

Bleaching

On the bus riding toward work and bread
ol' nigger lady she sayin' to fresh white uniform
 negro young nurse
yu nurse yu nurse withered black eyes
lookin' at young embarrassed black eyes

Ol' small mammy wif manger face
knowin' young breasted nurse is all negro
so child delight happy for white short skirted
delicious thighed ebony nurse

Shriveled up bandana head of wet nurse slave youth
talkin' talkin' talkin' proud to freedom's
rollin' bed dark child

Rollin' bed dark child goin' to white Ben Casey
in white marbled corridors in white stoned hospital
young dark baby real shamed fraid white klu klux klaner
will see mammy lady talkin' talkin' talkin'
and never take young nurse black belly to bed
my belly's not black says young frightened white eyes

Oh lord where's bessie smith lead belly paul robeson
medgar evers tractor crushed white minister odetta
hanging silent bodies swinging from quiet southern olive trees
mississippi swamps miriam makeba africa

This conversation what they live for this conversation what
they die for.

-- Dave Rasey

Omaha, Nebraska

Situation

a problem or a rose,
which would you take?

Direction

the picture window --
one step from the blackboard.

Premise

we are always falling.
the earth is a
horizontal waterfall.

Answers

cakes on my table
covered with dust.
i'm afraid to eat.

-- Douglas Blazek