

*paula obè*

## MEN IN ROBES



i've spent many lonely nights crying  
many lonely nights in tears  
trouble like water under the bridge  
telling me things that I don't wish to know  
the caroni river overflows  
and traffic is piled up for hours  
just like these emotions inside my head  
just like these emotions inside my head

the church says don't do this it's wrong  
the church says don't do that it's wrong  
and the church says don't you dare  
love your own reflection  
men in robes telling me what to do  
men in robes telling me who to love  
and how do I choose  
living in a Christian world  
when it's you that keeps me sane  
when night falls  
you that keeps me safe  
when all else fails

if I shatter this reflection they'll win  
tired of writing loves notes in the fire  
tired of reading ashes in the dawn  
i hear hypocrisy has a new name in town  
tell me something father  
what is it you tell those little boys  
do you tell them to climb  
the staircase to your heaven

do you make them say  
10 hail mary's full of grace  
so that they can be saved  
since you're the closest thing  
to God.

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*Calabash: A Journal of Caribbean Arts and Letters* is an international literary journal dedicated to publishing works encompassing, but not limited to, the Anglophone, Francophone, Hispanophone and Dutch-speaking Caribbean. The Journal is especially dedicated to presenting the arts and letters of those communities that have long been under-represented within the creative discourse of the region, among them: Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles, Maroon societies, and the Asian and Amerindian societies of the region. Calabash has a strong visual arts component.

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