on a hospital cloth. His fingerprints on the dough, marking it 
before baking. Drifting to sleep in Pelham, fucking a female spy.

This man was used against me, 
in a dream. 
Broken teeth 
Dirty apron 
Hires a bowery desperado, 
to pull out the garbage

and imagine the whiteness 
of his wife's withered stomach.
24 The proportion of Magic
25 has seeped so low.

26 For the 1st person plural

27 America, then,
28 Atlantis,
29 in blind overdose.

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : The New World

1 The sun is folding, cars stall and rise
2 beyond the window. The workmen leave
3 the street to the bums and painters’ wives
4 pushing their babies home. Those who realize
5 how fitful and indecent consciousness is
6 stare solemnly out on the emptying street.
7 The mourners and soft singers. The liars,
8 and seekers after ridiculous righteousness. All
9 my doubles, and friends, whose mistakes cannot
10 be duplicated by machines, and this is all of our
11 arrogance. Being broke or broken, dribbling
12 at the eyes. Wasted lyricists, and men
13 who have seen their dreams come true, only seconds
14 after they knew those dreams to be horrible conceits
15 and plastic fantasies of gesture and extension,
16 shoulders, hair and tongues distributing misinformation
17 about the nature of understanding. No one is that simple
18 or priggish, to be alone out of spite and grown strong
in its practice, mystics in two-pants suits. Our style, and discipline, controlling the method of knowledge.
Beatniks, like Bohemians, go calmly out of style. And boys are dying in Mexico, who did not get the word.
The lateness of their fabrication: mark their holes with filthy needles. The lust of the world. This will not be news. The simple damning lust,
float flat magic in low changing evenings. Shiver your hands in dance. Empty all of me for knowing, and will the danger of identification,
Let me sit and go blind in my dreaming and be that dream in purpose and device.
A fantasy of defeat, a strong strong man older, but no wiser than the defect of love.

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : The Burning General

Smoke seeping from my veins. Loss from the eyes. Seeing winter throw its wind around. Hoping for more, than I'll ever have. Forgetting my projects, and the projected sense of order, any claim to "sense" must make. The reason Allen and the others (even freakish pseudo dada mama) in the money jungle of controlled
8  pederasty
9  finally bolted. Shut and gone, at the same time.

10  But can we replace the common exchange of experience with stroking
11  some skinny girl's penis? Is sense to be lost, all of it, so that
12  we can walk up Mulberry Street without getting beat up in Italian.

13  Violence and repression. Silly Nigger hatred for the
14  silk band of misery. They are right, those fatty doctors. Perhaps
15  it is best to ease into kill-heaven than have no heaven at all.
16  What do you think, Eddie, out there in Idaho shivering against
17  the silence, the emptiness of straight up America? What's it look like
18  there?

19  Can we ask a man to savor the food of oppression? Even
20  if it's rich and full of mysterious meaning. Can you establish
21  (and that word must give my whole game away) any kind of equality?
22  Can there be such thing forced on the world? That is, that the poor
23  and their owners appreciate light wherever they are, simply as light.
24  Why are you so sophisticated? You used to piss and shit in your pants.
25  Now you walk around thinking all the time, as if that sacred act

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26  would rewrite the world in bop talk, giving medals to every limping coon
27  in creation.

28  Is there more to it than that? This is the time to ask, even while perfecting
29  your line. We realize that ends and means should be separated, but who
30  will do the separating? The evaluating. You want your experience
31  thought of as valuable. Which is, listen baby, only another kind
32  of journalistic enterprise. Not worthy of that bumpy madness
33  crawled up your thighs when the urine dried those sweet lost winters,
34  and tears were the whole fucking world.

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A host of loves is the city, and its memory
dead sense traveling (from England) on the sea
for two hundred years. The travelers show up in Japan
to promote peace and prosperity, perhaps a piece
of that nation's ass. Years later, years later,
plays rework the rime of lust. As history, and a cloud
their faces bang invisible notes, wind scribbled leaves
and foam. An eagle hangs above them spinning. Years and travelers
linger among the dead, no reports, gunshots white puffs
deciding the season and the mode of compromise. The general good
has no troops or armor, subtly the books stand closed, except
sad facts circled for unknown hippies carrying the mail.
I leave it there, for them, full of hope, and hurt. All the poems
are full of it. Shit and hope, and history. Read this line
young colored or white and know I felt the twist of dividing
memory. Blood spoiled in the air, caked and anonymous. Arms opening,
opened last night, we sat up howling and kissing. Men who loved
each other. Will that be understood? That we could, and still
move under cold nights with clenched fists. Swing these losers
by the tail. Got drunk then high, then sick, then quiet. But thinking
(and of you lovely shorties sit in libraries seeking such ideas out).
I'm here now, LeRoi, who tried to say something long for you. Keep it.
Forget me, or what I say, but not the tone, and exit image. No points,
or theories, from now on, just me and mine, when they get me, just
think of me as typing with a drink at my right hand, some women who
love me ... and the day growing old and sloppy through the window.
Verse, as a form, is artificial. Poetry is not a form, but rather a result. Whatever the matter, its meaning, if precise enough in its information (and direction) of the world, is poetic. The poetic is the value of poetry, and any concatenation of elements is sufficient to induce the poetic. What you see is as valuable as what you do not. But it is not as meaningful (to you). Poetry aims at difficult meanings. Meanings not already catered to. Poetry aims at reviving, say, a sense of meaning, or meaning’s possibility and ubiquitousness.

Identification can be one term of that possibility. That is, showing a thing with its meaning apparent through the act of that showing. Interpretation can be another term. That is, supporting a meaning, with one’s own life. That is, understanding. And using that position as a map, or dictionary. Depending on whether you move or sit.

I write poetry only to enlist the poetic consistently as apt description of my life. I write poetry only in order to feel, and that, finally, sensually, all the terms of my life. I write poetry to investigate my self, and my meaning and meanings.

But also to invest the world with a clearer understanding of it self, but only by virtue of my having brought some clearer understanding of my self into it. I wrote in a poem once, "Feeling predicts intelligence."

But it is possible to feel with any part of our consciousness. Whatever part of us does register: whatever. The head feels. The heart feels. The penis feels. The penis is also, because it is able to feel, conscious, and has intelligence of its own. No one can deny that intelligence, or at least no one should try. The point of life is that it is arbitrary, except in its basest forms. Arbitrariness, or self imposed meaning, is the only thing worth living for. It is the only thing that permits us to live.

The only time I am conscious of my limitations is when I am writing. The rest of the time, there is no standard, at all reasonable, for judging, in fact, what limitations are.

Year of the Buffalo
1964
Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : All's Well

(For E.R. & M.B.)


2 An old time love withered, in seeing, off and on
3 in a thing like rain (the wetness in your head, and
4 all the stampeding, fear, hacked open skulls grinning
5 sensing your loss, the words floating just beyond your
6 fingers (invisible antennae

7 Just drew a blank, dope nod
8 corrupting what's left, and that nothing
9 confusion of blankness, the hatred when I wake
10 silence for motives, she, woman I am with, is
11 silent, as the dream of some other woman, never
12 existed, tho she be of flesh and red sperm spinning
13 through her veins. This woman came when I stuck her
14 iron insect screams holes. Blood flew up into the
15 dropper, we sent it back in her. Eyes rolled up,
16 lap quivered, lip shook. The next time she
17 got depressed going cross town. She held me so.
18 Not understanding the buildings stopped, and sky
19 hung above them just the same

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : The Bronze Buckaroo

for Herb Jeffries
Soft night comes back
with its clangs and dreams. Back
in through the base
of the hairy skull. The heavy pictures, unavailable
solaces, emptying their churchy magic
out. Golden girls, and thin black ones
patrol the dreamer’s meat. Things
shovel themselves, from where they always are. Spinning, a
moment’s indecision, past the vision of stealth and silence
Byron thought the night could be. Death blow Eliot silence, dwindling
away, in the 20th century. Poet clocks crouched in their Americas.
Dreaming of poems, only the cold sky could bring. Not room poems, or
fireplace poems, or the great washed poetry of our dizzy middleclass.
But something creeps and grabs them, rapes them on the pavement. The
Screams
are not essays, rich blonde poetess from the mysteries of Kipling's harmon
cical. Not guileful treatises of waste and desire, stuck somewhere
nursing her tilted beauty, like some old fashion whore, embarrassed
by God, or his diseases. The funny heart blows smoke, in the winter
and gives us all the earth we need. In summer, it sweats, and remembers.
Half way up the hill the mutineers stand, and seek their comrades out.
I am half way up, and standing.

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Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Numbers, Letters

If you're not home, where
are you? Where'd you go? What
were you doing when gone? When
you come back, better make it good.
What was you doing down there, freakin' off
with white women, hangin' out
with Queens, say it straight to be
understood straight, put it flat and real
in the street where the sun comes and the
moon comes and the cold wind in winter
11 waters your eyes. Say what you mean, dig
12 it out put it down, and be strong
13 about it.

14 I cant say who I am
15 unless you agree I'm real

16 I cant be anything I'm not
17 Except these words pretend
18 to life not yet explained,
19 so here's some feeling for you
20 see how you like it, what it
21 reveals, and that's Me.

22 Unless you agree I'm real
23 that I can feel
24 whatever beats hardest
25 at our black souls

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26 I am real, and I can't say who
27 I am. Ask me if I know, I'll say
28 yes, I might say no. Still, ask.
29 I'm Everett LeRoi Jones, 30 yrs old.

30 A black nigger in the universe. A long breath singer,
31 wouldbe dancer, strong from years of fantasy
32 and study. All this time then, for what's happening
33 now. All that spilling of white ether, clocks in ghostheads
34 lips drying and rewet, eyes opening and shut, mouths churning.

35 I am a meditative man, And when I say something it's all of me
36 saying, and all the things that make me, have formed me, colored me
37 this brilliant reddish night. I will say nothing that I feel is
lie, or unproven by the same ghostclocks, by the same riders
always move so fast with the word slung over their backs or
in saddlebags, charging down Chinese roads. I carry some words,
some feeling, some life in me. My heart is large as my mind
this is a messenger calling, over here, over here, open your eyes
and your ears and your souls; today is the history we must learn
to desire. There is no guilt in love.

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Red Eye

(for Calvin Hernton and Ishmael Reed)

1 The corrupt madness of the individual. You cannot live
2 alone. You are in the world. World, fuck them. World rise
3 and twist like you do, night madness in rain as heavy as stones.
4 Alabama gypsy talk, for peeling lips. Look in your mother's head,
5 if you really want to know everything. Your sister's locked up
6 pussy. Invasion of the idea syndrome like hand clapping winter in.
7 Winter will make you move. Or you will freeze in Russia and
8 never live to see Napoleon as conceived by Marlon Brando.
9 We are at the point where death is too good for us. We are
10 in love with the virtue of evil. This communication. Rapping
11 on wet meat windows, they spin in your head, if I kill you
12 will not even have chance to hate me

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : A Western Lady

1 The sick tightening. Brain damage movie
2 of forbidden flesh, laying in the shadows
3 breathing without purpose, meat stacked
4 in terrible silence, her mother wept
5 to think of that meat, her father, paced
6 and said the star spangled banner into
7 his brain damage soup. These were windows
8 we looked through. The brother died in a
9 guitar school, stringing guitars and praying
10 for a piece. And it was his own movie star
11 slipping green panties over high heels. Hence
12 his pimples, and the bunching of his waistband.
13 No one is expected to be rich and smart. Hence
14 planes go down from 30,000, full of screaming
15 materialists, whose mothers stunted them
16 hanging around election machines. It was the metal clack
17 that did it. A flag lobotomy, which has the victims
18 wallowing on warehouse floors, whistling popular Bach.
19 I suffer with these announcers. Butter and egg men,
20 whose promise rolled with the big ice, them’s pre-
21 historic times.

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Return of the Native

1 Harlem is vicious
2 modernism. BangClash.
3 Vicious the way its made.
4 Can you stand such beauty?
5 So violent and transforming.
6 The trees blink naked, being
7 so few. The women stare
8 and are in love with them
9 selves. The sky sits awake
10 over us. Screaming
11 at us. No rain.
12 Sun, hot cleaning sun
13 drives us under it.
The place, and place
meant of
black people. Their heavy Egypt.
(Weird word!) Their minds, mine,
the black hope mine. In Time.
We slide along in pain or too
happy. So much love
for us. All over, so much of
what we need. Can you sing
yourself, your life, your place
on the warm planet earth.
And look at the stones

the hearts, the gentle hum
of meaning. Each thing, life
we have, or love, is meant
for us in a world like this.
Where we may see ourselves
all the time. And suffer
in joy, that our lives
are so familiar.

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Black Art

Poems are bullshit unless they are
teeth or trees or lemons piled
on a step. Or black ladies dying
of men leaving nickel hearts
beating them down. Fuck poems
and they are useful, wd they shoot
come at you, love what you are,
breathe like wrestlers, or shudder
strangely after pissing. We want live
words of the hip world live flesh &
coursing blood. Hearts Brains
Souls splintering fire. We want poems
like fists beating niggers out of Jocks
or dagger poems in the slimy bellies
of the owner-jews. Black poems to
smear on girdlemamma mulatto bitches
whose brains are red jelly stuck
between 'lizabeth taylor’s toes. Stinking
Whores! We want "poems that kill."
Assassin poems, Poems that shoot
guns. Poems that wrestle cops into alleys
and take their weapons leaving them dead
with tongues pulled out and sent to Ireland. Knockoff
poems for dope selling wops or slick halfwhite
politicians Airplane poems, rrrrrrrrrrrrr
rrrrrrrrrrrrrr ... tuhtuhtuhtuhtuhtuhtuh
... rrrrrrrrrrrrr ... Setting fire and death to
whities ass. Look at the Liberal

Spokesman for the jews clutch his throat
& puke himself into eternity ... rrrrrrr
There’s a negroleader pinned to
a bar stool in Sardi’s eyeballs melting
in hot flame Another negroleader
on the steps of the white house one
kneeling between the sheriffs thighs
negotiating coolly for his people.
Agghh ... stumbles across the room ...
Put it on him, poem. Strip him naked
to the world! Another bad poem cracking
steel knuckles in a jewlady's mouth
Poem scream poison gas on beasts in green berets
Clean out the world for virtue and love,
Let there be no love poems written
until love can exist freely and
cleanly. Let Black People understand
that they are the lovers and the sons
of lovers and warriors and sons
of warriors Are poems & poets &
all the loveliness here in the world

We want a black poem. And a
Black World.
Let the world be a Black Poem
And Let All Black People Speak This Poem
Silently
or LOUD

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Poem for HalfWhite College Students

Who are you, listening to me, who are you
listening to yourself? Are you white or
black or does that have anything to do
with it? Can you pop your fingers to no
music, except those wild monkies go on
in your head, can you jerk, to no melody,
except finger poppers get it together
when you turn from starcHECKing to checking
yourself. How do you sound, your words, are they
yours? The ghost you see in the mirror, is it really
you, can you swear you are not an imitation greyboy,
can you look right next to you in that chair, and swear,
that the sister you have your hand on is not really
so full of Elizabeth Taylor, Richard Burton is
coming out of her ears. You may even have to be Richard
with a white shirt and face, and four million negroes
think you cute, you may have to be Elizabeth Taylor, old lady,
if you want to sit up in your crazy spot dreaming about dresses,
and the sway of certain porters' hips. Check yourself, learn who it is
speaking, when you make some ultrasophisticated point, check yourself,
when you find yourself gesturing like Steve McQueen, check it out, ask
in your black heart who it is you are, and is that image black or white,
23 you might be surprised right out the window, whistling dixie on the way in.

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : American Ecstasy

1 "Loss of Life Or Both or Both Hands or Both Eyes . . . . . . . . . . . . The Principal Sum
2 Loss of One Hand and One Foot . . . . . . . . . . . . . . The Principal Sum
3 Loss of One Hand and One Eye or One Foot and One Eye . . . . . . . . . . The Principal Sum
4 Loss of One Hand or One Foot . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . One half The Principal Sum
5 Loss of One Eye . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . One fourth The Principal Sum"

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Are Their Blues Singers In Russia?

1 Spies are found wanting. They wanted
2 in line, on the snow, a love to get high
3 with, and not, the line, a lie, a circling
4 tone of merciless involvement, the pushing, the
5 stomping, an image of green space was what the spy
6 wanted, standing there being shoved and hurled around
7 by his nostrils. They cold nights, after waiting, and
8 worse mornings. When the girls go by, and the lights go off
9 and on, to forget the clocks, and the counting of cobblestones
10 to keep pure cellar static off his back. The li'l darling, holding
11 'is wee wee he gotta pee, a little run down he leg. He pants soiled,
12 the wind freezed that part of his leg that wanted love most

13 We stand for tragic emblems when we return to the pros and cons
14 of the world. The shielding, for nothing. God's contradictions we
speak about as if we knew something, or could feel past what we
describe, and enter the new forms of being. See the door and enter,
get in out of the snow, the watermoccasins, and stuff, mud he
carried around in his mouth, or on the ground up to his ankles,
it'll get stupid or boring. So much, so much, to prepare a proper
place, to not exist in.

The day was a bargain.
A jew on the corner was thinking
of bargains. A dog, out back
did not start yet, howling, puny words,
barking in sorrow, a boat, for the spy's family to ride in
while they watched a sinking image of the world, and the spy's death

in snow they could really dig as beautiful or cool or somewhere else,
or just grimy lace curtains would make them hang against the boat's window
dreaming of God. The disappointment would come
after they opened their mouths, or version last
would come, and coparmies would salute the jewish dog
barking the rhythms of embezzled deserts.

We are all spies for god.

We can get betrayed. We ask for it, we ask
so much. And expect the fire the sun set the horizon
to slide through human speech dancing our future dimensions.
We expect some real shit. We expect to love all the things
somebody runs down to us. We want things, and are locked here, to the earth,
by pussy chains, or money chains, or personal indulgence chains, lies, weak
phone calls, attempts to fly when we know good and fucking well we can't
and even
the nerve to get mad, and walk around pretending we are huge magnets
for the
most beautiful force in the universe. And we are, but not in the image of
wind
spreading the grass, or brown grass dying from a sudden snow, near the
unemploy-
ment office where the spy stands trying to remember just why he wanted to
be the kinda spy he was

HARD FACTS [By Baraka, I. A., 1934-]

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : History On Wheels

1 Civil Rights
2 included Nathan
3 and the rest
4 of them, who got in america
5 big shotting off the agony
6 a class of blue Bloods, hip
7 to the swing and sway of
8 the usa. yeh all the 1st
9 negroes world wide, joined
10 knees, and shuffled heroically
11 into congress, city hall, the
12 anti-p program, and a thousand
13 penetrable traps of cookstove
14 america. a class of exploiters,
15 in black face, collaborators,
16 not puppets, pulling their own
17 strings, and ours too, in the
18 poor people's buck dance, w/o
19 the bux. But see, then later,
20 you talkin afrika, and its unity
21 like a giant fist of iron, smashing
22 "racialism," around the world. But see
23 that fist, any fist, reared back to
strike an enemy, shd strike the real enemy. Not a colorless shadow for black militants in residence, to bloat the pockets and consolidate the power of an international bourgeoisie. In rag time, slanting stick legs, with a pocket full of toasted seaweed, and a bibliography of bitter neocapitalists or bohemian greys, celebrating life in a dark garage w/ all cars banned until the voodoo car appear. The way the rich blackies showed after we marched and built their material base, now niggers are left in the middle of the panafrikan highway, babbling about eternal racism, and divine white supremacy a hundred thousand dollar a year oppression and now the intellectualization, the militant resource of the new class, its historical valorization. Between them, john johnson and elijah, david rockefeller rests his smiling head.

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Das Kapital

Strangling women in the suburban bush they bodies laid around rotting while martinis are drunk the commuters looking for their new yorkers feel a draft & can get even drunker watching the teevee later on the Ford replay. There will be streams of them coming, getting off near where the girls got killed. Two of them strangled by the maniac.
There are maniacs hidden everywhere can't you see? By the dozens and double dozens, maniacs by the carload (tho they are a minority). But they terrorize us uniformly, all over the place we look at the walls of our houses, the garbage cans parked full strewn around our defaulting cities, and we cd get scared. A rat eases past us on his way to a banquet, can you hear the cheers raised through the walls, full of rat humor. Blasts of fire, some woman's son will stumble and dies with a pool of blood around his head. But it wont be the maniac. These old houses crumble, the unemployed stumble by us straining, ashy fingered, harassed. The air is cold winter heaps above us consolidating itself in degrees. We need a aspirin or something, and pull our jackets close. The baldhead man on the television set goes on in a wooden way his unappetizing ignorance can not be stood, or understood. The people turn the channel looking for Good Times and get a negro with a pulldown hat. Flashes of maniac shadows before bed, before you pull down the shade you can see the leaves being blown down the street too dark now to see the writing on them, the dates, and amounts we owe. The streets too will soon be empty, after the church goers go on home having been saved again from the Maniac ... except a closeup of the chief mystic's face rolling down to his hands will send shivers through you, looking for traces of the maniacs life. Even there among the mythophrenics.

What can you do? It's time finally to go to bed. The shadows close around and the room is still. Most of us know there's a maniac loose. Our lives a jumble of frustrations and unfilled capacities. The dead girls, the rats noise, the flashing somber lights, the dead voice on television, was that blood and hair beneath the preacher's fingernails? A few
other clues

we mull them over as we go to sleep, the skeletons of dollarbills, traces of dead used up labor, lead away from the death scene until we remember a quiet fit that everywhere is the death scene. Tomorrow you got to hit it sighs through us like the wind, we got to hit it, like an old song at radio city, working for the yanqui dollarrrr, when we were children, and then we used to think it was not the wind, but the maniac scratching against our windows. Who is the maniac, and why everywhere at the same time ...

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Real Life

Ted, Ted? In the bay at the bottom of the wat er lies the president of the united states, his chappaqui dick, bent around an immigrant in an automobile. Nixon calls from the coast, you thought you’d get away clean, but my vengeance comes from beyond the grave. Nixon slobbers on the phone, wetting the cocaine on the desk he and pat have been snorting since early morning, herb alpert blurring low contradictions in the wings Shadows gather on the windows, then blow twisted into the whole dark which comes now he lights go on in the white house. Ford cracking his knuckles turns off the tv and calls nixon you alright dick, he says, white whistles jag at nixons calm, high and wild, pat’s jaws quivering, green and blues come off the screen and stutter 3-D in the room, sympathetic and wanting to rub them he cant speak rockefeller’s talking ford says the plan, was national
unity, the new money
and the old,
he cant speak, nixon cant, high, and hot, cripple forever upstairs
pat starts to pee on the rug, and roll in it. Her giggles like a vincent
price movie, without popcorn, nixon slobbers, trying to make a point, ford
is saying national unity, as rockefeller grins, his finger, shoving up into
the air, across a thousand miles, at the mad western capitalists and their
southern friends. Yall dont know how, this shit works, he is saying (really)
the commentator, looks over his shoulder, as if he knows that nixon is
watching. Ford whispers numbly, dick, dick, yes,
Mr. president?

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Horatio Alger Uses Scag

Kissinger has made it, yall. He's the secretary
of state, U.S.A. The anglo-snakes have called him
mooing to their side, his bag-time with rocky helped
a lot. His ol lady, was once, they say, rocky's main
squeeze ... intellectually. But Henry, the k, pushes through
his dangerous glasses. His wine smile sloshes back and forth
he's thinking, as he speaks. A fast man on his feet. The subject,
a cold threat to the a-tabs (it makes him feel vaguely nationalistic,
but not in an irresponsible way, him bein a jew and all
ya know ... but they hired him not for his jewishness "grrr ... he sd
what is that", but for his absolute mastery of the art of
bullshitting.
And so, he lays it all out
across the U.N. decks for all
to hear, and be afraid. His freckles, even,
show, so synonymous with america is this
fat priapic mackman
A-rabs, he says, you betta
be cool with that oil & shit
20 & beyond us all, you cdda laugh
21 is the realization that the shadowy figure
22 in the arab getup, is yo man, rocky, makin
23 the whole thing
24 perfect

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : When We'll Worship Jesus

1 We'll worship Jesus
2 When jesus do
3 Somethin
4 When jesus blow up
5 the white house
6 or blast nixon down
7 when jesus turn out congress
8 or bust general motors to
9 yard bird motors
10 jesus we'll worship jesus
11 when jesus get down
12 when jesus get out his yellow lincoln
13 w/the built in cross stain glass
14 window & box w/black peoples
15 enemies we'll worship jesus when
16 he get bad enough to at least scare
17 somebody---cops not afraid
18 of jesus
19 pushers not afraid
20 of jesus, capitalists racists
21 imperialists not afraid
22 of jesus shit they makin money
23 off jesus
24 we'll worship jesus when mao
25 do, when toure does
26 when the cross replaces Nkrumah's
27 star
28 Jesus need to hurt some a our
enemies, then we'll check him
out, all that screaming and hollering
& wallering and moaning talkin' bout
jesus, jesus, in a red
check velvet vine + 8 in. heels
jesus pinky finger
got a goose egg ruby
which actual bleeds
jesus at the apollo
doin' splits and helpin'
nixon trick niggers
jesus w/ his one eyed self
tongue kissing johnny carson
up the behind
jesus need to be busted
jesus need to be thrown down and whipped
till something better happen
jesus aint did nothin' for us
but kept us turned toward the
sky (him and his boy allah
too, need to be checkd
out!)
we'll worship jesus
when he get a boat load of ak-47s
and some dynamite
and blow up abernathy robotin
for gulf
jesus need to be busted
we ain't gonna worship nobody
but niggers gettin' up off
the ground
not gon worship jesus
unless he just a tricked up
nigger somebody named
outside his race
need to worship yo self fo
you worship jesus
need to bust jesus (+ check
out his spooky brother
allah while you heavy
on the case
cause we ain gon worship jesus
we aint gon worship
jesus
we aint gon worship
jesus
not till he do somethin
not till he help us
not till the world get changed
and he ain, jesus ain, he cant change the world
we can change the world
we can struggle against the forces of backwardness, we can
change the world
we can struggle against our selves, our slowness, our connection
with
the oppressor, the very cultural aggression which binds us to
our enemies
as their slaves.
we can change the world
we aint gonna worship jesus cause jesus dont exist
except in song and story except in ritual and dance, except in
slum stained
tears or trillion dollar opulence stretching back in history, the
history
of the oppression of the human mind
we worship the strength in us
we worship our selves
we worship the light in us
we worship the warmth in us
we worship the world
we worship the love in us
we worship our selves
we worship nature
we worship ourselves
we worship the life in us, and science, and knowledge, and
transformation
of the visible world
but we aint gonna worship no jesus
we aint gonna legitimize the witches and devils and spooks and
hobgoblins
the sensuous lies of the rulers to keep us chained to fantasy and
illusion
sing about life, not jesus
sing about revolution, not no jesus
stop singing about jesus,
sing about, creation, our creation, the life of the world and
fantastic
nature how we struggle to transform it, but dont victimize our
selves by
distorting the world
stop moanin about jesus, stop sweatin and crying and stompin
and dyin for jesus
unless thats the name of the army we building to force the land
finally to
change hands. And lets not call that jesus, get a quick
consensus, on that,
lets damn sure not call that black fire muscle
no invisible psychic dungeon
no gentle vision strait jacket, lets call that peoples army, or

wapenduzi or
simba
wachanga, but we not gon call it jesus, and not gon worship
jesus, throw
jesus out yr mind. Build the new world out of reality, and new
vision
we come to find out what there is of the world
to understand what there is here in the world!
to visualize change, and force it.
we worship revolution
How will it go, crumbling earthquake, towering inferno, jugger-
naut, volcano, smashup,
in reality, other than the feverish nearreal fantasy of the capitalist
flunky film hacks
Tho they sense its reality breathing a quake inferno scar on their
throat even snorts of
100% pure cocaine can't cancel the cold cut of impending death
to this society. On all the
screens of America, the joint blows up every hour and a half for
two dollars an fifty cents.
They have taken the niggers out to lunch, for a minute, made us
partners nigger Charlie) or
surrogates (boss nigger) for their horror. But just as superafrikan
mobutu cannot leap
ardskinhat his
way out of responsibility for lumumba's death, nor even with his
incredible billions
rockefeller
cannot even save his pale ho's titties in the crushing weight of
things as they really are.
How will it go, does it reach you, getting up, sitting on the side
of the bed, getting ready to go to work. Hypnotized by the ma-
chine, and the cement floor, the jungle treachery of
trying
to survive with no money in a money world, of making the boss
100,000 for every 200
dollars
you get, and then having his brother get you for the rent, and if
you want to buy the car
you
helped build, your downpayment paid for it, the rest goes to buy
his old lady a foam
rubber
rhinestone set of boobies for special occasions when kissinger
drunkenly fumbles with her blouse, forgetting himself.
If you don't like it, what you gonna do about it. That was the question we asked each other, & still right regularly need to ask. You don't like it? Whatcha gonna do, about it??

The real terror of nature is humanity enraged, the true technicolor spectacle that hollywood cant record. They cant even show you how you look when you go to work, or when you come back.

They cant even show you thinking or demanding the new socialist reality, its the ultimate tidal wave. When all over the planet, men and women, with heat in their hands, demand that society be planned to include the lives and self determination of all the people ever to live. That is the scalding scenario with a cast of just under two billion that they dare not even whisper. Its called, "We Want It All ... The Whole World!"

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : A Poem for Deep Thinkers

1 Skymen coming down out the clouds land
2 and then walking into society try to find out
3 whats happening---"Whats happening," they be saying
4 look at it, where they been, dabbling in mist, appearing & disappearing, now there's a real world breathing---inhaling
5 exhaling concrete & sand, and they want to know what's happening. What's happening is life itself "onward & upward,"
6 the spirals of fireconflict clash of opposing forces, the dialogue of yes and no, showed itself in stabbed children in the hallways of schools, old men strangling bankguards, a hard puertorican inmate's tears
7 exchanging goodbyes in the prison doorway, armies sweeping
wave after wave to contest the ancient rule of the minority. What
draws them down, their blood entangled with
humans,
their memories, perhaps, of the earth, and what they thought it
could be. But blinded by sun, and their own images of things,
rather than things as they actually are, they wobble, they
stumble, sometimes, and people they be cheering alot, cause
they think the skymen dancing, "Yeh ... Yeh ... get on
it.....," people grinning and feeling good cause the
skymen
dancing, and the skymen stumbling, till they get the sun out
eyes, and integrate the inhead movie show, with the
material reality that exists with and without them. There are
tragedies, tho, a buncha skies bought the loopdieloop program
from the elegant babble of the ancient minorities. Which is

where they loopdieloop in the sky right on just
loopdieloop
in fantastic meaningless Curlicues which delight the thin gallery
owners who wave at them on their way to getting stabbed in the
front seats of their silver alfa romeos by lumpen they have gotten
passionate with. And the loopdieloopers go on, sometimes
spelling out complex primitive slogans and shooting symbolic
smoke out their gills in honor of
something
dead. And then they'll make daring dives right down toward the
earth and skag cocaine
money
whiteout and crunch iced into the statue graveyard where Ralph
Ellison sits biting his
banjo
strings retightening his instrument for the millionth time before
playing the star spangled banjo. Or else loopdieloop loopdieloop
up higher and higher and thinner and thinner and
finer
refiner, sugarladdies in the last days of the locust, sucking they
greek lolliepops.
Such intellectuals as we is baby, we need to deal in the real
world, and be be in the real world. We need to use, to use, all
the all the skills all the spills and thrills that we conjure, that we
construct that we lay out and put together, to create life as
bEAUfiful as we thought it could be, as we dreamed it could be,
as we desired it to be, as we knew it could be, before we took
off, before we split for the sky side, not to settle for endless
meaningless circles of celebration of this madness, this madness,
not to settle for this madness this madness madness, these yoyos
yoyos of the ancient minorities. Its all for real, everythings for
real, be for real, song of the skytribe walking the earth, faint
smiles to open roars of joy, meet you on the battlefield they say,

they be humming, hop, then stride, faint smile to roars of open
joy, hey my man, what's happening, meet you on the
battlefield
they say, meet you on the battlefield they say, what i guess needs
to be discussed here
tonight
is what side yall gon be on

POETRY FOR THE ADVANCED [By Baraka, I. A., 1934-]

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Pres Spoke in a Language

1  Pres
2  spoke in a language
3  "of his own." What did he say, between the
4  horn line
5  s, pork pie hat
tenor tilted
pres once was a drummer but gave it up cause other dudes
was getting
the foxes
while he packed his tomtoms
"Ding Dong," pres sd, meaning
like a typewriter, its the end
of this
line. "No Eyes," pres wd say, meaning
I didn't cdn't dig it, and what it was was
lame. Pres
had a language
and a life, like,
all his own,
but in the teeming whole of us he lived
tooting on his sideways horn
translating frankie trumbauer into
Bird's feathers
Tranes sinewy tracks
the slickster walking through the crowd
surviving on a terrifying wit
its the jungle the jungle the jungle
we living in

and cats like pres cd make it because they were clear they, at
least,
had to,
to do anything else.
Save all that comrades, we need it.

REGGAE OR NOT! [By Baraka, I. A., 1934-]
Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Reggae or Not!
A piece to be read with Reggae accompaniment.

1 Inside beyond our craziness is reality. People rushing through life
2 dripping with
3 funk. Inside beyond our craziness and the lies of philistines
4 who never wanted to be anything
5 but Bootsie
6 w/ golden curls
7 and a dress tho they black as tar
8 beyond our inside, beyond wvo, beyond craziness
9 dripping with
10 reality
11 is the funk
12 the real fusion of life and life
13 heart and history
14 color and motion grim what have you’s
15 beat us eat us send us into flight
16 on the bottom-ism on the bottom
17 up under-ism, up under
18 way down-ism way down under-ville
19 feet bottoms, everybody put us down
20 we down
21 how we got down
22 how we got, hot, how we got so black
23 & blue
24 how we cd blow
25 how we cd know
26 how we cd, and did, and is, and bees, how
27 how how, and how how how, and how and why and why why

like big eye nigger motion
heavywt champ
our terror ... AHEEESSSSHHHHHHHHHEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE
our women watched when the crackers cut off our balls
in the grass, they made the little girls watch
stuffed them in our mouths
(this was before they complained about
OPEC, before they complained about baraka being rude
before malcolm set kenneth clark on fire
(and after too ... 
but history
the development of the afroamerican nation
in the black belt south.

from blue slaves
from green africa
from drum past and pyramid hipness
from colors colors all the time, everyday, bright---bright---brightness
red green yellow purple orange wearing niggerssssss AAAAAAHHHHHH
violet violent shiny head shiny shoe knife carryin niggersssssssss
AAAAAAAAAA

dust, cripples staggering
white hats, blood, blood in the cotton
wear the fuck out it
love you baby
drunk motherfucker

preachin in the twilight madness and jesus fuckem
hell all around
white face hell
inside beyond the madness history
beyond the scag, history
beyond the oppression and exploitation
Aheeeeeeeeeee--balls
in the sand
preach!!
baldhead rip off
teach!!
chicken eatin metaphysical
loud talkin chained up motherfuckas
anykinda nigger jet plane flyin ishmael reed lyin nigger
andy young hung like a sign announcing the new policy
get a paycheck pay the madness pay the blood pay the history
beyond the sick ness and racism
history
today's combustion
for the revolutionary future
beyond the madness and cocaine
beyond the male chauvinism and baby actin niggers
who want disco to substitute for their humanity & struggle
And the alligators clappin they hands Garvey, man
yeh, Nat man, alligators in the sunlight
in the day time now
sittin beside us groundin
man, I see it
it no fool I
I no be fool dem tink
no fool I
alligators Marcus
Nat man, they come right up to us
and explain scientific why our shit aint right
why we need to be under dem,
why we need to bend and sway like
dead boy wilkie, downtown with them
no fool I, I no for fool, bee, bee crazy sometime
sometime be out, be way out,
like crazy mother fucka
purple language come out I mouth
ya know,
but Nat man,
Marcus,
alligator
they organize to love us
they take us out ourselves
got whip mout whip eye whip talk
all for fool I but I no be no fool for they
I no go for ghost, like dig, pig, I fuck you up for fun
like a dance
like pussy russo in the joint
want to control the pills
instead the blood drove a shank in his titty
ya punk he scream they take him into solitary
an alligator
he say why you want to separate bozo
((that he inside name for I
bozo, like H.Box Brown say, the muthafucka
upsidedown
he bozo
I---I
all eyes, a we eye, us, like raging black purpleness
as music, as rhythmic sun screams our color lay for them

The nation, he said,
he had been cut,
the nation
does not, he said,
and before he cd get it out
I drove the blade deep down thru
the adam’s apple, severing the jugular

and man, hey, instead a blood
ya know, the racist punk,
all words spill out
all words run on ground like bleach waterbug
all words say no, like lula, say no, say, like lula, no
say, hey, say, no, like lula, trying to kill i i no like clay
say he, words spill out where blood shd be, abstract shit all out
say hey, why you gonna split
139 1979 a calm time compared
140 1979 cool compared to what will be
141 1979 fire in me banked compared
142 up against what will be
143 all I's we, this cant go on
144 this cant go on, all this
145 this craziness, beyond it is us
146 is history, our lives, and
147 the future. Beyond this
148 beyond craziness, beyond capitalism
149 beyond national oppression and racism
150 beyond the subjugation of women
151 disco bandit style beyond
152 lies of the disco bandit
153 beyond lies of the mozart freaks
154 beyond joe papap and papap joe

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155 beyond breznev, and all the little multi-colored breznev clones
156 masquerading as radicals telling persons they revolutionaries
157 beyond all the little latest generation of human failure pettybourgeois
158 explainers of the bullshit, beyond everything but what will last what is
159 real, what the people will make and demand, what they are and have been,
160 there is Self Determination and Revolution
161 There is Revolution and Self Determination
162 there is the fire so broad a rainbow of fire, a world full of fire
163 there is all bullshit for now exploding
164 so ready all bussshit for next be explode
165 all fire so flame rise so for fire be heavy and everywhere now
166 Self Determination
167 & Revolution
(sing)

168 Revolution
169 & Self Determination
170 World, to be, for I and that person
171 and every person, for all I's all we's all they's all all's together be
172 cool now compared to explosion life future
173 when every minute is blow up of everyting stupid always
174 is cool now compared to all exploded jack the ripper rich ass
to people smashed powerful garbage dead forever by our hand
to destroyed dumb systems of exploited pain corrected by annihilation only
forever till the next shit
be in the struggle conscious comrade
be in the struggle righteous friend
its cool now, the nation, the workers mad but shit aint rose
beyond the calmness history and pain
beyond the torture history and future fill each other with flame
its cool now, the alligators talking to us like we cant see what's on they mind
jimmy carter cant talk to you
jesse jackson cant talk to you
bootsie and the funkadelic cant talk to you
Who can talk to you---who can still bullshit you

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who can set you up with lies you aint heard
with unscientific science and metaphysical analysis
alligators in the disguise of the hiptime
alligators from the old alligator pad,
fake communists, sham revolutionaries
they can and do and will till broke head screams
talk to you they can shorenuff anyway bussit the besta
you, but a alligator got bad breaaff smell like a alligator
a alligator eyes is white and bloodshot, full of alligator
images, a alligator brain is fulla alligator thoughts teethy
and slimy and fulla dead half ate animals. a alligator bite
when they talk and they tryin to con you they be bitin and it
hurt so you bash them and they look at you weird you say stop
bitin muthafucka and talk if you goin to i dont eat no alligator
but they make hip pouches to carry my goddam papers in
It's a higher level of bullshit goin down
a much higher level of bullshit
goin down, aint even bullshit, its alligator shit
some sophisticated amphibian feces goin down
up under they bumps and tears, up under they alligator eyes
mostly up under they alligator
lies. a much higher level of bullshit goin down

do you really think Henry Winston was hipper than Rochester and if so why
do you really think Andy Young was hipper than Andy Old
or that Angela Davis was hipper than Beulah or Poncho be with Cisco
or that Alligators got sidekicks hipper than Gabby was with Roy & Dale
Some sidekick muthafuckers some sidekicks, want us to call the nation
sidekickania
got sidekick inside they eyes eat and breathe love bein sidekicks and got
sidekickitis
so much grey stuff hang out they ears droolin eye tears into dirt
come out the closet sidekicks

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its calm now & cool, 1979 a calm time, sidekicks can still get over
ride alligators upriver to trade, the jungle is smokin but coolin
and the sidekick deals get made. Come out the closet sidekick
Roy Rogers retired, Cisco doin reruns
Mantan been canonized by the Sidekick society
And Booker T. been made an official militant on the lower east side

cant tell multinational unity
from side kick-ism-itis might even fight us
but all folk got to dig it for be real
for be hot
for be us
for be life thrown into future
too much pain go down
too much hate
too many people like we, no go for alligator
ghost
we is nation in suffering
we is nation in chains
the latest spears will not even be spears
tho the warcries sound the same
reach out for the comrades reach out for true comrades
reach out for allies reach out for real allies
no fool I this alligator, all I's look for light
we no be fool for alligator, nor the alligator big time friend
We be for heat & fire
We be for genuine war
No be fool for alligator
Self Determination
(sing)
Revolution

We know our friend for fighting
We know our comrade for struggle
no be bullshit only for word noise

no be dry dull stuff but war war war war war
fuck a bourgeois alligator
lyin he tryin to be help
we know our friend for fighting
we see our comrade they struggle
no be fool for alligator
with some new time chauvinistic lie, by, by, by, no fool I
by, no fool all I

dead folks dead pass away
rich shit dead pass away
liars imitating revolution die
pass away
beyond bullshit is history
beyond deadshit is history & pain
niggers riding alligators will get blown away when the alligator do
even in the calmest of times
Self Determination Revolution
(sing)

Revolution Self Determination
We no be fool
for alligator
our comrade hear and understand
To liberate we got kill
To liberate blood must flow
To liberate imperialism gotta go
we for kill racism, we for kill our oppression and every other person
too
alligator bullshit for big time rich folks
he bite yr militance off like sleepy monkey with tail
in the wrong place
its calm now, jojo, story teller, compared to other future time hotting
hotting be back be back be black be black and all other color too
we for win anyway

we for all us win
we in people laughing our victory song
our victory
song go like this

Self Determination
Revolution
Self Determination
Revolution
(sing)

Self Determination
Revolution
Self Determination
Revolution
Socialism Socialism Socialism
DEATH TO ALLIGATOR EATING CAPITALISM
DEATH TO BIG TEETH BLOOD DRIPPING IMPERIALISM
I be black angry communist
I be part of rising black nation
I be together with all fighters who fight imperialism
I be together in a party with warmakers for the people
I be black and african and still contemporary marxist warrior
I be connected to people by blood and history and pain and struggle
We be together as party as one fist and voice
We be I be We, We We, the whole fist and invincible flame
We be a party soon, we know our comrade for struggle
We be war to come we bring war we no go for alligator
we kill his trainer too

Self Determination
Revolution
Self Determination
(sing)
313 Revolution
314 Socialism Socialism Socialism

[Page 185 ]

315 Only Socialism will save
316 the Black Nation
317 Only Socialism
318 will save the Black Nation
319 Only Socialism will save
320 America
321 Only Socialism will save
322 the world!

[Page 187 ]

AM/TRAK [By Baraka, I. A., 1934-]

[Page 189 ]

[Trane]

1 Trane,
2 Trane,
3 History Love Scream Oh
4 Trane, Oh
5  Trane, Oh
6  Scream History Love
7  Trane

1  Begin on by a Philly night club
2  or the basement of a cullut chuhch
3  walk the bars my man for pay
4  honk the night lust of money
5  oh
6  blow---
7  scream history love

8  Rabbit, Cleanhead, Diz
9  Big Maybelle, Trees in the shining night forest
10  Oh
11  blow
12  love, history

13  Alcohol we submit to thee
14  3x's consume our lives
15  our livers quiver under yr poison hits
16  eyes roll back in stupidness

[Page 190 ]

17  The navy, the lord, niggers,
18  the streets
19  all converge a shitty symphony
20  of screams
21  to come
22  dazzled invective
Honk Honk Honk, "I am here to love it". Let me be fire-mystery air feeder beauty"

Oh scream---Miles comes.

Hip band alright sum up life in the slick street part of the world, oh,

If you cd nigger man

Miles wd stand back and negative check oh, he dug him---Trane

But Trane clawed at the limits of cool slandered sanity with his tryin to be born

[Page 191 ]

raging shit Oh blow,
yeh go do it honk, scream

uhuh yeh---history love
blue clipped moments
of intense feeling.
"Trane you blows too long".
Screaming niggers drop out yr solos
Bohemian nights, the "heavyweight champ"
smacked him
in the face
his eyes sagged like a spent
dick, hot vowels escaped the metal clone of his soul
fucking saxophone
tell us shit tell us tell us!

There was nothing left to do but
be where monk cd find him
that crazy
mother fucker
duh duh-duh duh-duh duh
duh duh
duh duh-duh duh-duh duh
duh duh
duh duh-duh duh-duh duh
duh duh
duh

Can you play this shit? (Life asks
Come by and listen

& at the 5 Spot Bach, Mulatto ass Beethoven
& even Duke, who has given America its hip tongue
checked
checked
Trane stood and dug
Crazy monk's shit
Street gospel intellectual mystical survival codes
Intellectual street gospel funk modes
Tink a ling put downs of dumb shit
Pink pink a cool bam groove note air breath
a why I'm here
a why I aint
& who is you - ha - you - ha - you - ha
Monk's shit
Blue Cooper 5 Spot
was the world busting
on piano bass drums & tenor

This was Coltrane's College. A Ph motherfuckin d
sitting at the feet, elbows
& funny grin
Of Master T Sphere
too cool to be a genius
he was instead
Theolonius
with Comrades Shadow
on tubs, lyric Wilbur
who hipped us to electric futures
& the monster with the horn.

From the endless sessions
money lord hovers oer us
capitalism beats our ass
dope & juice wont change it
Trane, blow, oh scream
yeh, anyway.
There then came down in the ugly streets of us
inside the head & tongue
of us
a man
black blower of the now
The vectors from all sources—slavery, renaissance
bop charlie parker,
nigger absolute super-sane screams against reality
course through him
AS SOUND!
"Yes, it says
this is now in you screaming
recognize the truth
recognize reality
& even check me (Trane)
who blows it
Yes it says
Yes &
Yes again Convulsive multi orgasmic
Art
Protest

& finally, brother, you took you were

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(are we gathered to dig this?
electric wind find us finally
on red records of the history of ourselves)

The cadre came together
the inimitable 4 who blew the pulse of then, exact
The flame the confusion the love of
whatever the fuck there was
to love
Yes it says
blow, oh honk-scream (bahhhhhhh---wheeeeee)
(If Don Lee thinks I am imitating him in this poem, 
this is only payback for his imitating me - we 
are brothers, even if he is a backward cultural nationalist 
motherfucker---Hey man only socialism brought by revolution 
can win)

Trane was the spirit of the 60's 
He was Malcolm X in New Super Bop Fire 
Baaahhhhh
Wheeeeeee.... Black Art! ! !

Love 
History 
On The Bar Tops of Philly 
in the Monkish College of *Express* 
in the cool Grottoes of Miles Davis Funnytimery 
Be 
Be 
Be reality 
Be reality alive in motion in flame to change (You Knew It!) 
to change! !
(All you reactionaries listening

Fuck you, Kill you 
get outta here! ! !)

Jimmy Garrison, bass, McCoy Tyner, piano, Captain Marvel Elvin 
on drums, the number itself---the precise saying 
all of it in it afire aflame talking saying being doing meaning 
*Meditations,* 
*Expressions* 
*A Love Supreme* 
(I lay in solitary confinement, July 67 
Tanks rolling thru Newark 
& whistled all I knew of Trane 
my knowledge heartbeat 
& he was *dead*
they said.
And yet last night I played Meditations
& it told me what to do
Live, you crazy mother
 fucker!
Live!
& organize
yr shit
as rightly
burning!

IN THE TRADITION [By Baraka, I. A., 1934-]

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : In the Tradition

(for Black Arthur Blythe)

"Not a White Shadow
But Black People
Will be Victorious ... "

[1]

Blues walk weeps ragtime
Painting slavery
women laid around
working feverishly for slavemaster romeos
as if in ragtime they spill
their origins like chillers (lost chillen
in the streets to be
telephoned to by Huggie
Bear from channel 7, for the White Shadow
gives advice on how to hold our homes
together, tambien tu, Chicago Hermano)
genius bennygoodman headmaster
philanthropist
romeos---
but must coach
cannot shoot---

hey coah-ch
hey coah-ch
trembling fate wrapped in flags
hey coah-ch
you can hug this

while you at it
doah-ch
Women become
goils gals grinning in the face of his
no light
Men become
boys & slimy roosters crowing negros
in love with dressed up pimp stupidity death
hey coah-ch
wanna outlaw the dunk, cannot deal with skyman darrell
or double dippin hip doctors deadly in flight
cannot deal with Magic or Kareem ... hey coah-ch coah-ch
bench yrself in the garbagecan of history o new imperial dog
denying with lying images
our strength & African
funky beauty
nformat the three networks idiot chatter

Arthur Blythe
Says it!
in the tradition

Tradition of Douglass
of David Walker
Garnett
Turner
Tubman

of ragers yeh
ragers
(of Kings, & Counts, & Dukes
of Satchelmouths & SunRa's
of Bessies & Billies & Sassys
& Ma's
Musical screaming
Niggers
yeh
tradition
of Brown Welles
& Brown Sterling
& Brown Clifford
of H Rap & H Box

Black baltimore sister blues antislavery singers
countless funky blind folks
& oneleg country beboppers
bottleneck in the guitarneck dudes
whispering thrashing cakewalking raging
ladies
& gents
getdown folks, elegant as
skywriting
tradition
of DuBois
Baby Dodds & Lovie
Austin, Sojourner
I thought I heard Buddy Bolden
say, you're terrible
you're awful, Lester
why do you want to be
the president of all this
of the blues and slow sideways
horn. tradition of blue presidents
locked up in the brig for wearing zoot suit
army pants. tradition of monks & outside dudes
just before just faster just slowly twilight crazier than europe or its
racist children
bee-doo dee doop bee-doo dee dooo doop (Arthur
tradition
of shooters
& silver fast dribblers
of real fancy motherfuckers
fancy as birds flight, sunward/high
highhigh
sunward
arcs/swoops/spirals
in the tradition
¼ notes
Tell us again about the negro artist & the racial mountain so we will not be negro artists, Mckay Banjoes and Homes In Harlem, Blue Black Boys & Little Richard Wrights, Tradition of For My People Margaret Walker & David Walker & Jr Walker & Walker Smith Sweet Ray Leonard Rockin in Rhythm w/
Musical Dukes,

What is this tradition Basied on, we Blue Black Wards strugglin against a Big White Fog, Africa people, our fingerprints are everywhere on you america, our fingerprints are everywhere, Cesaire told you that, our family strewn around the world has made more parts of that world blue and funky, cooler, flashier, hotter, afro-cuban james brownier a wide panafrican world

Tho we are afro-americans, african americans let the geographic history of our flaming hatchet motion hot ax motion hammer & hatchet

our cotton history our rum & indigo sugar cane history
Yet, in a casual gesture, if its talk you want, we can say

Cesaire, Damas, Depestre, Romain, Guillen

You want Shaka, Askia, (& Roland Snellings too)

Mandingo, Nzinga, you want us to drop

Cleopatra on you or Hannibal

What are you masochists

paper iron chemistry

& smelting

I aint even mentioned

Troussaint or Dessaline

or Robeson or Ngugi

[Page 204 ]

Hah, you bloody & dazed, screaming at me to stop yet,

NO, hah, you think its over, tradition song, tradition

poem, poem for us together, poem for arthur blythe

who told us again, in the tradition

in the

tradition of

life & dying

in the tradition of those klanned & chained

& lynched and shockleyed and naacped and ralph bunched

hah, you rise a little I mention we also the tradition of amos and

andy

hypnotized selling us out vernons and hooks and other nigger
crooks of

gibsons and crouches and other assorted louses of niggers that
turn from
gold to shit proving dialectics muhammad ali style

But just as you rise up to gloat I scream COLTRANE! STEVIE

WONDER!

MALCOLM X!

ALBERT AYLER!

THE BLACK ARTS!
Shit & whistling out of my nkromah, cabral, fanon, sweep---I cry

Fletcher

Henderson, Cane, What Did I Do To Be So Black & Blue, the

most perfect
couplet in the language, I scream Mood Indigo, Black

Bolshevik, KoKo,

Now's the Time, Ark of Bones, Lonely Woman, Ghosts, A Love

Supreme,

Walkin, Straight No Chaser, In the Tradition

of life
& dying

centuries of beautiful

women
crying

In the tradition

of screamed

ape music

coon hollers

shouts
even more profound

than its gorgeous

sound

In the tradition of

all of us, in an unending everywhere at the same time

line

in motion forever

like the hip Chicago poet Amus Mor

like the Art Ensemble

like Miles's Venus DeMilo

& Horace Silver reminding us

& Art Blakey sending us messages

Black Brown & Beige people

& Pharaoh old and new, Blood Brotherhods

all over the planet, land songs land poems

land sculptures and paintings, land niggers want still want
will get land
in the tradition of all of us in the positive aspect
all of our positive selves, cut zora neale & me & a buncha other
folks in half. My brothers and sisters in the tradition. Vincent Smith & Biggers, Color mad dudes, Catlett & White Chas & Wm, BT, Overstreet & the 6os muralists. Jake Lawrence & Aaron Douglass & Ademola

Babatunde Building More Stately Mansions
We are the composers, racists & gunbearers
We are the artists
Dont tell me shit about a tradition of deadness & capitulation
of slavemasters sipping tea in the parlor
while we bleed to death in fields
tradition of cc rider
see what you done done
dont tell me shit about the tradition of slavemasters & henry james I know about it up to my asshole in it
dont tell me shit about bach mozart or even ½ nigger beethoven
get out of europe
come out of europe if you can
cancel on the english depts this is america
north, this is america.
where's yr american music
gwashington won the war
where's yr american culture southernagrarians
academic aryans
penwarrens & wilburs
say something american if you dare
if you can
where's yr american
music
Nigger music?

(Like englishmen talking about great britain stop with tongues lapped on their cravats you put the irish on em. Say shit man, you mean irish irish Literature ... when they say about
they you say nay you mean irish irish literature you mean, for the last century you mean, when you scream say nay, you mean yeats, synge, shaw, wilde, joyce, ocasey, beckett, them is, nay, them is irish, they's irish, irish as the ira)
you mean nigger music? dont hide in europe---"oh thats classical!"
come to this country nigger music?
you better go up in appalachia and get some mountain some coal mining songs, you better go down south in our land & talk to the angloamerican national minority they can fetch up a song or two, country & western could save you from looking like saps before the world otherwise Palante!
Latino, Native American Bomba, Plena, Salsa, Rain dance War dance Magical invective The Latin Tinge Cherokee, Sonny Rollins w/Clifford Brown Diz & Machito, or Mongo SantaMaria Comin Comin World Saxophone Quartet you cannot stand up against, Hell No I Aint Goin To Afghanistan, Leon Thomas million year old pygmies you cannot stand up against, nor Black Arthur tellin you like Blue Turhan Bey, Odessa, Romance can Bloom even here in White Racist Land It can Bloom as Beautiful, though flawed by our oppression it can bloom bloom, in the tradition of revolution
Renaissance
Negritude
Blackness
Negrissmo
Indigisme
sounding niggers
swahili speaking niggers niggers in turbans
& assembly line, turpentine, mighty fine female
blacks, and cooks, truck drivers, coal miners
small farmers, iron steel and hospital workers
in the tradition of us
in the tradition of us
the reality not us the narrow fantasy
in the tradition of african american black people/americ
nigger music's almost all
you got, and you find it
much too hot

in the tradition thank you arthur for playing & saying
reminding us how deep how old how black how sweet how
we is and bees
when we remember
when we are our memory as the projection
of what it is evolving
in struggle
in passion and pain
we become our sweet black
selves

once again,
in the tradition
in the african american tradition open us yet bind us let all that is positive find us we go into the future carrying a world of blackness yet we have been in the world and we have gained all of what there is and was, since the highest expression of the world, is its total & the universal is the entire collection of particulars ours is one particular one tradition of love and suffering truth over lies and now we find ourselves in chains the tradition says plainly to us fight plainly to us fight, that's in it, clearly, we are not meant to be slaves it is a detour we have gone through and about to come out in the tradition of gorgeous africa blackness says to us fight, it's all right, you beautiful as night, the tradition thank you langston/arthur says sing says fight in the tradition, always clarifying, always new and centuries old

Sing!
288  Fight!
289  Sing!
290  Fight!
291  Sing!
292  Fight! &c. &c.
293  Boosheee doooooo doo doooo dee
dooooo
dooollllllllll!
296  DEATH TO THE KLAN!

HEATHENS [By Baraka, I. A., 1934-]

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Heathens
(Freedom Jazz Dance or Dr. Jackle)

1

1  They Ugly
2  on purpose!

2

1  They get high
2  off Air Raids!

3
They are the oldest continuously functioning Serial Killers!

They murder to Explain

They think Humans are food.

They imitate conversation by lying

They are always naked and always dirty the shower & tuxedo don't help

They go to the bathroom to have a religious
They believe everything is better Dead. And that everything alive is their enemy.

Plus Heathens is armed and dangerous.

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Heathens in Evolution

When their brains got large enough They created Hell!

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Heathen Bliss

To be Alive & Ignorant

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Devil Worship

is Heathen Self Respect
Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Civil Rights Bill #666

*The Negro Heathen Enablement Act.*

1 "Essentially, it allows more Negroes to become
2 Heathens."

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Heathen Technology & Media

1 Seek to modernize
2 cannibalism

3 & make it
4 acceptable to

5 the food.

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : 'Christ Was Never in Europe!'

(Kwame Toure)

1 AT LYNCHINGS
2 HEATHENS WEAR
3 WHITE TIE
4 IN FORMAL
5 HOOD & ROBE

6 IN THIS FRENZIED
7 RITUAL
8 THEY RECONFIRM
9 THE SUPERIORITY
Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Heathens Think Fascism is Civilization

1 AND THAT THEY ARE SUPERIOR
2 TO HUMANS & THAT
3 HUMANITY IS METAPHYSICAL

To understand that ...

can you? I mean really
really dig what that means ... It's like monsters roaming
the earth ... who sting to live, who know no better. Who, like
wild animals, might sing, or make a sound some way, that
might pretend, imitate, a human cry, the sweet rationality of
love.

That is the art of it, that it exists and carries with it, so many
complexities, even that craziness, but then aesthetics is con-
ected to the real. The deadliness of that

ugliness, or uncomprehended smoothness. The technology of
predatory creatures who feed on flesh, who shit on the tender
aspirations of human evolution, because they have no concep-
tion of humanity. Except as that natural yelp, which they can
see as somehow, a reflex of what that might be. It took that
kind of vision for them to understand the use of religion in the
changing world. To cloak themselves in the modest trappings
of early christianity, having murdered its prophet for power and
profit.
Wise, Why's, Y's [By Baraka, I. A., 1934-]

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Wise 1

WHYS (Nobody Knows
The Trouble I Seen)
Trad.

1 If you ever find
2 yourself, some where
3 lost and surrounded
4 by enemies
5 who won't let you
6 speak in your own language
7 who destroy your statues
8 & instruments, who ban
9 your omm bomm ba boom
10 then you are in trouble
11 deep trouble
12 they ban your
13 own boom ba boom
14 you in deep deep
15 trouble
16 humph!
 probably take you several hundred years
to get out!

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Wise 2

Billie's Bounce
Charlie Parker

I was of people
caught in deep trouble
like I scribe you
some deep trouble, where
enemies had took us
surrounded us / in they
country
then banned our
omomboom ba boom

the confusion
the sickness

/What vision in the blackness
of queens
of kings
/What vision in the blackness
that head
& heart
of yours
that sweet verse
you made, I still hear
that song, son
of the son's son's son's
son

I still hear that
song,
that cry
cries
screams
life exploded

our world exploding us
transformed to niggers

What vision
in the blackness
your own hand sold you
"I am not a king or queen," your own hand
if you bee of the royal catch
or the tribes soulwarped by the ghoulishness

I still hear those songs and cries
of the sons and sons and daughters and daughters
I still bear that weeping in my heart
that bleeding in my memory

And I am not a king
nor trader in flesh
I was
of the sufferers
I am among those
to be avenged!
Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Wise 3

_Hipnosis_
Grachan Moncur III

1 Son singin
2 fount some words/ Son
3 singin
4 in that other language
5 talkin bout "bay bee, why you leave me"
6 here," talkin bout "up unner de sun cotton in my hand." Son
7 singing, think he bad cause he can speak
8 they language, talkin bout "dark was the night the ocean deep white eyes cut through me"
9 made me weep."

Son singin fount some words. Think he bad. Speak they language.
Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Wise 4

Dewey’s Circle
David Murray

1 No coat has I got
2 no extra chop
3 no soft bed or favor
4 no connection with the slaver

5 dark was the night
6 our eyes had not met
7 I fastened my life to me
8 and tried to find my way

9 talk did I hear
10 of fires and burning
11 and death to the gods

12 on the dirt where I slept
13 such talk
14 warmed me
such talk
lit my way

I has never got nothing but hard times and punishment
Any joy I had I made myself, and the dark woman
who took my hand and led me to myself

I has never got nothing but a head full of blood
my scar, my missing teeth.

I has never got nothing but killer frustration/ yes dark
was the night
cold was the ground

I has never got nothing, and talk
of rebellion
warmed me

Song to me, was the darkness
in which I could stand
my profile melted into the black air
red from the flame of the burning big house

in those crazy dreams I called myself
Coltrane
bathed in a black and red fire
in those crazy moments I called myself
Thelonius
& this was in the 19th century!
Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Y's 18

*Explainin' The Blues* (Ma Rainey)
"Georgia Tom" Dorsey

1 What are
2 these
3 words

4 to
5 tell
6 it

7 all?
8
9 facts
10 acts
11 Do they have
12 their own
13 words?

14 !Exacts!

15 The Scientist in love
16 w/precision
17 but we need
18 this
19 we must have
20 it
21 the exact real
the concrete
what it is

24  
& that whole
is story

Africa
Slave
mind memory
Birth
A land across
the ocean
Blue Water
Green world
Blood
& Stopped Motion

These mismatched slaves
they cooled
readjusted
the black
forever
the white
till the debt's
paid
(for them to
become
as new
as we
so they
become
the overseers)

this world of
limits
twists
& opposing
forces

these elements
of constant
Change

What is yr world
& yr face
yr clock's
confession

Have you slept w/
the constitution
3/5ths of the darkness
spoke to

refer to the records
thereby
dumb romance
it's lie
for a flag's
health
a class
stealth
to cover
its murder
its beatings

As a domestic
bleeding
a near by
tragedy.
We cd go to Dred Scott for testimony
Henry Bibb

We cd ask Linda B or Henry
The Box

We cd be drawn into eternity
w/ David and his Appeal

To speak of all we have feel!

Only reality say Where we will go
It's tethers Its' chains Its' sick pricks
inventing crushings for our lives a decoration
of horror they cd define & understand they cd justify our deaths & torture
they cd be clean & taking a little
taste
As the lightning tried to illuminate Animal life
Their smiles even chill us mad poseur posing as the mad doctor who is the original American Nazi The southern Himmlers & Goebbels, baked in our dying
What the war proposed our entrance as citizens who once had been slaves
This 13, 14 & 15 yr numbers in the
lottery

This Freedman's Bureau
this 40 acres

as grounds for
identical
social
valence
political
economic

(not Sociology & Social Democratic
political
Bohemianism)

Revolution, The question
the answer

What revolution
cd not be
destroyed
bought
or postponed?

What revolution
cd not be
sold out?

All those
in the real
world
The betrayal of Niggers was necessary to welcome Imperialism!

That was its condition The Killing of Nigger Democracy

So Spain it's decorated past The Philippines, Puerto Rico Cuba, the booty

The new era

amidst our sunlight mass laughter emancipation The Paris Commune

The Berlin meeting to divide the Dark Places Colonial Pie
That one day the Heathens wd actually come on the real side - that they wd take our hearts as funny valentines.

That they wd stick our lives & history in the toilet bowl (toxic waste) & claim our past & future.

As the Commune smashed dead

The rehearsals for Buchenwald & Belsen carried out in the American South

Unwilling nigger actors Heavy Minstrels this torture Birth of the
The "rule by naked terror" can not be called Fascism because we are Niggers & that is too famous for the likes of us. Fascism wd come later in Europe (naturally) & be well advertised as an excuse for Israeli imperialism.
Black Mountain Blues
Bessie Smith

1  "The only
2  railroad
3  guaranteed
4  not to break down!"

5  100 years
6  Before
7  The Col-
8  trane
9  The
10  real
11  sub
12  way

13  Ms "Moses" Streamliner
14  John Parker's Darker

15  Sparker
16  at Night
17  No light
18  but a far star
19  North

20  &wayoff
21  Like a whistle or a horn

22  The black night
23  fills
24 our ears

25 We gon' go
26 has already

27 gone

28 "Choo Choo" is the translation
29 in somebody else's

30 Station

31 #

32 Whooooooeee Whooooooeee
33 Whoooooooooo Whoooooooooo Whooooooooo

34 is its real
35 sound

36 from way up under
37 the ground

38 Way
39 Down

40 Whoooooweeee Whoooooeeeeeoooo
41 Whooooooeee Whoooooeeeeeoooo
Thats it real sound Under Ground!

& then sometimes if the night is cold & bright

that whistle cries like all through

that night

that whistle cries & it moans

Whyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyy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In "The Masque of the Red Death" near the end of the ball a deadly stranger appears. Not Vincent Price, some thing with eyes like numbers mouth a siren about to wail Screamed headlines, the dope of the radio. The party goers freeze the Butlers and Maids get their notices they are skeleton walkers, boat feet, Wings, dark countenanced baritones Willowy sopranos; the hall Swept with an actual tide of Red & Black—the White is the silence as the Flag Waves.

Did some one say, "The Renaissance is over?" Or was that the living Dying wind, reality, or the Rags of yr future? The living dying wind adhesive against wet w/ blood top hats souls w/bullet holes. Ex leapers smashed against the bankruptcy of bullsjit & oppression.

Finally we know, half superiorly, all these guests will die of the Plague. The Black Death! The Red Death! The Plague! Horror movie statistical murders.
Dead in old houses & under cars. In chain gang Gulags & share cropper concentration camps.

Most of us wake up in a crumbling plague ridden mansion. Imitation music Imitation laughter Imitation people w/ Imitation Lives- A nation of minstrels and ignorant powerful people plus slave niggers almost as insane as their oppressors!

A ritual of Black & Red Caped Devil Messengers In the shadow of the casement glass

Our glasses, raised in the air, are frozen in a shadow as wet as blood!

It begins to snow outside beyond the dead forest, inside the naked empty grey cities

The snow is spotted w/ blood. A madman's signature
is shown on television.

Disease, now, is continuous!

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Stellar Nilotic (29)

You Gotta Have Freedom
Pharoah Sanders

1 You want to know
2 how I escaped? (There were bright yellow lights now, and red
3 flashes.)

4 Can we talk here? Are we all ex-slaves? (a laughter
5 ruins the dawn silence, and the birds acknowledge us
6 with their rap of flutes).

7 That star, just over the grey green peak (the moonlight
8 acknowledges us and makes us shadows.) Was how I was led,

9 A slender black woman, around 23, put out her hand, turning
10 toward the star. You know how night is, the star was blue and
11 beautiful. Around it music, we drummed through the forests.

12 Their ignorance, that country of "Their" and its united snakes
13 unified in madness, and worship of advantage. You cannot
14 have aristocracy, except you have slaves.
They teach you that.

Yet our going, our breathing, the substance of our lives, was with us chanting against whatever was not cool.

This was always, and remains a foreign land. And we are undoubtedly, the slaves.

There is some music, that shd come on now. With space for human drama, there shd be some memory that leaves you smiling. That is, night and the way/ Her lovely hand, extended. The Star, the star, all night We loved it like ourselves.

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : At The Colonial Y They Are Aesthetically & Culturally Deprived (Y’s Later) (31)

*Maple Leaf Rag*

Scott Joplin
SHARK MONSTER Rockefeller

Codes. Explosion is War.

For Wha? (The Blood)

Profits

of New

Avant disease come to ya'

What was in the bush / yr society

smoked

EATS EATS

its terror

White Beast

alive w/ Harpoons

inside it the bones

of whole nations

Slavery, Concentration

Camps, Plantations

Gas Chambers

The death of Reconstruction was

the death of the dream

the death of the reality

The death of any wd be American

Democracy!

[Page 244 ]

Bloodless "Jaws" whale shark monster

it kills include cultures

now post McCarthy where

is Grapes of Wrath or I Was

A Fugitive or the truth

of itself? Was Sam Spade

a Communist Sympa
thizer? Or Philip Marlowe?

But even that individual cry for straight shot Democracy cd finally find itself banned in darkness while Robotic Horror pornography makes us consumers of masturbation and degenerating values.

An america where the only academy awards go to Ronald Reagan w/ Clarence Pendleton as Ben Vereen. "Boogity Boogity" an Ellison description of Ellison describing. The teeth of imperialism is a chant for the dying things needing to die. Its poison swelling EAT EAT Its cry of terror!

You see (a whispered aside) even its "humanity" (a people of slave holders) was a kind of minstrelsy

An unconvincing Black Face Act.

Now the flicks are a form of Commerce less and less of art Film innovation was revolutionary Eisenstein's Red Montage With that connection, the tech nology & casual populist dream

Equality.
So much popcorn.
The Jews, Italians, Irish, Poles, & c. had first to give up being that
to enlarge the baby slave holder Fat banker fish
to be its evolved "revolutionary"
Sleek sea thing
(Sleek?)
A nigger
in its teeth
The feed of bulging monsters
so creative they invented fascism in the black belt
of democracy
So the Black Face, Dixie Land, thin rag, non-"race,"
Funny hat, Paul Whiteman
stiff seat, noun baked non swing
of the "cool," bebop's cover.
Or for the Shorties & Rodgers
& Bru's & Becks & the green
of our dollar - oh man- to
the "progressive jazz" of glass
adjectives w/ no where to blow.

[Page 246 ]

Until we get fusion & its con
a cool out of new blues
turns a chain to a flexible
rubber unbreakable straw
for yr elevator colored nouveau,

to the gallows garden
of the floating compradors

where their eggs, like body snatcher
pods lay hatching way in the middle
94 of the air.

95 This bend of class
96 to the death of itself
97 & rebirth in fake neon flames.
98 Elvis Presley was the FDR of
99 the 1950's, the philosophy
100 was workable & when the
101 Beatles moved in simply slander
102 them w/belittling Jesus
103 & enlarge the American market.
104 Nigger Music became figure
105 music. Chocolate death
106 Plastic. Instead of rejection-
107 The Huge monster's mouth
108 Him/Her's protein digesting skin

109 To Europe? To The Past?
110 But leave reality to the
111 real & the living

112 By the end of the 19th century

[Page 247]

113 they cd convert the sorrow songs
114 to Barber Shop
115 Quartets.

[Page 248]

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : 'There was Something I Wanted to Tell You.' (33) Why?
African Lullaby
Babenzele Pygmies,
S. Africa

1 Revolutionary War
2 gamed
3 sold
4 out
5 The Tories
6 still in control
7 of the culture

8 English Departments
9 still
10 & the money & "culture"
11 in an "English"
12 accent.

13 The Green Mtn Boys
14 Tom Paine The Bill
15 of Rights

16 tried to cut
17 it

18 But then 19th century
19 Explosion, Free the
20 Slaves, Kill feudal

[Page 249 ]

21 ism, Give rights
22 to the Farmer & Worker

23 the vote to Women
24 But that got blew
25 Hayes-Tilden, Bloody
26 Democrats

27 Traitor
28 Republicans

29 The Ku Klux Klan
30 (A murder Gang!)

31 & that leap, into industrial society
32 democracy they sd
33 Got all but Killed
34 tho murdered
35 many times!

36 Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Mao, Ho
37 Fidel, Nkrumah
38 Martin, Sandino
39 & Malcolm X

40 Have all been
41 betrayed

42 All revolutions bear their own
43 betrayal, & betayers
44 The world is complex

[Page 250]
It is the dying of the life

the quenching of the spark
the greying of the light
the cold whiteness of the recently
full of flaming inspired intelligent
heart! The dead entrail of our
collective traditional
effem. Animal
connections. Metaphysics.
Greed. Anti Science
lives. Ugly in power
and uglying up our only
life.

The rot, the lie, the opposite
will always, if there is ever
that, exist. As life means death
and hot cold. Darkness lights'
closest companion. Its twisted,
& rises as a spiral. It is No &
Yes, and not It for long.

Motion, the beat, tender mind
you humans even made music.
But, our memory anywhere
as humans and beyond, parallel
to everything, is rise is new is
Changed, a glowing peaceful
Musical
World.

What betrays revolution is the need
for revolution. It can not stop in life.
Whoever seeks to freeze the moment is
78 instantly, & for that instant, mad!

79 We are servants of life in upward
80 progressive motion. Fanners
81 of the flame. Resistance is Electric.
82 Fred sd, its measurable on every
83 block.

84 The wd be stoppers of revolution
85 are its fossil fuel

86 Winter comes
87 and Spring

88 We can sometimes
89 hear
90 explosions!

[Page 252]

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : YMCA #35

After The Rain
Trane

[1]

1 We talked all the time
2 as spirits we were
allowed.
& watched the different
primates in their turns
& elegant twists

We caught the rising virus
like a style of neon
murders. A calm
blood washing upward

Between giggles & drunk laughter
wisdom hit the walls
& ceiling, windows
closed if open
opened if
closed

It was never quiet
no familiarities
were permitted

The good guys sat
& watched the door

the wizards crawled
from 14th St to the
outer crust

Colors & rain
The well dressed well spoken
The poverty stricken
The lonely
The important
maniacs
They were singing through their noses, & fingers. Everybody was a headline. A massacre that couldn't be a revealed gorilla.

These were rich people & Heroes. The stink was not stink, the garbage not really garbage. If you could bend concrete & hang like the high tent of drunken rapists. Applause would rock & roll you in your dreams.

Awards could be coughs, hands reaching, poetry of climaxes, proposed. Crippled.

Weasels I knew & sang a song for the airplane underground.

Not to be subjective. A heart full of dashes. No opening through backs. Exploding in their dreams.

It is not enough to witness, you are somewhere anyway & you won't sweat.
Riding through the valley
Sundays coldness a hole
in summer. A red dark ball
pasted over
with notes

But picture The Tempt
Do-walking
clean among black
waves

Picture a blinding whiteness
like Cab Calloway's
shoes

the nigger computers
bluely reporting
ghosts ahead
who are cannibals

We ponder for the Bop-trillionith
time

The Madness
of the Gods
Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : The Turn Around Y36

_The Turn Around_
Hank Mobley

1 Jack Johnson

2 was convicted
3 of White Slavery!
4 He was probably
5 the only person ever
6 convicted in this
7 country
8 of Slavery!

9 -Coyt's Son

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : ('One More Time')

_Humph_
T. Sphere Monk

1 Likewise
2 in all these years
3 I only seen one time
4 Downbeat called somebody
5 a "racist" from the front cover
6 & that was LeRoi Jones. Was
7 the only time.

8 -Likewise
Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Lord Haw Haw (as Pygmy) #37

All Blues
Miles

1 We were here

2 before

3 God

4 We

5 invented

6 Him.

7 Why?

8 That's a good/ god damn
9 question.
Be Bop
Diz

1  OoBlahDee
2  Ooolyacoo
3  Bloomdido
4  OoBopShabam
5  Perdido Klackto-
6  Veestedene
7  Salt Peanuts oroonie
8  McVouty
9  rebop

10 Ornithology
11 BaBa Ree Bopp

12 Ooo Shoobie
13 Doobie

14 & The Sisters
15 Dooie Blah
16 &
17 Dooie Blee

18 a Kuka mop

19 Bee Doop Doop
20 ie Doo
21 pie -Lemon Drop
22 Be Doopie
23 Doop Dop

24 Squirrel
25 in The Glass
26 Enclosure

27 of the essential
28 Transbluesency

29 We dreamt Paradise
30 w/you
31 Naima

32 Savoying
33 Balue Bolivared

34 in black Night
35 Indigo

36 Brownie Red
37 Hollywood Hi Noon
38 Trane Lights

39 Salaam Thunder
40 electricity trademark

41 Yr heart
42 in Repetition

43 de Milos
Monk's Shades
made the tru/man
of a Hairy
Square
symbol
in faded corniness

Gold Electric
Natural Grace
like
Freedom

Horns
of our
Description - Desperatenesses'
Drums

Sharp spectrum Blace
painted hard light

Lush life romance
ancient
trade.

Hideehideehidee hee
ooooohhhhhhhhhhh

Oh Imperial Ghost
who is no
Ghost
& Real
I think of you & the sorrow of gates & absences in your soul America like the dead spaces like ignorance between the stars

The Ape said, "Floogie, Lucy, Baby!"

Human light in your African Eyes.

Travelin Travailing Majestic Life Form
90  Scatting

[Page 262 ]

91  Boogieing

92  Cosmos In

93  Cosmos

94  Rhythm

95  Rapping, capping
96  hand
97  slapping

98  Black Poet

99  Chanting

100  to the Ist fire.

[Page 263 ]

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : So the King Sold the Farmer #39

*Angels & Demons At Play*
Sun Ra
The Ghost

Ghost

Watch out

for the Ghost

Ghost get you

Ghost

Watch out

for the

Ghost

In bitter darkness screams sharpness as smells & Seas black voice

Wails

in the death filled
darkness

Their bodies disease beneath intoxicated floors

A seas shudder afraid its turned
to Blood

The bodies

they will, in death's shill
to Lionel Hampton
Ghost Look out
for the Ghost

Ghost
is have us
chains
is be with
dying

is caught

Sea mad, maniac
drunken
Killing sea

Ghooooooooost

Ghooooooooost

The chains
& dark
dark &
dark, if there was "light"
it meant
Ghooost

Rotting family we
ghost ate
three

[Page 265 ]
A people flattened chained
bathed & degraded
in their own hysterical waste

below
beneath
under neath
deep down
up under

grave cave pit
lower & deeper
weeping miles below
skyscraper gutters

Blue blood hole into which blueness
is the terror, massacre, torture
& original western
holocaust

Slavery

We were slaves

Slaves

Slaves

Slaves
We were Slaves - Slaves - Slaves. They threw our lives a way beneath the violent philosophy of primitive cannibals.

Primitive Violent Steam driven Cannibals

My Brother

[Page 267 ]

Baraka, Imamu Amiri, 1934- : Y The Link Will Not Always Be 'Missing' #40

The Wise One
Trane
Think of Slavery as Educational!

NOTES

1. Back ^ [Note 1

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2. Back ^ [Footnote 1

[1] Both title and epigraph, "A blue fog you can almost see through," are from a Duke Ellington composition, on his 1946 Carnegie Hall LP.

3. Back ^ [Footnote 2 2


4. Back ^ [Footnote 3


5. Back ^ [Footnote 4 3


6. Back ^ [Footnote 5 4


7. Back ^ [Footnote 6

[6] Baraka was born Everett LeRoy Jones; the middle name LeRoi to appear in the fifties.

8. Back ^ [Footnote 7 5


9. Back ^ [Footnote 8 6


10. Back ^ [Footnote 9 7

11. Back ^ [Footnote 10]


13. Back ^ [Footnote 12]


14. Back ^ [Footnote 13]


15. Back ^ [Footnote 14]


16. Back ^ [Footnote 12]

Willie Best was a Negro character actor whose Hollywood name was Sleep'n'eat.

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