

Enith Tate



Keeping dreams

we landed on your shores
not to steal, scorn, rape
we did not arrive sardine-tight, tear full
dehydrated cargoes
on fishing boats
though some came by treacherous
means, their deeds spilling trickery

we arrived
without shackles
but we've tripped over death
ruthless politicians just the same

we did not come in greed
rather with hands
opened wide to a dream
we came because we were as good
as any to carry the baton
or win the gold

we listened when told
we were deserving
back home black was never mentioned
there was no reason for distinction

we came because we were paid for,
whereas there are no payment for blood
we might have given you our hidden pains
but that was to make us better

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Calabash

pride strong it was never our desire
to stand in your lines
or suck the life
from your over-burdened system

we became a punch line for comedians
about our many jobs held
hands always clasped tight in prayer
because our children, our children_s children
our parents, grandparents, a whole village
was hinging on our survival

we dream of telling them
you treated us well
that you afforded us a room
with a view of the future

we did not come to ravish
but sometimes we fall in love
and love demands all there is
giving everything it has

