**Harlem Dancer**

**By Claude McKay**

Applauding youths laughed with young prostitutes   
And watched her perfect, half-clothed body sway;   
Her voice was like the sound of blended flutes   
Blown by black players upon a picnic day.   
She sang and danced on gracefully and calm,   
The light gauze hanging loose about her form;   
To me she seemed a proudly-swaying palm   
Grown lovelier for passing through a storm.   
Upon her swarthy neck black shiny curls   
Luxuriant fell; and tossing coins in praise,   
The wine-flushed, bold-eyed boys, and even the girls,   
Devoured her shape with eager, passionate gaze;   
But looking at her falsely-smiling face,   
I knew her self was not in that strange place.