
Foot Notes on Equality

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I.

In the days when the sky crushed to the trees to the ground
 And hope hung suspended from the branches
 Strangled by the passion of the times
 We moved beneath the heavens
 Our backs doubled over
 By unfinished fields yet to be tended
 The land nourished us with her strength
 The strength of our pain
 The pain of our sorrow
 The sorrow of our bondage

II.

Under the pale whiteness of the foreign sky
 Africa's rivers still flowed in our souls
 And our roots sank into the bitter ground
 Dawn and sunset merged
 The years fled one after another
 The old songs lost their meaning
 Our folk tales their values
 And the spirits of the ancestors
 no longer dwelled within us
 In the Southern concentration camps
 Our lives ground raw, bleeding
 Between the barbs of cotton and tobacco fields
 -----waiting-----
 Our tired hands cried out for deliverance
 For some it was in song
 across the river
 For others at night on foot
 But Freedom came slow of foot
 hard of heart and begrudgingly
 It stank of garbage piles
 welfare rolls
 unemployment
 rat droppings
 broken plaster
 Hunger in the children's stomachs
 The booming of Segregation
de facto, de jure
 And always the promises of our forefathers and enslavers,

“We hold these truths
to be self evident that all men
are created equal.”