**Léopold Sédar Senghor**

[***Black Woman***](https://allpoetry.com/poem/8594637-Black-Woman-by-Leopold-Sedhar-Senghor)

Naked woman, black woman  
  
Clothed with your colour which is life,  
with your form which is beauty!  
  
In your shadow I have grown up; the  
gentleness of your hands was laid over my eyes.  
  
And now, high up on the sun-baked  
pass, at the heart of summer, at the heart of noon,  
I come upon you, my Promised Land,  
And your beauty strikes me to the heart  
like the flash of an eagle.  
  
Naked woman, dark woman  
  
Firm-fleshed ripe fruit, sombre raptures  
of black wine, mouth making lyrical my mouth  
Savannah stretching to clear horizons,  
savannah shuddering beneath the East Wind's  
eager caresses  
  
Carved tom-tom, taut tom-tom, muttering  
under the Conqueror's fingers  
  
Your solemn contralto voice is the  
spiritual song of the Beloved.  
  
Naked woman, dark woman  
  
Oil that no breath ruffles, calm oil on the  
athlete's flanks, on the flanks of the Princes of Mali  
Gazelle limbed in Paradise, pearls are stars on the  
night of your skin  
  
Delights of the mind, the glinting of red  
gold against your watered skin  
  
Under the shadow of your hair, my care  
is lightened by the neighbouring suns of your eyes.  
  
Naked woman, black woman,  
I sing your beauty that passes, the form  
that I fix in the Eternal,  
  
Before jealous fate turn you to ashes to  
feed the roots of life.

**Aimé Césaire**

***Notebook of a Return to the Native Land***

At the end of daybreak...

Beat it, I said to him, you cop, you lousy pig, beat it,

I detest the flunkies of order and the cockchafers of hope.

Beat it, evil grigri, you bedbug of a petty monk. Then I turned

toward paradises lost for him and his kin, calmer than the face

of a woman telling lies, and there, rocked by the flux of a

never exhausted thought I nourished the wind, I unlaced the

monsters and heard rise, from the other side of disaster, a

river of turtledoves and savanna clover which I carry forever

in my depths height-deep as the twentieth floor of the most

arrogant houses and as a guard against the putrefying force

of crepuscular surroundings, surveyed night and day by a cursed

venereal sun.

At the end of daybreak burgeoning with frail coves, the hungry

Antilles, the Antilles pitted with smallpox, the Antilles dyn-

amited by alcohol, stranded in the mud of this bay, in the dust

of this town sinisterly stranded.

At the end of daybreak, the extreme, deceptive desolate eschar

on the wound of the waters; the martyrs who do not bear witness;

the flowers of blood that fade and scatter in the empty wind

like the screeches of babbling parrots; an aged life mendacious-

ly smiling, its lips opened by vacated agonies; an aged poverty

rotting under the sun, silently; an aged silence bursting with

tepid pustules,

the awful futility of our raison d'être.

At the end of daybreak, on this very fragile earth thickness

exceeded in a humiliating way by its grandiose future—the vol-

canoes will explode, the naked water will bear away the ripe

sun stains and nothing will be left but a tepid bubbling pecked

at by sea birds—the beach of dreams and the insane awakening.

At the end of daybreak, this town sprawled-flat, toppled from

its common sense, inert, winded under its geometric weight of

an eternally renewed cross, indocile to its fate, mute, vexed

no matter what, incapable of growing with the juice of this

earth, self-conscious, clipped, reduced, in breach of fauna

and flora.