

They jes lay there open  
in her lap short stump  
like fingas curved ova  
the callused grey-white palms

his ass go when Time come

gir'—and she can't talk plain 'count  
of her lip—gir' I whip  
any bitch that got two  
legs won't think on it twice

Make yo hand in a fis'

She ain't heard and her hands  
is meaty, deep veined wid  
red brown lines a little  
lighter than her skin her  
nails bite down past the quick.

Don't no man jes beat on  
me but time I whip my  
nigga ass don't care who  
right who wrong that's the time  
he stop bein my man

what he do you  
nonya

*(the long lip puffed and black)*

how much he take  
nonya

*(I seed this in a dream)*

## Boston / George Buggs

Downtown, citizens design destruction.  
Black Bostonians bend,  
bear the burden of being far from home.  
White Boston fears the future.

White Boston fears its own, fears love,  
living, yet loves building fear  
of black faces,  
who live, in their former homes.  
Who live where architectural beauty  
has long since been detained in  
the vacuous heritage of Boston's fame.

Beauty  
has fallen away from this place.  
Mortar once was spiritual.  
Brick was flesh of constructed fortune  
for O'Reillys and O'Rourkes.  
Thought, communicated, was phone.  
There were no wrong numbers one could call.  
Infant dreams curled in sleep,  
in children's sleep,  
coursed in playtime thru their veins,  
in vain, in vain.  
Fathers and mothers loved each other.  
Each would rise. Each would come and go  
out the exits of the other's living.

Brogue  
suited sidewalk supervisors  
come to the sites of demolition holding  
blueprints of constructed tears,  
outlines of false concern.  
Can recount the names of initial  
occupants, addresses, designs of places  
they now own.  
Can sign receipts for their victims  
who live, in abjection, away from thrones.  
Can go to their suburbs of cash and crowns.  
Can, if they want, be alone  
and left alone to grand glittering balls  
or restricted quiet zones.

In Roxbury this scene:  
They are there. Can go nowhere.  
Good black women.  
Good black men bearing beauty

in baskets of dusky denim, cotton shirts,  
monotonous underwear.  
Too-mature children—little girls, little boys  
know dark joys and little else  
or little more—  
play at playing and do not play,  
grow hard, go mean.  
Now it seems the good have gone  
or stay, invisible, indoors  
or watch from waiting windows  
for the rumbling wrecker's crane.  
Come for the final shattering,  
the final destruction of their names,  
the destruction of dangerous halls  
where anger plays its solemn games.

The craned hate hies to destroy,  
strives to dismember, fragmentize,  
dreams of dark denizens.  
Rises, an ungainly Brontosaurus,  
anachronistic, yet there  
to destroy illusions and dreams  
it cannot discern nor claim.

**Boston, 5:00 a.m.—11/74 /  
Etheridge Knight**

Awake! For Mornings  
Are the same as Nights.  
The troops goosestep  
Through the sleeping streets.

**The Missionaries / Samuel Allen**

Look, the hotel!  
Was it arson?

Excitedly, my partner said  
We should hurry on to the next mission.