

CROSS-OVER AMERICA'S LYRICAL SONNETS (4 poems)

TRIBUTE TO MICHELE AND BARACK OBAMA:
WWMY

**God-signed, ebony-etched, sun-loved lady,
Deeply dark and lovely King Solomon lover,
More-delightful-than-New-Testament wine
and public presence blessing,
Lady from a line worth thousands of priest-held pens
penning and passing pages thru the centuries,
Presenting us with statured style,
Gifting us with grace-filled class,**

**You, uniquely you, flower of Sharon,
Beloved lily among thorns of the valley,
Your elegantly curving long, strong petals
Along joy-lined, defined, penetrating eyes
focus and stretch ever upward and away from ugly voices
which wail yet fail to peel and pronounce you downward;**

**Your smile, nonplussed, unperturbed, illuminates
the royally loyal lover's eyes of your courtly gentle man;
He, foreseen to be sachet of myrrh, cluster of henna,
A woods-rooted, mountain-framed, refreshing apple tree
among thousands of fruitless lesser trees,
And a light-footed gazelle, out of reach of serpents' tongues-
With you at his side - springing, hill, sky and scripture bound,
Healing, freedom-seeking, integrity, and brilliance bound.**

**Because of all this and more, with deepest gratitude to you
now compelled to stand aside and yield
Your seats of honor to beauty-blotting thorns
and blight-bitten trees:
To you, our forever First Lady and kingly President,
we take our knees.**

CROSS-OVER AMERICA'S LYRICAL SONNETS (4 poems)

TIMELY DANCE TIME SONNET IN THREE|FOURTEEN TIME (for Harryette Mullen)

PROLOGUE

Soon, she'd be finding time to read the *Time to Dance Times*;
soon was no longer too late, soon means the time isn't yet past.
It'll indeed be different than the time when she was three,
eyes deafened by dying knees dancing with partnering trees.

Then was a rotten non-morning time as eyes, and bodies, waited
for

laying down

to the end of time

which in the end never came, blessedly, nor did time to throw down
nor time to take off, to launch prematurely. No. The time to fly flew.

Soon, in this morning-extended-to-nighttime time, she'd be given time
to dance un-noosed towards life-giving light with a bleeding bird heart;
given timely time for flying feet to perform a real-time whole soul dance,
to honor, celebrate the passing of wounded knees, echoing through time.

STORY

Cuban-heeled poetry in motion, set in 4-D time,
set in 3-D space, weighted and committed legs,
partnering other music-driven percussive legs, in
four-four time, rueda time, Latinx footing time.

With times and spaces, she fills labyrinthian places
while her "he" time-starts or restarts each on-their-mark,
get-ready moment of glow and go.

Hips lead, stretching, settling, pendulum swinging,
marking time, drawing lines in non-white, colored spaces,
culture-fying four-cornered places even as her poems, music,
and lines rise up, seize hold, subside, find homes. Feet follow,
step over and over thru keyed sets of beating hearts.

She defies the end time back-throwing her to a colorless
off-rhythmed canvas, holds position, remains 3-D and fully framed.

EPILOGUE

Green apple time will be winter time,
Tawny dreams time will be summer time,

Because in summer time there are many very untimely fires
Time after time. Last time she watched the summer time pass
She wore a watch and timed it.

During that time in her life, for the first time, she knew why

The Times Square bell marked each year's closing time.
She called friends of color to tell her bell connections story,

Remembered it had been a fiery minute since they'd talked.
They drank a lot, firewater, back in that time. This time, no, instead,

After dancing & losing track of time, including Old Man time,
They borrowed pens, & stole time to write the story down on napkins,

In ink that would not fade like old-time newspapers,
So that it be readable, up close, for you who will take, or give, the time.

CROSS-OVER AMERICA'S LYRICAL SONNETS (4 poems)

PROTEST PO'TEST PROPS POTS PIT PT PI PIC PICK PICKN PICNIC

Moderately flat, chatty, and compromising jingles do picnicing,
Decry racism, sexism, isms of any or all kinds, homophobia,
Nuclear weapons, petro pipelines, bad leaders and gun violence,
While the color orange prevails, slighting no one, politically
And correctly guiding every-day folks around muddy holes
And away from edges that might divide, decorating a pyramid
Of people on the top of which guarded flat-voiced speakers
Speak of the long-ago justice-whisperers takin' us to the streets,
Old school, 50-years-ago, America-the-opposite-of-great streets,
When many more than one, two, a few days were needed to get
Even one point across, when matching t-shirts were a future
Privilege as were rays of sunshine and lightly fiddled songs,
When non-casual commitment to causes, sentenced to history,
Was knee and back-breaking, black and blue making, life-taking.

Then was not when Tees half-heartedly, 5th-handedly recalled
"Takin' it to the streets" proclamations of peace and freedoms,
Translated today in white-speak of all colored sizes, provided
By biased venders urging us to buy the "commemorating" Tees
Stating all lives matter, indeed, no need for fear, let's walk
Together, talk together, lean in together to casually overhear
While under-hearing veteran voices of elderd young-hearts:
Both the few broken-bodied 50-years-later iron-spirited ones,
Still mourning yet surviving the dead King Jr., the good King Jr.,
And the many time-weakened waning warrior ones who'd been
Too late to many battles, positioned elsewhere safe from danger
By choice or circumstance, in non-change-making spaces, distant
Witnesses to urgencies then when, unlike now, voice-powered
Marching meant sacrificing selves to raise justice from the dead.

In our blocked off streets today, the drums, trumpet songs,
Bodies lacking time for rest or play by the reflecting pool,
And pointed, focused calls to battle are terribly missing among
The upbeat mingling marchers unafraid to bring their babies
To this togetherness live-streaming en masse mass movement,
A black-brown-bland-white photo-shopped poster-board image
Un-bordered by uniformed barriers set up to test commitments.
Missing in the details is deadly purpose; in its place are superficial
Wandering pleasantries, parading troops of selfies, and lined up
Lines of officially orange & matching designated tees stretching
From Monument to Memorial, warmed by the sun, not anger-fire.

Absent anger-fired don't-play bodies and missing deadly purpose
Dooms those of us lulled into dressing down in color-prepped Tees
To a soul-killing, dust-covered, future-forgotten corner of history.

CROSS-OVER AMERICA'S LYRICAL SONNETS (4 poems)

FROM THE ROOMS OF BROKEN CHILDREN

Rooms of us broken children,
Walls of silencing stones,
Rooms of our broken voices,
Spirits, lives, and bones:
Your closets, classrooms, cabins,
Courtrooms and aborting rooms,
Offices, dorm rooms, motel rooms,
Garages and prison cell rooms,
Attics, basements, bathrooms,
Containing child persons, muted
and alone with unanswered fear-born questions
echoing room to room:
What made mothers mad enough to murder?
Would fathers've killed us, for real,
If we'd been bold, And told
a trusted someone how they'd hurt us,
in our cores?
Was it true we be nothin' more
than worthless shits or whores?
Kindred unvoiced questions
bounced off bathroom walls in schools,
Where we, hyper-vigilant and unbolded children,
holding ourselves hostages,
keeping ourselves alone and mental miles apart
From the others,
ever ready for unspeakables,
sat down carefully in stalls,
wincing at the taunting walls which read:
"Spics, niggers, whores, and scummy slime,
you know'll do IT anytime
for a nickel or a dime, or a quarter overtime."
The unwritten WHAT IF question haunted us:
What if, God forbid, we'd done the awful IT
for nothin', unawares?
Were we damned to a hell much worse
than the one we already knew?
We dared not ask; we'd exit,
One by one
(no room for two-by-twos),
away from garaged suicides, closeted mutilations,
one room and one step
at a time, unbreaking,
escaping to the safe spaces
of our unwalled streets.