

Rachel E. Vernon



## The Exile's Return<sup>1</sup>

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Three African Boys  
All dead.  
One of Cold  
One of madness  
And one  
Of excessive  
Anglicization.

I have  
Returned home  
To exile.

I have the  
Form of Africa  
The tongue  
Of England.

No-one  
Here  
Or there  
Speaks  
The language  
Of my heart.

I  
Am alone.  
An alien  
In my homeland.

And yet  
I wonder

Did you  
My Christ  
Speak  
Your father's  
Tongue  
On returning  
Home?

Or did  
You sit  
As I  
An exile  
In the Courts of Heaven  
Knowing the ways of men

But a  
Stranger  
To angels?



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1. In 1745 the Reverend Thomas Thompson took three boys from the Gold Coast of Africa to Islington in England to receive an English education under the auspices of the society for the propagation of the Gospel. Thomas Corboro died from consumption, William Cudjo went mad, but Phillip Quaque survived and after his ordination he went back home with his English wife Catherine, where he realized he had forgotten his native tongue.