### “Any Human to Another”

Countee Cullen

The ills I sorrow at

Not me alone

Like an arrow,

Pierce to the marrow,

Through the fat

And past the bone.

Your grief and mine

Must intertwine

Like sea and river,

Be fused and mingle,

Diverse yet single,

Forever and forever.

Let no man be so proud

And confident,

To think he is allowed

A little tent

Pitched in a meadow

Of sun and shadow

All his little own.

Joy may be shy, unique,

Friendly to a few,

Sorrow never scorned to speak

To any who

Were false or true.

Your every grief

Like a blade

Shining and unsheathed

Must strike me down.

Of bitter aloes wreathed,

My sorrow must be laid

On your head like a crown.

**“If We Must Die”**

Claude McKay

If we must die—let it not be like hogs

Hunted and penned in an inglorious spot,

While round us bark the mad and hungry dogs,

Making their mock at our accursed lot.

If we must die—oh, let us nobly die,

So that our precious blood may not be shed

In vain; then even the monsters we defy

Shall be constrained to honor us though dead!

Oh, Kinsmen! We must meet the common foe;

Though far outnumbered, let us show us brave,

And for their thousand blows deal one deathblow!

What though before us lies the open grave?

Like men we’ll face the murderous, cowardly pack,

Pressed to the wall, dying, but fighting back!

 ”**Dream Variations”**

Langston Hughes

To fling my arms wide

In some place of the sun,

To whirl and to dance

Til the white day is done.

Then rest at cool evening

Beneath a tall tree

While night comes on gently,

Dark like me –

That is my dream!

To fling my arms wide

In the face of the sun,

Dance! Whirl! Whirl!

Til the quick day is done.

Rest at pale evening…

A tall, slim tree…

Night coming tenderly

Black like me.

**“I Too”**

Langston Hughes

I, too, sing America.

I am the darker brother.

They send me to eat in the kitchen

When company comes,

But I laugh,

And eat well,

And grow strong.

Tomorrow,

I’ll be at the table

When company comes.

Nobody’ll dare

Say to me,

“Eat in the kitchen,”

Then.

Besides,

They’ll see how beautiful I am

And be ashamed—

I, too, am America.

**“Harlem”**

Langston Hughes

What happens to a dream deferred?

      Does it dry up

      like a raisin in the sun?

      Or fester like a sore—

      And then run?

      Does it stink like rotten meat?

      Or crust and sugar over—

      like a syrupy sweet?

      Maybe it just sags

      like a heavy load.

      *Or does it explode?*

**“The Negro Speaks of Rivers”**

Langston Hughes

I’ve known rivers:

I’ve known rivers ancient as the world and older than the flow of human blood in human veins.

My soul has grown deep like the rivers.

I bathed in the Euphrates when dawns were young.

I built my hut near the Congo and it lulled me to sleep.

I looked upon the Nile and raised the pyramids above it.

I heard the singing of the Mississippi when Abe Lincoln went down to New Orleans, and I’ve seen its muddy bosom turn all golden in the sunset.

I’ve known rivers:

Ancient, dusky rivers.

My soul has grown deep like the rivers.