

for daring to lay  
its hand upon you.  
I could drown all raindrops  
for beating so much  
on your skin.  
I could harness all space  
that envelops every step  
that you take.  
I could burn the time  
that caresses you  
as you live.

### *The Law*

Smoldering huts.  
Towering city against the sky.  
Lifeless.  
America on the move.  
No green.  
Make our country beautiful!  
Black silence.  
Central Park in the spring.  
Wailing wind.  
Comical hit on Broadway.  
Barbecued flesh.  
"Pass the gravy."  
Life passes on.

### *Brief Thought before Dawn*

The sun has not risen yet  
But the day has begun.  
Many times this back will bend  
Before this day is done.  
"Stoop labor."

### *The Shoe Shine*

Mister, how'sa 'bout a shine?  
Gee, Mister, only ten cents  
'sa all,  
Bes' shine all o' New O'leans  
Das fer shore, Mister.  
Ain't no nigger  
Shine black like dat befo'.  
Lawdy, boss, a whol' quarter  
'Tank you, I'se shore tanks yo', boss.  
I shore tanks yo', boss.  
That's right, boss,  
I sure thank you.  
You and all your lily-white brothers.  
You don't see it, boss,  
But your damn vanity  
Is putting me through school.  
Someday you'll know  
But you won't like it  
Because things are going to change.  
So let me say it once more.  
I shore tanks yo', boss.

### *What Is*

There is no truth,  
just words.  
There is no love,  
just lovers.  
There is no hell,  
just life.  
There is no death,  
just peace.

*Suppression*

In death, so still  
 Unnoticed  
 This thing  
 I, annoyed:  
 The buzzing of freedom  
 Flight of happiness.

Hasty trial  
 No defense  
 No jury.  
 "Guilty one  
 Stand up  
 Hear your fate.

Death.  
 Now.  
 It cannot wait."  
 This hand  
 Mine.  
 Crushing blow  
 The last flutter

Then  
*down, down, down*  
 The fall.

Hooray!  
 It  
 has paid.

This hand  
 Raised  
 The victor  
 The all-powerful.  
 Who among the weak  
 Will dare the hand  
 That justice metes?

A-a-ah, peace  
 Golden peace  
 Empty golden peace

Blasphemous peace  
 Foundation strong  
 Carcasses

Those that disagreed.  
 There rot the wings.

It dared be free  
 Dared be happy  
 While I slept.  
 It dared intrude  
 Disturb my slumber  
 It had to die:  
 The fly.

*Existence*

Grin, fight, kick, joke —  
 It's the only way to fly.  
 Smile, stab, pat, strike  
 Before he looks my way.  
 Cry, stick, tear, steal —  
 The means are justified.  
 Crush, rise, heel crack  
 It's grown too big  
 And it must die.

How else could be successful  
 A person such as I?

*The Jewel*

A jewel was mine.  
 I lost it in the  
 Slimy, filthy gutters of neglect.

Now I wander  
 Aimlessly, searching.

Finding it, I vow  
 To make it brighter  
 Than all others.