

BRONZE WOMAN

Written by Cécile Nobrega



Find me a place
in the sun
in the sea
on a rock
near an Isle
in the Caribbee:
There I will set her,
Honoured, Free!

Free
to be kissed and petted by the wind;
Free
to be washed with the brine of sweet and bitter memoirs
Sin:
Free
to be stubborn and steadfast as night,
Dark is her Destiny
Wrong her right.

Woman of Bronze!
Symbol of Slavery

Free
Strength
sweat and toil,
who can foil
your quest
for best
to give your child?

One night a woman
says the Book,
went to Him late,
late in the gloomy darkness
of the night;
Went to Him, the Light,
for places for her sons
the left, the right
to sit beside Him.
Chide her not!
Mother instinct is the same
today
as then
for evermore
however mild,
she seeks the betterment
of her child.

Bronze Woman!
You were no different
When you laid with massa boss,
Free
or
forced
you knew there was no loss
of favours
food:
Food for the black and hungry brood,
Mulato-Eurasian child money
subsidised economy,
guaranteed
a step away
from want and need:
a step away
from toil and sweat
the heat of day:
Pray
Feel no hurt

with those who talk
of illegitimacy
and illiteracy,
Social stigmas – Language Craft;
Feel proud
that you have done your part:

Stained your skirt
with water-mark
waist deep
paddy beds
cane fields
to keep
stinted stomachs
hungry mouth
salt and rice
such sacrifice
as those passed on many know of
Death!

Consumptive death
Malarial death,
visited troolie huts
clean earthen floor
the same as
Overseer, Manager
before
promotion
to driver
extortion
child labour.
All this you bore,
Feel hurt no more.

Feel Joy
with those who served the mine,
today your sons and daughters shine
like the bright gold
you bartered for,
in great professions,
Music, Medicine, Law.

White Man's purse
has no curse
his seed
no need:

but Men
poor Men
they run away
after the night
the day
is done
they're gone
through need
disown their seed
then you are left alone
Bronze Woman
father-mother
Caribbean Woman
To play a dual role.

Stalwart woman-man
With the sun in your bones
and the bloods in your veins;
strength in your heart
and love in your limbs,
Your buxom breasts
hang down
like juicy brown mangoes
in the mouth of your child,
Your eyes are determined
Yet gentle and mild,
Who can help but set you
Bronze Woman
above!
Who can help but cherish
This monument of Love.....

Then find me a place
in the sun
in the sea
on a rock
Near an Isle
In the Caribbee:
There I will set her
Bronze Woman
Free
Honoured for shaping
Our Destiny.