the POETRIE gallerie

All materials must be accompanied by a stamped, self - addressed envelope. Address all correspondence to The Editor, DAWN Magazine, 628 N. Eutaw St., Baltimore, Md. 21203.

It Was Something You Said

(I can see it Mama)
Childhood died today
and your
steel-eyed warning
rings louder and louder
in my fears
of youth long
since retired by conscious
conspiracy
and the ambiguities
of time
On the knee of a prophet
lessons of life
and love
were learned
You said that the freedom
of age is
not worth the
pain of maturity
if the soul is not whole
(Mama I can feel it)

William O'Banner
Baltimore, Md.

Nomen Community

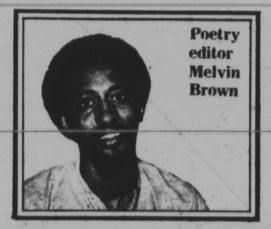
nomen community
full of women, children
and parasites
(pimps, pushers and punks)
tears were shed regularly
for Malcolm, Bobby Seale
for George & Johnathan Jackson
for her sons scarred from
a battle yet to be fought
her mouth was tight with fury
insults were hurled
sorry you're not qualified
sorry you're qualified
but we're not hiring
sorry you're qualified but not
enough experience
sorry you're over qualified
sorry spit from the enemies mouth
entangled in pure
teardrops racing down
amber brown cheeks
her fist clenched and
she sang a song to herself
" . . and didn't it rain, Oh my
Lord didn't it rain . . ."
she told a story to her children
about Angola and South Africa
and how victory was almost near
and she took their hands and
made them
chant uhuru sassa, uhuru sassa
until they fell asleep
at the end of the starless night
she wrote a letter to the man she
loved
their consummation was her
strength
and she felt peace within
tomorrow she would spit back

Claudia Simpson
Oakland, Calif.

Black Poetry Dies...

how do i begin
should i start at the surface
scratch my way in
should i lie & speak of roses
growing
by the trashcans in my backyard
or should i cry ova a
slanted body/dirty/drunk/dead
on subway steps
i am Black poet
or am i am poet
who bees Black sometimes i think
not
Black Poetry does . . .
hit u like bricks rainin thru
windows
Kaufman & Baraka hammer nails
into my brain buildin bridges
between half-thoughts
shaking me alive w/ spirits/
rhythms
forming dark continents w/ in
My heroes ride no white horses
they come rapped in verses like
fresh lemons piled on a stair
Black Poetry does . . .
hurt me/cuts my face in
splintering puzzle pieces
leaves bleeding nerves
dangling/dancing in salty winds
Black Poetry does . . .
parade naked standzas inviting
me to go back
to the beginning
re-read the lemon verses
Rogers is poet BLK/Haki is poet
BLK
Marley is poet BLK
they pull open eyes w/ phrases
making critics white
shake/rattle/& roll away from
it/us

Gloria Green
Baltimore, Md.



Poetry editor Melvin Brown

Sister

sister, i've loved you wrong
as people love the crippled, the
scarred
i've forgiven you as "we" must
forgave you the roach that walked
you to school
the pro'keds for all seasons &
the pissy cloud that lived in your
hallway.
i hung out in my rebellious moods
and swore i understood
cuz i was taught to "understand
your kind of blackness"
the crude language and hostile
ways
excused the house key dangling
on a string
around the dirty neck
and the fact you'd never heard of
badminton
or read *Animal Farm*
so now it's your turn
to forgive our imaginary lives
in Negro bliss
to forgive my having known rose
bushes and pink trim
cotillions and working doorbells.

Sauda B. Halima
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Friends

Have raven eyes
Wear thin smiles
Breathe bottled gas
Twitch daggered hips

Offer cancerous kisses
Love discussions of deceit
Always willing to help you hurt
Can make the Devil cry

Touch with leprosy hands
Drink the blood of tender hearts
Become sicken by others' success
Live in damp, dark, and smelly
places

Friends arrive early
They leave too late

Helen Coleman
Phila., Pa.

Aretha

aretha
lusty jukebox queen of rhythm and
blues
passionate, harmonious aretha
one soft step of heaven drowning
in her own tears
sing baby
sing the blues back into the
mainstream
sing till the cows come home
scream baby
you own the melody
sing for the choir boys and
lawrence welk and the ghost of
j.c. penny
sing for the masses
sing for the young valentinos and
the indians and the team that
won the superbowl
sing for the judges and the pirates
moan baby
while they grab at your legs and
plead
sing for all you're worth
don't let them know they frighten
you
they'll spot the flaws in your
flawless style
so sing aretha
sing till the cows come home
sing for all you're worth
and when they doubt that you're
the very best
and ask you to sing new songs
learn to dance instead

Donald Mosley
Los Angeles, Calif.

Parking

There is something
Sensuous
About soft
Piano sounds
And the full
Moon
Over laughing
Crickets
On a car radio
Turned
Down
Real
Low
Windows up
Lights out
She reaches for . . .
He reaches
Out
And
Under
A steamy
Curtain
Reaching back
They
Bring
Sweet
Sighs
And
Giggles.

Terry Edmonds
Baltimore, Md.

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stops torment of itchy skin
Anti-itch formula soothes irritation and promotes healing
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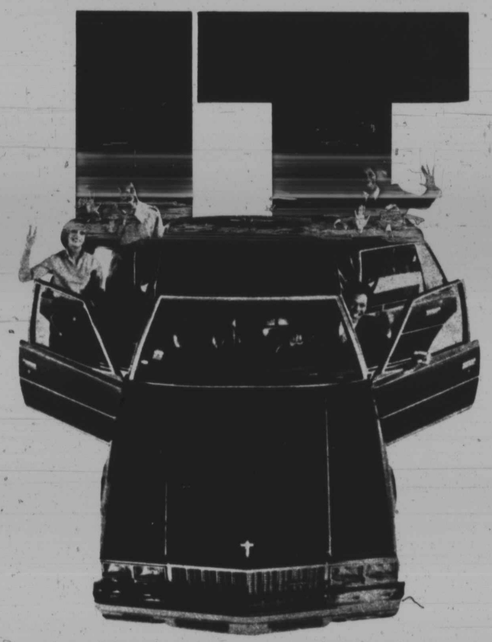
POOL IT



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