

*Edgar O. Lake*

## LITTLE RICHARD'S SECOND COMING



In the Dust Bowl street-lights  
Hope rendered us in off-white  
Sepia lines of starchy linens sprout  
a forest of feathered hats  
    And, "Jesus-Jesus" hand-fans  
Laced and lacy, converts wait  
Despite the burning shoes

Across from Hamilton Court  
where St. Nicholas snakes like a river  
and snips at Seventh Ave at 'Hund'er'd  
N' Sis-teenth Street: comes Li'l Richard  
    "Hallelujah, Bless His Name!"  
'Lived long enough to see it! -  
from Hollywood to Harlem, 's-right!

Up the ramped stairs, outside  
The platform 'bout-to-take-your-breath  
These women been here, done took-off  
from White Women's Long Island homes  
    "He Won't Forsake Us, Nor...."  
All around the 25<sup>th</sup> Precinct, blue sedans wailing  
Niggers' knives cutting every lottery-winner

Crowded like the Hindenberg, the fans rotate  
The perfume's choking like a gas chamber  
'Bout to ask God's children for their prayers,  
- and one tithing-tenth - for the off'ring  
    "Sinner! - Saved by Grace!"  
Sweet Daddy - Bishop McCullough's nearby

trombones, blaring: draped in white, the ratings game

But, the Faithful wait for the King of Pommade, Tuti  
The Monarch of Mascara, pre-Pink Floyd, Tuti-Fruti  
He's turned his back on Hollywood – protesting!  
He's the King of Rock-and-Roll – will take it back –  
    “This Little Light of Mine – Say What?”  
The tired Daughters of the Carolinas toss their curls  
Little Richard's seen the fork in the road – and took it  
  
Praise his name!

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