

## Sonia Sanchez

(1934-)

**T**O ANSWER THE QUESTION of how I write, we must look also to why I write. I write to tell the truth about the Black condition as I see it. Therefore I write to offer a Black woman's view of the world. How I tell the truth is part of the truth itself. I've always believed that the truth concealed or clouded is a partial lie. So when I decide to tell the truth about an event/happening, it must be clear and understandable for those who need to understand the lie/lies being told. What I learned in deciding "how" to write was simply that most folks tend to think that you're lying or jiving them if you have to spice things up just to get a point across. I decided along with a number of other Black poets to tell the truth in poetry by using the language, dialect, idioms, of the folks we believed our audience to be.

### Homecoming

i have been a  
way so long  
once after college  
i returned tourist  
style to catch all  
the niggers killing  
themselves with  
three-for-oners

with  
needles  
that cd  
not support  
their stutters.  
now woman  
i have returned  
leaving behind me  
all those hide and  
seek faces peeling  
with freudian dreams.  
this is for real.  
black  
niggers  
my beauty.  
baby.  
i have learned it  
ain't like they say  
in the newspapers.

### Malcolm

do not speak to me of martyrdom  
of men who die to be remembered  
on some parish day.  
i don't believe in dying  
thouh i too shall die  
and violets like castanets  
will echo me.

yet this man  
this dreamer,  
thick-lipped with words  
will never speak again  
and in each winter  
when the cold air cracks

with frost, i'll breathe  
 his breath and mourn  
 my gun-filled nights.  
 he was the sun that tagged  
 the western sky and  
 melted tiger-scholars  
 while they searched for stripes.  
 he said, "fuck you white  
 man. we have been  
 curled too long. nothing  
 is sacred now. not your  
 white faces nor any  
 land that separates  
 until some voices  
 squat with spasms."

do not speak to me of living.  
 life is obscene with crowds  
 of white on black.  
 death is my pulse.  
 what might have been  
 is not for him/or me  
 but what could have been  
 floods the womb until i drown.

### blk / rhetoric

*(for Killebrew Keeby, Icewater,  
 Baker, Gary Adams and  
 Omar Shabazz)*

who's gonna make all  
 that beautiful blk / rhetoric  
 mean something.

like  
 i mean  
 who's gonna take

the words

blk / is / beautiful  
 and make more of it  
 than blk / capitalism.

u dig?

i mean

like who's gonna  
 take all the young / long / haired  
 natural / brothers and sisters  
 and let them

grow till

all that is

impt is them

selves

moving in straight /  
 revolutionary / lines

toward the enemy

( and we know who that is )

like. man.

who's gonna give our young  
 blk / people new heroes

(instead of catch / phrases)

(instead of cad / ill / acs)

(instead of pimps)

(instead of wite / whores)

(instead of drugs)

(instead of new dances)

(instead of chit / ter / lings)

(instead of a 35¢ bottle of ripple)

(instead of quick / fucks in the hall / way

of wite / america's mind)

like. this. is an S O S

me. calling.....

calling.....

some / one

pleasereplysoon.

### A Poem for My Father

how sad it must be  
to love so many women  
to need so many black  
perfumed bodies weeping  
underneath you.

when i remember all those nights  
i filled my mind with  
long wars between short  
sighted trojans & greeks  
while you slapped some  
wide hips about in  
your pvt dungeon,  
when i remember your  
deformity i want to  
do something about your  
makeshift manhood.  
i guess

that is why  
on meeting your sixth  
wife, i cross myself  
with her confessionals.

### Poem No. 3

i gather up  
each sound  
you left behind  
and stretch them  
on our bed.

each nite  
i breathe you  
and become high.

### Towhomitmayconcern

watch out fo the full moon of sonia  
shinin down on ya.  
git yo/self fattened up man  
you gon be doing battle with me  
ima gonna stake you out  
grind you down  
leave greasy spots all over yo/soul  
till you bone dry. man.  
you gon know you done been touched by me  
this time.  
ima gonna tattoo me on you fo ever  
leave my creases all inside yo creases  
i done warned ya boy  
watch out  
for the full moon of sonia  
shinin down on ya.