

BLACK TRUTH

Tonight my black woman,
I have brought you to my room
And to bed we go, but wait!
Now that you have removed your dress,
Your girdle, stockings and bra, your gold chain
Around your neck, allow me!
I take off her false eyelashes,
I bathe her face of that false colour
And when she was bare of all make-up
There before me her honest beauty opened
A rare orchid.
I loved her over and over....
It was as though we traversed a continent of new meaning
I shall say no more.

My black woman,
You lay there and memories of a distant land
Come up to me in a flood of pride
Thick shadows rising from the heat of your body.
I see multitudes of beasts and men on their hunts,
And trees glowing silently, the wind rushing in heavy stream
Loud with messages of your heart, haunting tom-toms
Reverberating in the eden of your breasts.
Women and girls are gathered together here

/ And there

And there around fires, around squares, around circles
Like necklaces charming a neck.
Here, singing of love and there where flaming
Red devils tremble the darkness,
Their eyes bulge with tears -
A new bride has lost her warrior;
A child's voice is stilled in birth;
An elder has gone into the drum
Climbing down the Phallic throne
In tales of gods and tribal majesty of the land
Where God himself pronounced earth in the word of man,
His own image in these faces that chart earliest rivers.
Eyes reflect from their depths
Suggestions of dreams undreamt.
Listen to their voices, psalms in the deaf octave of snails
Gathering in the forest of your hair!

Night has fashioned itself from your womb
Black woman, taking to it your warmth,
And when you least expected the sleep broke,
Your dreams dissolved with the mist
That greeted your mornings.
Waves of foam unsettled your teeth,
The song turned blood between your lips

As your sons were snatched from your arms
Like storm-ripped coco-palms
Leaving wide-open wounds in the secret breasts of the earth.
Woman, I take to myself the elysium of your black sleep
My seed will emanate the ancestral womb
To thrive in the sunshine of your nakedness,
My weeping is for this beauteous reality
Embalmed like cinnamon under the mother-bark,
Here before me, you black woman, black truth.

LeRoy Clarke

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