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I Can

Lacking inspiration,
or any kinda
motivation:

I run.

Hide.

Till I can't see m'self
on the,
inside.

Outside:

I'm a mess.

A loner,
social stress.

School hates me,
it breaks me,
takes me

On a quest:

No regrets.

So I live it.

Scary,
coming home.

Seeing my muther:

Mary,

lyin' at 'er toes.

She's got 'er woes.

Like, a million of 'em.
Billion of 'em.

But she don't know . . .

An' she'll pack my lunch,
with all that
Tenda, love an' care.
An' when I leave for the day,
she'll just sit there:
pullin' at 'er hair.

It's grayed,
frayed:
ripped at the seams.
Daddy's been beatin' at
the girl of 'is dreams.

School again,
just great.
Just another day.
Walk up the entrance,
through the doors:
school leaves me wantin'
nothin' more.

I can teach myself:
math, read, an' write.
All dis knowledge
ain't goin' straight to ma head.

I can live by m'self,
but mama says I gotta stay in doors.
She don't like the fact,
I guess

that I'm livin' with da poor.

I can do it
I can do it I can do it Icandoit ICANDOIT
. . . But do I want to?

Everything I've ever known
is through drunken lies
by Jack and Greygoose.
He leads by the bottle,
I can remember 'im slumpin' over to me, one night.
His breath alone made me shiver, man.

But I held my breath.
Stood strong,
Possibly dribbled
in my rippling jeans
and fought for who I was-*am*:

A black boy.
Who wants to change the way his name is said.
Spelt.
Felt.
On the tongue; let it roll so good.
Let it slide.
Melt.
Let it feel so good to say:
Hi.
Hello.
How do you do?
I'm okay,
But, boy, how are you?

It would be great,
Hell, it would be fine.

To walk into a restaurant
Where white people dine,
and get service with a smile.

Am I asking a lot?

I

Think

Not.

To my drunken old man
Who beats his cook/maid/lover to shame,
When it's race beaten into you,
Who is to blame?

The darks? The pales? The all in-betweens?
I'm not even sure,
If I even understand what I mean . . .

All that I'm saying is:
I'll all up for the change.
I want my pops to stop reachin'
for that bottle, close in his range.

I want my mom to just smile,
mean it, say: Have a nice day!
I want school to be fun,
not just a place that I stay.

I want to be equal,
and I know what to say:
I'll start at my school,

I'll start: today!
I'll spread the word,
the word my father quit,
and when I get tired,
I can count on my . . .