

Joseph Powel

A Hymn For Sister Maya

The epitome of eloquence,
The embodiment of elegance;
Queen--
Mother Africa descended
In all her glorious splendor.
Her voice,
Once silent long ago,
Now springs forth
Like the thunder
Of a thousand rainstorms
And just as nourishing;
Or,
Like the still small voice
Of a gentle angel,
Bearing glad tidings
Of great joy.
Her beauty
Knows no equal;
Her words
Are like fine silk,
Smooth to the touch,
Pleasing to the skin;

Or,
A double-edged sword
Piercing bone and marrow,
For she can't help
But bring forth truth,
The truth.
It is her gift to us--
Her calling,
Her life's blood,
Her duty
As one raised up from the wilderness,
Not as a reed swayed by the wind,

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But a prophetess of the highest order.

She is
That heaven we find in a wildflower,
Our mirror to nature;
But not only that.

She is
The storefront preacher;
The street rapper;
The social worker;
That favorite teacher.

She is
Mother, daughter;
Sister, lover;
Friend;
Our fielder of dreams
And conveyer of nightmares.

She is
The cry of Rachel
Weeping for her children
And refusing to be comforted.

She is
The song of the virgin Mary
In praise to her God.
The world is brighter
Because she has shone her light
In our dark places.

Her candle
Will one day
Blow out,
But the flame
That she has ignited
Will burn on,
Eternal,
For that is
What flames do.