

POET'S CORNER

Only A Friend Can Betray You

By Kamau Khalfani

I was born into this world all alone, from the time of my birth until I was grown.
 But at the tender age of ten I committed a sin, I went out into the world and I made a friend.
 We became close and struck like glue, but I didn't know that only a friend can betray you.
 We grew together like grapes on a vine, whatever I had was his and his world was mine.
 But as we got older and the world grew colder, my meek little friend became so much bolder.
 We went separate ways, trotted across the globe, and by some coincidence met at the crossroads.
 Now I had a lover and a life that was fun, he had a rough time, and women...none.
 So I helped him, supported him, in his corner I stayed too, which is where I learned life's greatest lesson, only a friend can betray you.

No Place At The Dinner Table

By Natalie D. Lambert, Sista' Girlfriend, Inc.

America is my family, but there is no place for me at the dinnertable.
 Like the fabled stepchild I am cast to do the dirty and there are no rewards for me.
 I have to step outside myself to escape the reality and to see myself and be somebody else just to FEEL free.
 Who am I? America
 Surely not what you expected me to be a child of the ghetto— who has still succeeded.
 Who am I? America
 Your conscious should be guilty with shame...
 You raped, robbed and stole my culture you cannot speak my name.
 Who am I? America.
 Am I coloured, Negro, BLACK, Afro-American, African-American or just plain nigggggggga—
 Tell me America — am I still in this family or NOT?

FOLLOW "THE LEADER"

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max to the revival, a full house, each person holding a burning candle, each flame representing the peace of that same Holy Spirit, sent high-octane prayers toward heaven, as a

strong black man, and priest, begged us to take that light out, from the parish and into our African-American community at-large. Makes good sense, since our community is in such dire need of peace. Besides, we need our strength in order to fight the true enemy, who, using racist bottom-dwellers living on earth, attacks us most viciously at the precise moment he thinks we're making progress, as we are now.

Just over a week later, I made some remarks in a public forum to which I'd been invited, on a matter of grave importance to that progress. The next day, Armageddon began.

Perhaps, and soon, I may tell you that story. It's a tale of a ruthless oligarchy of planters, and the parasitic, self-styled aristocrats who feed off it, then look arrogantly down their evil proboscis at the working-class. It's about psychological and spiritual dehumanization among the slaves on that plantation while perverting images and giving comfort to racists far beyond slave row. Like that old woman, they carry the vomitus of hate, and need exorcism as they eagerly hand their souls to Satan, worshipping at the altar of the almighty dollar.

Planters do not plant, they own. They own plantations, and slaves. Slaves break their backs planting while the planters get rich. But, in St. John's Gospel (15: 14-15), The

AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY IN OUR NATIONAL PARKS

By Gwen Walker

At the Boston African-American National Historical site the saga of Blacks in the struggle for independence and citizenship is presented. The park focuses on the political, social and educational aspects of Black Life in Boston. Special features in the park are: the African American Meeting House; the oldest Black Church in the United States; and the Phillips School; integrated in 1855.



GWEN WALKER

Washington D.C. has several sites that reflect African-American history. Washington is dedicated to the legacy of Mary McLeod Bethune, who was an educator, presidential advisor, college founder, and human rights activist. A statue of her is in Lincoln Park on Washington's Capital Hill.

In Washington's Anacostia neighborhood the focus is on Frederick Douglass, an editor, orator, statesman and diplomat. The site was Douglass home from 1877 until his death in 1895 called "Cedar Hill." This site is a 21-room mansion, overlooking the nations capital from atop the Anacostia encampment. Ironically, the house was originally owned by a slave holding land developer; while the area surrounding the house was subdivided as a white-only neighborhood, Douglas became one of the city's first "blockbreakers."

The boyhood home of Martin L. King is preserved in Sweet Auburn, Georgia, another southern neighborhood still rich in history and African American culture.

Other parks or historical sites are:

- Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site-Alabama
- George Washington Carver National Historic Site-Missouri
- Fort Scott National Historic Site - Kansas
- Fort Larned National Historic Site - Kansas
- Fort Davis National Historic Site - Texas
- Fort Harrison - unit of Richmond National Battlefield - Richmond Virginia
- The Chalmette Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historic Park in Louisiana

Find out more at the National Park Service in Washington or the West Las Vegas Library.

Leadersays, "You are my Friends..." and "I no longer speak of you as slaves..." and if Father Clements is right, a disciple is a friend, as well as a follower. Like him, I am bound, as a disciple, not to hate the planter. How I feel about the plantation is another matter. And, be it war against the Archdiocese, or against the planters, these battles must be engaged, but with faith, in The Leader.

But, how best do we fight? Some of the Apostles carried swords, and not for decoration.

Anger, unlike hate, is not a sin, especially when, like ours, it is righteous. We must channel that anger so it serves not our ruination but our liberation. But like the enslaved Hebrews who, once they truly turned to The Almighty were liberated, according to the Old Testament, Our Leader, angry at what He sees, will do no less for us who are living the New. But He's waiting for us. Be not so quick to turn the other cheek, but instead, be stronger than the

enemy. Don't break your neck running to church to pray for him, rather, understand with compassion his demonic behavior, for The Just One has love for both sides, nevertheless He will give us justice. Meanwhile, we must fight these battles, as does the enemy, with any and all weapons at our command, while attempting to command some more.

Further, we must strike with faith, then God will answer our call. But he cannot hear our cry for liberation over the agonizing din of fratricide in our communities, the screams of our battered women and children, or even understand it through the slurred speech and crocodile tears of disillusioned warriors trying to escape.

Faith is a given for the true disciple, for he KNOWS: his Leader is the answer, to racism and the liberation struggle, and that He is alive, well, and living...in Las Vegas. But, I must say that for a few too-short days in early February he was 'gettin' down with his pal, George Clements, and some lucky folks at St. James Parish. Yes, my home-boys in Chitown, Father Clements did make it to St. James, and Illinois' loss was Nevada's gain

As for us, who pray to The Almighty for justice in this day, do we really believe that Our Master will make a way where there appears to be none? If so, then let's follow The Leader! Beyond that, just keep the faith, for Deus provident...God will provide!



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