

Nadine Rogers

FOR THE GIRLS

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Who will stop our daughters from eating the food of misery
Who will tell them that locked closets may imprison living souls
That if a man touches a girl-child, she did not make him do it?

Who will show our daughters that fatherless children suffer quietly

Who will tell them that being on their feet means staying off their backs
That if a man whispers sweet nothings, he may have nothing else to offer?

Who will save our daughters from the rage of their tormented womenfolk
Who will tell them that a mother's love sometimes speaks through angry lips
That if a man decides your destiny, you teach your girl-child not to dream?

Who will show our daughters to pry their boy children away from their skirts
Who will tell them that raising a boy means letting him learn to be a man
That if your son thinks you are his wife, he will think his wife is his mother?

Who will stop our daughters from grabbing for the scraps left under the table

Who will tell them that their greatest power is not hinged between their thighs

That if a man leaves dirt on his marriage bed, then let him sleep on the floor?

Who will stop our daughters from storing their children's future in unsafe places

Who will tell them that the sins of the fathers will keep coming back

That if a child is left holding the pain, generations will be cursed by the legacy?

Calabash

A JOURNAL OF CARIBBEAN ARTS AND LETTERS

Volume 3, Number 2 / Fall-Winter 2005

Information about this work:

FOR THE GIRLS

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Start Page: 86

URL: <http://www.nyu.edu/calabash/vol3no2/0302086.pdf>

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