

# MIXED COMPANY

## Three Early Jamaican Plays

*Maskarade* by Sylvia Wynter

*Bedward* by Louis Marriott

*The Creatures* by Cicely Waite-Smith

In 2012 Jamaica celebrates the 50th anniversary of Independence. *Mixed Company* is a collection of three of the finest early Jamaican theatrical works, written for the most part before the dawn of Independence.

Written in 1954 (*The Creatures* by Cicely Waite-Smith), 1960 (*Bedward* by Louis Marriott) and 1970 (*Maskarade* by Sylvia Wynter), the plays are examples of works conceived with a Jamaican audience in mind, a Jamaican audience conscious of the melting pot in which it lived. Each offers a unique perspective on the spirit of a people who held on to traditional beliefs and customs in the face of colonial opprobrium as the populace struggled to gain its political, social and cultural independence.

**'The greatest mind the Caribbean has ever produced'**

C.L.R. James on Sylvia Wynter

**'Eclectic yet sure-footed, playwright Louis Marriott is a keen student of his society and his plays are uncompromising in their integrity'**

Basil Dawkins

**'It [*The Creatures*] was about real Jamaican people... At last, the Jamaican labourer is permitted to be a dignified person on a Jamaican stage'**

Daily Gleaner critique, March 1943

Cover image: Costume design by Ellen Cairns for Pitchie Patchie in Talawa Theatre Company's 1993 production of *Maskarade* directed by Yvonne Brewster.



# MIXED COMPANY

## Three Early Jamaican Plays

**Edited by Yvonne Brewster**



*Maskarade* by Sylvia Wynter

*Bedward* by Louis Marriott

*The Creatures* by Cicely Waite-Smith

O B  
PR  
9265.7  
.M59  
2012

# **MIXED COMPANY: THREE EARLY JAMAICAN PLAYS**

Edited by Yvonne Brewster

*Dedicated to Buddy Pouyatt*

***Maskarade* by Sylvia Wynter**

***Bedward* by Louis Marriott**

***The Creatures* by Cicely Waite-Smith**



OBERON BOOKS  
LONDON

[WWW.OBERONBOOKS.COM](http://WWW.OBERONBOOKS.COM)

This collection first published in 2012 by Oberon Books Ltd  
521 Caledonian Road, London N7 9RH  
Tel: +44 (0) 20 7607 3637 / Fax: +44 (0) 20 7607 3629  
e-mail: info@oberonbooks.com  
[www.oberonbooks.com](http://www.oberonbooks.com)

This collection and editorial copyright © Yvonne Brewster 2012  
*Maskarade* copyright © Sylvia Wynter 1970, *Bedward* and  
Introduction to the play copyright © Louis Marriott 1960, 2012,  
*The Creatures* copyright © Cicely Waite-Smith 1954. Introduction  
to *The Creatures* copyright © Honor Ford-Smith 2012.

Sylvia Wynter, Louis Marriott and Cicely Waite-Smith are hereby identified as authors of these plays in accordance with section 77 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. The authors have asserted their moral rights.

All rights whatsoever in these plays are strictly reserved and application for performance etc. should be made before commencement of rehearsal to Oberon Books Ltd. No performance may be given unless a licence has been obtained, and no alterations may be made in the title or the text of the play without the authors' prior written consent.

You may not copy, store, distribute, transmit, reproduce or otherwise make available this publication (or any part of it) in any form, or binding or by any means (print, electronic, digital, optical, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise), without the prior written permission of the publisher. Any person who does any unauthorized act in relation to this publication may be liable to criminal prosecution and civil claims for damages.

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

PB ISBN: 978-1-84943-216-0

EPUB ISBN: 978-1-84943-634-2

Cover image: Costume design by Ellen Cairns for Pitchie Patchie in Talawa Theatre Company's 1993 production of *Maskarade* directed by Yvonne Brewster.

Printed and bound by CPI Group (UK) Ltd, Croydon, CR0 4YY.

Visit [www.oberonbooks.com](http://www.oberonbooks.com) to read more about all our books and to buy them. You will also find features, author interviews and news of any author events, and you can sign up for e-newsletters so that you're always first to hear about our new releases.

## Contents

Introduction	7
<i>Yvonne Brewster</i>	
Introduction to <i>Maskarade</i>	20
<i>Sylvia Wynter and Yvonne Brewster</i>	
<i>Maskarade: A Jonkunnu' Musical Play</i>	23
<i>Sylvia Wynter</i>	
Introduction to <i>Bedward</i>	137
<i>Louis Marriott</i>	
<i>Bedward: A Play in Two Acts</i>	140
<i>Louis Marriott</i>	
<i>Melodic lines for songs by Noel Dexter</i>	204
Introduction to <i>The Creatures</i>	211
<i>Honor Ford-Smith</i>	
<i>The Creatures</i>	223
<i>Cicely Waite-Smith</i>	
Notes on Contributors	254
Acknowledgements	256

## Introduction

Yvonne Brewster

In 1935 Marcus Garvey migrated to London in the final chapter of his mission to emancipate the minds of black people everywhere. It was a time when native Jamaicans at home and abroad started dreaming of freedom from the yoke of British colonialism.

The Great Depression between the two world wars had deepened the socio-economic misery that the masses still suffered a hundred years after the abolition of slavery. Trade unions emerged. Industrial disputes sometimes degenerated into riots. Plans were made to establish a political movement designed to end an electoral franchise based on wealth, to extend the vote to all adult Jamaicans, and to achieve Jamaican self-government.

In Britain, in 1938, an article in *The Daily Telegraph* read *inter alia*: 'A great deal is amiss with the economic and social conditions in Jamaica. The truth is that we are now reaping the harvest of a country's neglect. The time has come when it is incumbent upon Britain to apply herself earnestly to the task of redressing the more fundamental causes of West Indian discontent.'

That was a comparatively mild rebuke. Former British Prime Minister David Lloyd George, credited as the architect of the welfare state, had dubbed Jamaica and other British Caribbean colonies the 'slums of the Empire' and British commentators repeatedly contrasted the appalling socio-economic conditions of the Caribbean colonies with the enormous wealth that had accumulated in Britain through the proceeds of West Indian slavery and colonialism.

After a series of significant outbreaks of violence in Jamaica in mid-1938, in November of that year, a large West India Royal Commission from Britain toured Jamaica and other colonies for a close examination of social and economic conditions but also viewed the political landscape.

The sympathetic demeanour of the Royal Commission, under the leadership of Lord Moyne, was encouraging, as was its report. The Colonial Office soon signalled its intent to move Jamaica

forward, but the advancement schedule was bedevilled by the outbreak of the Second World War and the posting in Jamaica of a tough new Governor, Sir Arthur Richards, who was accused of conveniently using the war regulations to incarcerate and thus neutralise the most radical and progressive leaders of the new political movement which had been launched in September 1938, highlighting its demand for universal adult suffrage and constitutional progress toward self-government.

Still, in late 1944, a new constitution took effect, inaugurating a governance structure described as ‘semi-representative’. The former unicameral Legislative Council, which included members elected under a severely limited franchise sharing law-making responsibility with ex-officio members and gubernatorial appointees, was then transformed into a totally nominated Upper House of a bicameral legislature. The lower chamber was the new House of Representatives comprising 32 members elected in single-member constituencies under universal adult suffrage.

An Executive Council was culled from this hybrid legislature, but real power remained in the hands of the appointees and the Governor held the highest trump. He could take exclusive control of any matter simply by declaring it one of ‘paramount importance’. The first step towards an independence-bound federation of the British Caribbean colonies was taken when the British Secretary of State for the Colonies, Arthur Creech Jones, joined delegates from West Indian countries in a ‘Closer Association’ Conference in Montego Bay, Jamaica.<sup>1</sup>

The first Jamaican to be Chief Minister whilst Jamaica was still a Colony was Alexander Bustamante who held the post for two years (1953-1955) followed by his cousin Norman Manley (1955-1962). Jamaica became a member of the short-lived Federation of the West Indies 1958-1962. Full independence from the United Kingdom was achieved on the 6<sup>th</sup> August 1962.

The practice of theatre in Jamaica is nothing new. The first formal theatre was built as long ago as 1750. In fact there have existed no fewer than three large theatres in Kingston on the same site in downtown Kingston. The Ward Theatre designed by the Jamaican Rudolph Henriques, which replaced the second

Theatre Royal on the site after the 1907 earthquake had done its worst, was a gift to the city of Kingston from its then Custos Colonel C.J. Ward in 1912. With a capacity of just over 900 in its three layers of seating (Parquet, Dress Circle and the Gods), the Ward was recognised as a national Monument in 2000<sup>2</sup> as the only surviving example of a Victorian cum Edwardian style theatre in Jamaica and the rest of the English-speaking Caribbean.

It may be of interest to note here the Ward, with the exception of one or two details, is exceedingly similar to the Theatre Royal in London’s Stratford East (1844) designed by James George Buckle, with one important distinction: it is virtually twice the size of the London theatre which seats only 460 people on its three layers.

For nearly two centuries (1750-1941) these buildings provided a comfortable, even luxurious, Kingston venue for performances of plays and other entertainments. At first touring companies from the United Kingdom paid regular visits, the performances in these Theatre Royals were intended exclusively for those in high places (slave owners and the merchant classes, not slaves and the working classes) except, ironically, high up in the ‘Gods’ where a certain amount of segregated seating was permitted until riots in 1815 put an end to that. In the early nineteen hundreds theatre companies from the United States of America considered a tour to Kingston as something to aim for. By the third and fourth decades of the twentieth century Jamaicans began to take part in this activity, culminating in the development of the annual Pantomime in around 1941, after which the flavour, text, and increasingly the subject matter represented more local concerns and flavour.

The simmering hankering after the good old days of the foreign imports continued. George Bernard Shaw, whilst on a visit to Jamaica in 1911, sought to advise the locals on the wisdom of encouraging local writing and acting and warned that the consequence of continuing to regard foreign work in such a favourable light would be a Jamaican theatre which was vulgar and degraded.

<sup>2</sup> Sadly, the Ward Theatre is now (December 2011) in urgent need of repair and refurbishment.

1 Excerpt from Louis Marriott's unpublished journals.

In certain quarters some still hankered after the good old days but the wealth of talent and imagination always readily available created a vibrant sustainable culture of producing locally written plays. The Caribbean Thespians, the Little Theatre Movement and The University Players, amateur in name but professional in nature, are landmark local organisations which made invaluable contributions to the development of a local brand of writing for, acting in and direction of Jamaican theatre in the late Forties and the Fifties. Many of those who actively participated in these organisations in this burgeoning locally significant theatre scene have become household names in the arts of the Caribbean. They include Wycliffe Bennett, Slade Hopkinson, Mona Chin (Hammond), Derek Walcott, Ronnie Harrison, Noel Vaz, Easton Lee, Leonie Forbes, Trevor Rhone, Charles Hyatt and Louis Marriott to name but a few.

On August 6<sup>th</sup> 2012 Jamaica celebrates the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Independence. *Mixed Company* is a collection of three of the finest early Jamaica theatrical works, written for the most part before the dawn of Independence.

Written in 1954 (*The Creatures* by Cicely Waite-Smith), 1960 (*Bedward* by Louis Marriott) and 1970 (*Maskarade* by Sylvia Wynter), the plays are examples of works conceived with a Jamaican audience in mind, a Jamaican audience conscious of the melting pot in which it lived. Each offers a unique perspective on the spirit of a people who held on to traditional beliefs and customs in the face of colonial opprobrium as the populace struggled to gain its political, social and cultural independence.

There exist some, possibly tenuous, links between the three playwrights. In the case of Alexander Bedward, Waite-Smith writes in her autobiography of her experience in Kingston of the 1930s: 'In the middle of the night...I was startled awake by the sound of tramping feet accompanied by a high strong wail of singing. The sounds advanced and swelled. It was like a singing army on the march, fast and urgent as if the soldiers expected the order to break into a run. Tramp, tramp hallelujah, the energetic statement of many feet and voices.'

We shall know (we shall know echoed the chorus)  
As we are known (as we are known)  
Never more (never more)  
To walk alone (to walk alone)  
In the purple of the morning  
Of that bright and happy day...

"What is it? Who are they? Where are they going?"

"Up to Hope River to be baptised", F told me. "Look out the window. You'll see them."

I ran to the window. All dressed in pure white they were, some with turbans of white and holding high their coloured banners lit by the torches carried by their leaders.

"To be baptised in the cold river like this at one in the morning?"

"Just as you see them, fully clothed. And they'll be back at dawn still singing their heads off."

The night pulsed with their ardour. The trees and telephone poles moved, the road slid away under them like a snake, flowers and shrubs writhed, a window pane across the street flashed like lightning. We shall know, as we are known..."

Louis Marriott in his introduction to *Bedward* celebrates the life-changing effect his discovery of the Bedward story some two decades later in the 1950s, he having had so little local history taught at his Secondary school. In the *Sunday Gleaner* of March 12<sup>th</sup> 1972 Sylvia Wynter published an important article which challenged the view of Marcus Garvey as a dreamer and Alexander Bedward as a lunatic. What drove both men she believed was 'the basic revolt of men against their being made merchandise.'

There are other areas social, geographical, historical and religious which these plays have in common. They are not urban, nor are they necessarily of the deep countryside, straddling as they all do, the semi-urban fringes of society. This is important as it was in these fringe environments that cultural tradition, 'roots', stood a better chance of robust survival. Apart from being good scripts for acting and producing, with the many vibrant characters which abound, they all have rebellion at heart:

rebellion in many forms and guises but sharing a common desired outcome of self-determination. They are all written with care to reproduce the rhythms and cadences of Jamaican speech of the time. The Jamaican relationship to rivers and their healing and dangerous qualities, has existed for as long as recorded time. Rivers and hills are of seminal importance in the plays as places of healing, support and mystery: In *Bedward* the Hope River plays a fundamental part in the success of his Ministry; it was in the Hope River he healed the sick. In *The Creatures* the river is the centrifugal force here. The hills in *Maskarade* are the magnetic force. Not surprising, set as they are in a country whose original Arawak name Xaymaca means 'land of wood and water'.

Traditional beliefs, practices and customs are common themes which permeate the plays. Although they have all been mistaken at one time or another as being plays for schools only, they all have very dark underbellies which encompass suicide, a double murder, and improper committal to a mental asylum of a prophet who threatened the status quo, all of which should concern adults too. The quality of writing, the stylistic sophistication, the broad imaginative canvasses they occupy need no apology.

In *Maskarade* the very act of keeping the age-old tradition brought from Africa of enacting the annual Jonkunnu festival is unlawful. The play begins with the festival troupe travelling to the hills above Kingston in search of refuge from persecution. Another kind of rebellion beats at the heart of *Maskarade*: the rebellion of the betrayed older lover in the face of her rejection for a newer model. This sub-plot (although it is too essential in the scheme of things to call it thus) brings the day to day existence into blinding focus. In *Maskarade* the hills are the source of protection and the constant background for the narrators of the piece. This is important to the proper understanding of the text and the playwright in her notes on the setting of the piece suggests 'opposition of the Blue Mountains, the plains and the sea' should be carefully configured.

The tradition of 'playing Jonkunnu' is deep-seated in the Jamaican people. In modern times the practice is often frowned upon as an embarrassment, dismissed as 'old-time rubbish' by sections of the middle classes, simply ignored or, worse fate

of all, consigned to the bin marked tourist attraction. Perhaps this is a result of a lack of an awareness, or a culture which is too geared towards tomorrow. The manifestation of Jonkunnu in the culture of Jamaica is too fundamental and too deeply rooted in African and European tradition and belief to ever be truly disregarded because of the continuing fascination with the ritual: the Jonkunnu play *Koo Koo, or Actor Boy* by Sam Hilary, the Jamaican playwright, is well remembered as a fine piece of theatre seen at the Barn Theatre in 1967, and the new (2011) journal of the Edna Manley College is called 'Jonkunnu'. Sylvia Wynter's play *Maskarade* holds a timely, entertaining, sometimes frightening call to cultural arms.

*Bedward*, set principally in August Town, above Papine, near to the Hope River where town meets country, tells the story of a Jamaican they sometimes called a prophet. Alexander Bedward (1840?1846?, 1848?<sup>3</sup>-1930) was a rebel; the victim of massive prejudice from the ruling classes which manifested itself in persecution and which became more intense the more he succeeded in his mission to provide a mode of worship to which the black man could relate.

Contrary to sensational newspaper reportage of the time, his Jamaica Native Baptist Free Church, founded in 1888, enjoyed phenomenal success with him at the helm as its charismatic faith healer and Bishop. His followers included numerous foreigners – mainly Panamanians, Cubans, Costa Ricans and Americans who journeyed to August Town to be healed. The size of his following, estimated at thirty thousand, especially when viewed in the context of the lack of mass communication at that time, was impressive.

In *Bedward* the battle lines are clearly drawn. Bishop Alexander Bedward was a pioneer advocate of black emancipation, a generation before Marcus Garvey. Alongside his call for social justice in Jamaica, his ministry placed categorical demands for the right to worship according to one's beliefs and cultural background. His rhetoric included the call to arms... 'We are going to have a great battle in this Church against the forces of evil...[a] battle against those who are against the poor that we

<sup>3</sup> Opinions vary on the year of Alexander Bedward's birth. No birth certificate exists.

must stand for.' He believed this was necessary as the rich could 'stand for themselves': 'The Pope of Rome and the Archbishop of Canterbury take good care of them'.<sup>4</sup>

Cicely Waite-Smith (Howland) wrote *The Creatures* in 1954. Canadian born, English educated, French trained in theatre, she married a Jamaican businessman, and clearly appreciated the culture of her new Jamaican compatriots. She is known to have identified with the struggle for Universal Adult Suffrage towards the goal of Independence. This delicate play, the earliest and probably the most rural of the trio, finds its home on the banks of a river a short bus ride away from the metropolis. It exhibits great sensitivity for the traditions, language and political aspirations of the people of Jamaica at that time. Written in gentle but telling style with dialogue which maintains for the most part a standard English format but which has a subtle, distinctive Jamaican identity when spoken: e.g. 'Miss Mae Lord me God the man nearly killed me, my head spinning round – my knees are giving away – '. While other playwrights were perhaps more overtly interested in the political or the religious, Waite-Smith carved out a space which allowed for the co-existence and interplay of birds, reptiles and natural phenomena with the everyday lives, times, beliefs and aspirations of the Jamaican. The river is the source of wisdom, peace, community gatherings and, perhaps more importantly for purposes of the play, the home of River Mumma, and whose deep waters accommodate the tragedy.

The traditional folkloric character River Mumma, is evoked with such power in *The Creatures* that the pull of the African ancestors and of vibrant handed-down mythology is all the more irresistible. She is described as a 'handsome and seductive woman, wearing a dark greenish gown'. The Fisherman calls her simply Woman. He is on intimate speaking terms with her and Yellowlegs and Lizard. This play has sometimes been regarded as exclusively children's literature because of the important part the bird of passage (Yellowlegs) and Lizard<sup>5</sup> play, but to do so is

<sup>4</sup> *Bedward*: Act One, Scene 3.

<sup>5</sup> The Lizard may very well be the serpent. Yellowlegs might very well be the Yellow Bird of the well-known song. However, birds do have a particular significance in Jamaican culture. In some forms of local belief systems the egg is sacred. In the ceremony held nine nights after death, a large bread in the shape

to ignore the very dark social anger, the almost hopelessness of the peasant who has to seek fortune in the city, leaving behind the more important things in life and being coarsened in the process. This runs like the river beneath the play.<sup>6</sup> It is not surprising that *The Creatures* was reportedly a favourite with Jamaican cultural/political icons Edna Manley,<sup>7</sup> sculptor wife of Norman Manley,<sup>8</sup> and Rex Nettleford<sup>9</sup>.

*The Creatures* is a play in One Act. In spite or perhaps because of its succinctness, in its brevity it paints a clear picture of a small enclave of simple people about to lose its innocence, as seen through the eyes of a henpecked old fisherman who continues to struggle to gain his independence from his insensitive wife. His rebellion is small, personal and alive.

In this, the 50<sup>th</sup> year of Jamaica's Independence when the theatre scene is so alive and dynamic and immediate, perhaps it is no bad thing to pause for a while and appreciate some of the first plays written solely with a Jamaican audience in mind.

Derek Walcott once suggested that to be universal one must first be specific. I think these plays qualify.

---

of a bird dominates the setting. This is meant to represent the journey the spirit will have to undertake. It must fly.

<sup>6</sup> Sylvia Wynter wrote in her wide-ranging paper: 'Jonkunnu in Jamaica: Towards the interpretation of folk dance as a cultural process': 'Jamaica too had its water-dance to the water spirit, or river goddess. This spirit known as "Ribba Mumma" was supposed to: "Inhabit every fountainhead of an inexhaustible and considerable stream of water in Jamaica." The slaves, in times of drought, used to persuade their master to sacrifice an ox at the fountainhead of the water turning the mill. The water spirit was supposed to materialize like a mermaid at noon, combing her long black hair...'.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> It was in the 1956 edition of Edna Manley's Literary Magazine *Focus* produced by the Extra Mural Department of the University College of the West Indies, that I first came upon *The Creatures* (Ed.).

<sup>8</sup> The 2<sup>nd</sup> Prime Minister of Independent Jamaica.

<sup>9</sup> Founder and Artistic Director of the National Dance Theatre of Jamaica and Trade Union Academic.

MASKARADE

A 'JONKUNNU' MUSICAL PLAY

BY SYLVIA WYNTER



*Cast in order of appearance:*

LOVEY	Traditional Storyteller
BOY	His apprentice, 12 years old
DRIVER	Coachman to the Mayor of Kingston plays King
BRIANSY	A Tailor plays Pitchie Patchie
DEAF MUTE	Assistant to Brainsy plays Houseboat
MAUD	Mayor's maid
ELIZABETH JANE	Mayor's daughter
QUASHEBA	Maroon girl plays Queen
CUFFIE	Maroon boy plays Actor Boy Prince
GATHA	Driver's common law wife plays Executioner
SLIM	Member of the Jonkunnu band plays Jack-in-the Green

*Chorus played by members of the cast.*

*Production History*

*Maskarade* was initially commissioned in 1973 by the Jamaican Information Service for broadcast on television when it was directed by Jim Nelson who subsequently collaborated with the playwright in the expansion of the play which was performed in Cuba in 1979. However this text was re-written for the production directed by Sandra Richards with musical direction by Michael Britt and choreography by Halifu Osumare, at the Nitery, Stanford University Campus in April 1983. In February 1992 it was presented at Northwestern University in the Josephine Louis Theatre directed by Sandra Richards and choreographed by Althea Teamer. In December 1993 it was produced by Talawa Theatre Company at the Cochrane Theatre in London when it was directed by Yvonne Brewster, designed by Ellen Cairns and choreographed by Greta Mendez.

**SYLVIA WYNTER**

- 'The greatest mind the Caribbean has ever produced'. C.L.R. James on Sylvia Wynter.
- 'A Caribbean intellectual of surpassing originality and brilliance'. David White on Sylvia Wynter, *Small Axe 8* (2000).
- She says: 'Growing up in the then British colony of Jamaica, the anti-colonial uprisings of the mid-to-late 1930s which crossed my childhood were to indelibly mark my life and work. Like *The Hills of Hebron*, the play *Maskarade* was part of the overall creative effort in a now independent British West Indies, to imaginatively create "a new conception of the self"; and thereby, of being human'.

**Sylvia Wynter** OJ was born in Cuba in 1928. At age two her parents returned to Jamaica where she received her primary and secondary education. In 1946 she was awarded the Jamaica Centenary Scholarship for Girls, which took her to Kings College London to read Modern European Languages.

She was a member of The Boscoe Holder Dance company between 1957-58.

In 1962 the year of Jamaica's Independence her only novel, *The Hills of Hebron* was published.

Her plays include *Maskarade*, *Under the Sun* (written for the Royal Court Theatre, England), and in 1970 *Rockstone Anancy*, a Jamaican Pantomime.

Among many other publications are a biography of Sir Alexander Bustamante, the first prime minister of independent Jamaica, *Ballad for a Rebellion*, and *We Must Learn to Sit Down Together and Talk About a Little Culture: Reflections on West Indian Writing and Criticism*.

In 1963 Wynter was appointed assistant lecturer in Hispanic literature at the Mona campus of the University of the West Indies. In 1974 she joined the Department of Literature at the University of California San Diego as a visiting professor. She became chairperson of African and Afro-American Studies, and professor of Spanish in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at Stanford University in 1977-1997, where she is now Professor Emeritus.

## Introduction to Maskarade

Sylvia Wynter answers questions put to her by Yvonne Brewster.

*YB: Your paper 'Jonkunnu in Jamaica: Folklore as Cultural Process' is a highly regarded academic paper, not a play. How did the play Maskarade come to be written?*

*SW:* Firstly, it is in no way either an anthropological or an ethnographic disciplinary paper. It was first written as an essay for a UNESCO conference on folklore which explains its non-academic, and instead, politico-cultural dynamic as a paper... Jim Nelson<sup>1</sup> would have responded to the paper in the way he did, especially given the fact that growing up in a then imperial colony like Jamaica, all things African had been systemically stigmatized. That is, until the anticolonial movements initiated the decolonisation of our hitherto British imperial domesticated consciousnesses. As a theatrical artist, Nelson would have been attracted to the other major aspect of what I myself had discovered in writing the Jonkunnu essay. This is the fact that, as in the English Morris dancing popular tradition, or indeed, as in the black American minstrel show, all of which had, like the African carnival tradition which gave origin to Jonkunnu, emerged from the immeasurably older, pre-Christian, pre-monotheistic, pagan religious, earth-centered popular religions.

As a tradition out of which pagan elements, such as those still carried over in Catholicism, had come to constitute, in our modern world, an ecumenically human popular tradition. One which we find, in contradiction to the brutal hierarchy of the slave master and the slave, had

<sup>1</sup> Having read the paper young Jamaican TV director Jim Nelson famously enthused: 'There is a play in this. Write it for me!' The first production was a Jamaica Broadcasting Corporation tele-play, which after some directorial conceptual work by Jim Nelson et al was reproduced as a play for theatre. As such, it represented Jamaica at the 1979 Carifesta Festival in Cuba.

continued to be syncretized within the terms of what had become in Jamaica, the now matrix African-pagan carnival tradition.

With the result that the popular, farcical doctor plays common to them all had come to syncretically integrate themselves at a popular level, as carried, on the one hand, by the slaves, and on the other, in the case of the English Morris dancing, for example, by the lower bookkeeper overseer classes, who would have been the main carriers of the Anglo-Scottish variant of this tradition. This paradoxically then, as a tradition out of which the now global popular musical culture of the world was to emerge.

*YB: Music plays an essential role in the play. How did you go about deciding on this element?*

*SW:* This has always seemed to me to be provided by the popular musical tradition, whether in the United States or in Jamaica in its contemporary forms. What Sandra Richards did was use elements from the Jamaican folk tradition as well as from the emergent rap tradition. I would imagine that any version of the play would follow the same formula by incorporating the contemporary popular musical forms.

*YB: The play script of Maskarade which appears in this collection is a later edition performed in the USA in 1983. Is there a reason for this choice?*

*SW:* Originally the Miss Gatha character of the play had been imagined in the same terms as she had originally been in my novel *The Hills of Hebron* (1962). This explains my strong disagreement with Jim Nelson on this single aspect of her being made into the stereotyped figure of the yard woman tradition in the original productions. I felt that this was strongly at variance with the African tradition out of which the Jonkunnu ceremony of the play *Maskarade* had evolved. This especially so with respect to Miss Gatha, whom I had conceived as still embodying the major conception of Mother Earth and

of the conception of justice, which is fundamentally different from that of the West's legalistic conception. By the way, the latter itself is a conception of justice that is also completely different from what had been the West's medieval tradition's conception of justice as either that of just or unjust titles, rather than, in our case, completely dependent upon legality and illegality. That is, a conception far more profoundly ethical in its mythological order of things. I must add that most of Nelson's other contributions to the script in the nineteen seventies were in many ways brilliantly innovative.

In the United States, when I was teaching at Stanford University from 1977 onwards, the play was produced by my very dear and talented colleague Sandra Richards, and it was for that production that in 1983 I rewrote the play, envisioning Miss Gatha's later role as the executioner in this alternative, so that it was now wholly my own conception, although the first school edition of the television play, the 1979 edition and my later version are directly correlated.

YB: *Maskarade* is regarded as a seminal Jamaican play. It is always in the top three when classical Jamaican plays are discussed. Why do you think it has withstood the test of time and fashion so emphatically?

SW: Your last question: fundamentally, the play is not mine. It is really my reworking of a millennially extended popular pagan tradition which is universally applicable, and whose formula I have merely copied. So in a sense it doesn't really belong to me; I see myself as merely its transmitter. A major parallel, of course, is the pantomime tradition of both Britain and Jamaica.

## ACT ONE

SCENE ONE  
ON A HILL ABOVE KINGSTON

SCENE TWO  
BRAINSY'S TAILORING SHOP

SCENE THREE  
OUTSIDE MAYOR MITCHELL'S HOUSE

SCENE FOUR  
ON A HILL ABOVE KINGSTON/BRAINSY'S SHOP

## ACT TWO

SCENE ONE  
ON A HILL ABOVE KINGSTON/OUTSIDE  
MAYOR MITCHELL'S HOUSE

SCENE TWO  
ON A HILL ABOVE KINGSTON/DRIVER AND  
GATHA'S YARD

SCENE THREE  
ON A HILL ABOVE KINGSTON/BRAINSY'S SHOP

SCENE FOUR  
BRAINSY'S SHOP/DRIVER AND GATHA'S YARD

## ACT THREE

SCENE ONE  
ON A HILL ABOVE KINGSTON/  
A KINGSTON STREET

## Act 1

### SCENE 1

*The orchestra overture ends with Jonkunnu-type drumming, then fades into silence as the curtain rises. The setting is early morning. Backdrop of mountains, tall and shrouded. Lighting to suggest that the mist swirling about the mountains is a continuation in a different modality and in a minor key of the music we have heard. This will be central to the synaesthesia effect i.e. with the senses replicating their effects. The set must catch the opposition of the Blue Mountain, the plains and the sea. The two-level stage serves to mark the difference-interaction of past and present. When the play begins the Jonkunnu Festival (see Appendix) has had to take refuge in the hills; to go underground like the Maroons. This sense of an underground existence needs to be brought out. A rickety sign half-falling, says '17 miles to Kingston'. LOVEY and the BOY wait on the lower level center stage, although the upper level is their turf, so to speak, during the play. They wait expectantly. The BOY listens, hears nothing. Takes up his bamboo flute. Looks up at the mist swirling. Plays a thread of a tune as if in accompaniment. Then he breaks off, alert. His tone is joyful.*

BOY: You hear something Mass Lovey?

It's them?

At last?

LOVEY: Only the breeze!

BOY: But...

LOVEY: The breeze play like that

In the bamboo leaves, can sound  
Like the walk a man walk.

BOY: (*Impatient.*) But why they take so long?  
I tired to wait, man! Cho!

LOVEY: It's a long way to have to come.  
All the way up from the sea  
Up past Half-Way Tree, then turn

Up past Papine.

BOY: It's a long way!

LOVEY: And on top of that they have  
To sneak like a thief,  
Hush drum, quiet dance  
Still fife, out torch  
So that the law don't hear!  
So that the law don't see!  
They have to run like a stream  
That run under the ground, till  
She find the sea and splash  
Out into the sun.

BOY: Ever since that time?

*To dub, chants.*

LOVEY: Ever since that time.

Ever since Jonkunnu maskarade ban by law.  
In Kingston town  
They have to come all that way  
To dance Jonkunnu!

BOY: Up past Parade, up past cross-roads  
Up past Half-Way Tree  
Turn up past Papine?

LOVEY: All that way till  
They turn up the hills  
Till they break free!

BOY: It's still a long time to wait!

LOVEY: We can use the time to practice.  
Get the fife.

BOY: I will never learn it,  
My tongue always tie up.

LOVEY: You will learn.  
After you practice over and over,

Till your face, your eye,  
Your finger and your feet  
Have their own mind, keep their own time.  
Till your tongue leap light and spin and gleam  
In the silence of the sea!  
Then you'll be a master of mime,  
A teller of tales and a spinner of dreams.

BOY: Like you, Mass Lovey?

LOVEY: Like me, you ready?

BOY: From the beginning again?

LOVEY: From the beginning!

*The BOY plays a fanfare on the fife. The orchestra repeats. As he narrates, a new dubbing theme, different from LOVEY's, accompanies. LOVEY's dub and the BOY's dub will counterpoint.*

BOY: Come one, come all  
Come high, come low,  
Come and see our ballad show!  
Come close, sit down.  
Listen while I relate  
A terrible place of love and hate  
That took place in Kingston Town  
In the year of our Lord  
Eighteen Hundred and Forty-One.

*LOVEY's dub begins.*

LOVEY: Then as now,  
I was a teller of tales  
Gathering pennies,  
Selling dreams.

BOY: Lovey the Great  
Spinner of dreams  
Master of mime  
Teller of tales  
On a Kingston street.

LOVEY: I was eye witness  
To the spectacle.

*The tempo on the fife quickens. The BOY mimes the action.*

Blow for Blow,  
Lead for Lead,  
Blood for Blood  
Actor Boy King  
And Actor Boy Prince  
Stone cold dead on a Kingston street.  
After that, riot! Soldier! Gun!  
I remember well, how I remember well.  
That Christmas Jonkunnu Maskarade,  
The people, the tale,  
And the part we all played.

*He interrupts himself, as though overhearing someone in the audience whispering.*

Now some people might think, say  
That the tale I going to tell  
Just a nice little piece of 'ethnic' business!  
So let me warn you from the beginning  
I'm no folklore Uncle Remus  
With a fake lore masquerade  
For some of you to come and get  
Your doctorate on!

BOY: Not a damn!

The tale we going to tell  
Trace its pedigree  
Way back from when

LOVEY: The first line trace  
On the first rock face.

BOY: The first tool make!

LOVEY: The first mask dance  
The first drum beat.

BOY: Long before Sumer  
Egypt or Crete  
Long before Babylon  
Genesis or Greece!

LOVEY: Long before then!  
With the first tale  
That man tell of himself!

BOY: And it's our task now  
To carry on

LOVEY: That first invent  
That man invent.

BOY: Himself! Herself! Ourself!

LOVEY: So that the separate flesh  
Could feel as one  
Could live as one  
Could share as one.

BOY: Once nature stop.

LOVEY: And history begin!

*Change of dub tone: Brisk, matter-of-fact.*

BOY: So now that we get  
That straight  
Listen while we set the stage  
For our terrible tale  
Of Love and Hate!

*Shift to storytelling beat. LOVEY will tell his story in the style of a calypsonian, i.e. driving, rhythmic, fast-paced. His dub becomes the parallel of a calypso or reggae beat. The stage jumps with rhythmic excitement with the rhythm as dominant as the words.*

LOVEY: It was a cold December month  
December, 1841, the wind  
Cut through the Kingston streets  
Like knife on ice.

Mayor Hector Mitchell  
 Wake up on the wrong side of his bed,  
 So his temper wasn't nice!

BOY: Nice! How Mayor temper  
 Could nice, when  
 His business near bankrupt,  
 His sourface wife,  
 Cripple in bed upstairs.  
 His daughter downstairs  
 Like wild bird in cage?

LOVEY: So he warn us strong  
 That morning of eighteen  
 Forty-one when he wake up on  
 The wrong side of his bed!  
 He warn us well!

*The Mayor's dub takes over here as the BOY mimes the Mayor's part and the CHORUS responds as the Crowd.*

BOY: I am a tough tough Mayor  
 Of world wide renown  
 I don't fool around  
 You know me well!

CHORUS: Yes, Mayor Mitchell sir!  
 We know you well!

BOY: I am out to show this town, once and for all!  
 I am the Order, I am the Law!  
 I am out to show this town  
 What I say, go!

CHORUS: Show it sir! Show it!

BOY: I want you ignorant idlers of Kingston  
 To understand one fact!  
 Too many Jonkunnu band  
 Every Christmas Festival  
 Making scandal in Kingston

Catching fight, this band with that one!  
 Busting head, bleeding blood  
 Making noise in decent people head!  
 Stop it! Or feel my iron hand!  
 You hear me! You understand?

CHORUS: (*Sings.*) Mayor, we hear you, we hear you well!  
 We must behave wesimal, we hear you well!  
 You out fe war, edo edo, you out fe war.  
 Behave wesimal, or Jonkunnu dead!

*As they sing, the BOY changes his persona as Mayor, changing props, etc. back to his apprentice role. As the song ends he comes forward. The BOY's dub now.*

BOY: It was into this situation  
 That Actor-Boy Number One  
 Enter the equation  
 Set the whole story into motion!

*Fanfare.*

I give you Ladies  
 I give you Gentlemen  
 Actor Boy Number One!  
 Driver by Name  
 Driver by occupation!

*DRIVER, elegant in Coachman's outfit enters to fanfare – strikes pose downstage.*

LOVEY: Now Driver was a Kingston man,  
 A scuffler if ever there was one!  
 He drive a carriage for Mayor Mitchell  
 As his regular employment.  
 But come every Christmas  
 He put out a maskarade band,  
 Scuffle a little extra money.  
 Driver's Jonkunnu band is the best band in Kingston.

BOY: No band could beat that band!

LOVEY: Now Driver organize  
 The Band all right  
 But his friend Brainsy  
 Dance Pitchie Patchie fool in Jonkunnu  
 And is the brains behind the band!

*BRAINSY enters, in a tumbling somersault, dressed in Tailor's outfit. Strikes pose, doing business, etc. with cloth draped on Tailor's dummy.*

LOVEY: Brainsy plan the costume.  
 Cut them out, sew them  
 With the help of a Deaf-Mute  
 His apprentice who dance, and prance  
 Houseboat in Jonkunnu!

*DEAF-MUTE, dressed as a Tailor's apprentice, enters with great leaps and twirls, than sits on stool, also engaged in business, etc. in Tailor's shop.*

LOVEY: Oh that was a band that Jonkunnu band!  
 Never any band to beat that one!  
 With Actor Boy King  
 Actor Boy Prince.

*The BOY mimes the characters of the folk play.*

LOVEY: And the fight that they fight  
 For the thone, for the Queen  
 For the Kingdom!  
 How they could dance and mime!  
 How they could fight  
 And die  
 And rise to fight again!  
 How they could spin a tale!  
 Like a rainbow stain  
 Shimmering on a Kingston street  
 After rain.

*Shift of music/mood. Brisk, everyday day.*

BOY: So when you see a date in your history book  
 1841, Mayor Mitchell abolish Jonkunnu  
 Ban it from Kingston and its environs  
 Take note there's something personal behind it.  
 For is man make history,  
 And is Driver cause it!

LOVEY: (*To a fast-paced rhythm: dub.*)  
 For that year  
 Trouble take Driver  
 In his old age!  
 From the time his eye  
 Fall on a pretty maid  
 Down at Parade!  
 One turn she turn her eye up  
 One turn she turn them down!  
 From that time on  
 Love strike like earthquake!  
 Driver drive on  
 But from that time on  
 He lost his heart  
 And he lost his way!

*DRIVER moves out of his pose but stands bemused.*

BOY: Love strike Driver dead,  
 Love strike for true!  
 Love turn Driver from super-fly  
 Into fool!

*Lights off BOY and LOVEY, up on Tailor's shop. DRIVER goes to mirror, turns viewing himself. A chant of CHORUS offstage could be used while the scene is being shifted.*

CHORUS: Strike him love  
 Let him know that life  
 Is not no puppet show  
 No moonshine doll  
 You play joke with

You take step with  
 You do as you have the mind with!  
 Let him know that life  
 Have another face that hide  
 Behind the harsh  
 White light of noon  
 Let him see that other side, love  
 Let him see it – soon!

## SCENE 2

*Lights fully up on BRAINSY's tailoring shop, cluttered with bits of costume for the coming masquerade. DEAF-MUTE works diligently at decorating the Queen's Throne. BRAINSY sits sewing. DRIVER tries on the Horsehead costume and examines himself in the mirror. Shakes his head. Snatches off the Horsehead.*

DRIVER: (*Explosive.*) You know something, Brainsy?

I tired of playing horsehead year in, year out,  
 Making an ass of myself,  
 I born for better part than that, man.  
 Something that express the real me.  
 Something with power, authority, weight  
 I going back to play Actor Boy King.

BRAINSY laughs quietly without looking up.

DRIVER: So what so funny?

BRAINSY: You look at yourself in the glass?

DRIVER: (*Looking.*) Well I'm a little fat here and there

Put on a little weight these few years.  
 So what? King can't fat?

BRAINSY: (*Holding up small King's costume.*) King can fat,

But not King costume!  
 What you want me do with this?  
 Let out a few yard here and there?

DRIVER: So what,  
 You can't cut new costume?

You can't sew new cloth?

BRAINSY: Cut new costume! Sew new cloth!

Driver don't make me vex  
 Don't draw my tongue!  
 Don't year after year I keep telling you?  
 Year after year till I tired  
 I tell you we need  
 To invest in new costume  
 If we not to  
 Keep on falling year after year  
 Behind the other band!  
 If we to keep on coaxing  
 Money out of people hand!  
 Over and over I tell you  
 If we want to make money  
 We have to spend money!

DRIVER: But that's what...

BRAINSY: (*Not listening. Angrily, sweeps the costumes to the floor.*)

Call this costume? This is old cloth!  
 Not even dead man would see himself  
 Dead in this one!  
 You don't see, Driver man?  
 We need more glitter, we need more spangle  
 We need new bead, we need new bangle  
 We need more pomp, or we might as well done with the  
 band.

DRIVER puts his hand over BRAINSY's mouth and forcibly sits  
 him down.

DRIVER: Cover your mouth, open

Your ears. Listen, I Driver  
 I – Man take a decision!  
 I going to invest! At last! In new costume!  
 ...Look!

*He takes out a cloth bag, pours coins on table. BRAINSY takes one up reverently, rings it against another then tests it with his teeth.*

BRAINSY: Money! New Costume!

Now Lettest Thou Thy  
Servant depart in peace!  
My eyes have seen the glory  
Of Driver's hand, letting go money!

DRIVER: Don't play joke, man!

Now look – (*He separates some of the coins.*)  
This is for my costume as  
Actor Boy, the King.  
I want it extra special,  
First class, to express that real man  
That people never see when  
They first look at me!  
And let go your hand, spend  
Money the way you want to all these years!  
Let go your hand!

*BRAINSY beckons to DEAF-MUTE who brings him his sketching pad.*

BRAINSY: You know something Driver?

If you really serious  
I have a new way to make your King's costume.  
I see some new satin cloth at Feurtado,  
A rich, rich purple  
I would make the breeches like this  
...and like this  
...and like this.  
The jacket like this  
Long lines to slim you down  
The sleeves to lend you authority  
Like this... (*He sketches.*)

DRIVER: (*Putting out more money.*) Now this is a costume for  
Quasheba.

Twice for her costume what I give you for mine.

I want a costume for Quasheba  
That will sweep her off her feet.  
Money no object.

BRAINSY: (*Still sketching.*) Costume for Quash what, Quash-  
who?

*Change of lighting. DRIVER changes mood. Reggae music under.*

DRIVER: Quasheba!

My Queen of Sheba.

BRAINSY: (*Puzzled, all attention now.*) Your... What?

DRIVER: (*Serious.*) She is the last knock

I knock on the door, Brainsy!  
The last ask, I ask from life  
The first see I see her  
Lightning strike!

*Lights upon BRAINSY as he signals to DEAF-MUTE to bring a bottle  
of rum and glasses: DEAF-MUTE pours, BRAINSY gives to DRIVER.*

BRAINSY: Cool it Driver. Pour

Some white rum down.  
Cool down the fever.  
Then tell me what the hell  
You killing yourself up for  
Over this Quash-who  
Quash-what!

DRIVER: (*Drinks.*) When you see her

You will understand  
Brainsy, man.  
When you see how her  
Breast point like Blue Mountain  
Her face like Poinciana flower  
Her laugh like Yallah's River  
Her waist like bamboo stem!  
You will see  
When I bring her

For you to take measurement  
For her new costume.

*BRAINSY stops cutting. Seats himself. Takes up his own drink. He will sit still as DRIVER acts out his narration, with DEAF-MUTE playing the part of QUASHEBA. The narration will be done in ballad style and must be fast-paced. The orchestra will intervene from time to time to provide sounds like the carriage horses, raucous satirical sounds accompanying BRAINSY's comments. The orchestra keeps a reggae beat under the scene, pacing it.*

BRAINSY: Alright Driver, explain yourself  
Tell me what new scheme  
You scheming now, and how  
The same scheme this time  
Different from all other time?

DRIVER: Yesterday I drop off Mayor Mitchell  
At his counting house.  
And as I turn the carriage  
Around the corner of Parade  
My eye light on this maid!  
And I tell you something!  
Lightning strike me!

BRAINSY: Like all the other time!

DRIVER: This time special!  
I sense that this time  
I have to take care.  
So I take time to ease the carriage  
Clip clop clip clop after her.  
By the time I reach West Parade  
She realize it's she I following.  
She turn around, turn her eye up  
Then give a little come-on smile.  
But by the time I whoa the horse  
Jump down to talk to her  
She turn into a lane

Then into a yard and gone!  
BRAINSY: The peadove fly away?

DRIVER: Fly away but after that smile  
I know to myself  
She mean me to wait.  
So I wait.

BRAINSY: And what happen?  
DRIVER: I wait...

BRAINSY: So you wait? Then what?  
DRIVER: Little time after, you should  
See her Brainsy, tiptoe back  
Come stand just inside the gate  
Pretending is not me  
She looking at...  
She come right back, just as  
I expect, perch there like peadove  
Waiting for hunter gun  
To take aim!

BRAINSY: And you take aim  
And say to yourself  
Mark!  
And you fire? Pam!  
Peadove flutter down  
Into your hand!

DRIVER: Not so easy as that  
This story like all story  
Have a little complication.

*Lights down on DRIVER and BRAINSY as CHORUS sings, and one of the masquerade group dressed as a Bird is hunted by DEAF-MUTE in mime and dance.*

CHORUS: (Sings.) Mister Driver go fe hunt peadove wallo,  
wallo, wallo, wallo  
He meet up with another hunter on the way

Wallo, wallo, wallo  
 Mr Driver come here the other day  
 Fe go hunt peadove edoh  
 Mister Driver come here the other day  
 But the peadove fly away.

*Repeat. Male/female dance duet re. hunter and peadove.*

## SCENE 3

*Outside Mayor Mitchell's house. By the front door, MAUD, the Servant, is a woman of about thirty with a cap and apron and is dusting the gilded frame of a large portrait of Mayor Mitchell in his Mayor's gown. Later she will kneel and clean and shine the floor with a coconut brush. She will work steadily, groaning to herself, through the scene. Mayor Mitchell's daughter ELIZABETH JANE is seated on a stone bench by the front door. She is about 16. Fair-haired. Pretty. Dressed in fashion of the time. With much care. She holds an embroidery frame and is embroidering a pillow case for her hope chest. The hope chest, a large mahogany one, stands under Mayor Mitchell's portrait. When MAUD dusts the portrait, she stands on it. Then kneels to polish it. QUASHEBA, about the same age, slender, tall, grave, beautiful, wearing the old-fashioned dress of a rural peasant, enters. She stands awkwardly.*

QUASHEBA: Good morning please, ma'am. (*To MAUD.*) Good morning.

MAUD: What you want?

QUASHEBA: I came to see Mister Driver ma'am.

MAUD: Driver don't live here

Driver only work here.

What you come to see him for?

QUASHEBA: He tell me to meet him here ma'am,  
 Today, to make arrangements  
 About the Jonkunnu play.

MAUD: Well, this is Mayor Mitchell's house  
 And Mayor Mitchell front door

If you want to see Driver  
 Go to the back gate and wait there.

QUASHEBA: Thank you, ma'am. (*She makes to go off.*)  
 You could do me a favour, ma'am?

MAUD: What?

QUASHEBA: Cuffie, ma'am, my friend  
 You could tell him when he come  
 That I am waiting at the back.

MAUD: Why should I do that?

I am Mayor Mitchell's servant  
 I not here to pass on message  
 To any stranger.  
 This is private people place  
 Not a railway station...

ELIZABETH JANE: What's your name?

QUASHEBA: I name Quasheba ma'am.

ELIZABETH JANE: What kind of a name is that?

MAUD: Quashie, you mean?

QUASHEBA: No ma'am. Quasheba.

Cuffie say that long ago  
 In Africa before our old time people  
 Come across the salt water  
 Akwasiba was the name for a girl born on Sunday  
 And up in Portland where Cuffie and my  
 Grandmother come from  
 They still use that name!  
 She did name Quasheba  
 And she pass her name on to me  
 She was a Maroon  
 Like Cuffie.

*MRS MITCHELL's voice is heard offstage. She bangs her walking stick on the floor throughout this scene.*

MRS MITCHELL: Elizabeth Jane?

ELIZABETH JANE: Who is Cuffie?

QUASHEBA: My boyfriend, ma'am.

But he is a Maroon too  
And he say the Maroons  
Call him the African way.  
They call him Kofi and...

MRS MITCHELL: Elizabeth Jane?

*MAUD shoos ELIZABETH JANE offstage.*

MAUD: What you a come with

'Bout your Akwasiba and Kofi?  
You name Quashie and Cuffie  
Like every other stupid country bumpkin!  
'Bout your Maroon grandmother  
And your Maroon boyfriend  
As if Maroon is anything special  
As if Maroon not maugre dog just like  
Every other black people them.

MRS MITCHELL: Maud? Maud?

MAUD: Coming this minute, Mrs Mitchell, ma'am. Coming this minute.

And get your dirty self  
Out of decent white people yard!

MRS MITCHELL: Maud!!

*ELIZABETH JANE re-enters in time to hear last remark.*

ELIZABETH JANE: My mother want you upstairs this minute!

MRS MITCHELL: Maud!

ELIZABETH JANE: Quasheba! Don't pay her no mind  
You can come back.  
Her bark worse than her bite.

*The song of Jane and Louise' begins on the fife. Total change of mood, as if a cloud has gone from the scene. The two young girls*

*about the same age play a scene as if they were still children, before race and class differences had separated them.*

ELIZABETH JANE: My name is Elizabeth Jane

My grandmother named me after her too.  
But you can call me Miss Elizabeth like everybody else.  
You have a middle name?

QUASHEBA: Louisa, ma'am.

That name after my other grandmother  
That one is not a Maroon.

ELIZABETH JANE: Jane and Louisa!

You know the song  
You know the game?

QUASHEBA: Yes, ma'am.

ELIZABETH JANE: Come, let's play it.

Let us pretend  
It still is now  
The way it was then...

*ELIZABETH JANE gets up, puts down her sewing. They face each other, hands on hips. They sway to the waltz tune, singing and playing the game. Drum and fife accompaniment.*

QUASHEBA and ELIZABETH JANE: (*Sing.*) Jane and Louisa

Will soon come home  
Oh will soon come home  
Oh will soon come home  
Into this beautiful garden...

*They mime the actions of the song.*

My love will you allow me  
To pick a rose  
Oh to pick a rose  
Into this beautiful garden.

*They change the rhythm to a brisk one and clap and chant.*

Jane and Louisa born on a Sunday

Whom will they marry?  
Try and tell me!

QUASHEBA and ELIZABETH JANE: Jane and Louisa will soon come home

Will soon come home

Will soon come home

Jane and Louisa will soon come home

Into this beautiful garden.

My love will you allow me to pick a rose  
To pick a rose

To pick a rose

My love will you allow me to pick a rose  
Into this beautiful garden?

Jane and Louisa born on a Sunday

Born on Sunday

Born on Sunday

Who, oh who will they marry?

QUASHEBA: Will he be rich?

ELIZABETH JANE: Will he be poor?

QUASHEBA: Will he be young?

ELIZABETH JANE: Will he be old?

BOTH: You turn to the left

You turn to the right

You wheel and turn

And shut your eyes tight

You open your eyes and that will be.

The very very one that he will be.

*They wheel, wheel, open their eyes. See no one, and laugh.*

ELIZABETH JANE: You see anyone, Quasheba?

QUASHEBA: Only a Johncrow! You see anyone, ma'am?

ELIZABETH JANE: Only a pitcher!

*ELIZABETH JANE seats herself on the bench. QUASHEBA seats herself on a small stool. ELIZABETH JANE fans herself with the embroidery - still laughing.*

It's really a Johncrow I see

You know Quasheba...

(Whispers.) It's really a Johncrow

I going to marry?

QUASHEBA: You going to married, ma'am?

ELIZABETH JANE: (*Puts her fingers to her lips, glances at the upstairs window.*)

Sh...h. My mother not supposed to know.

My father arrange it.

QUASHEBA: But how come your mother don't know, ma'am?

ELIZABETH JANE: She is a cripple and can't come downstairs  
So she don't know half of what going on...

QUASHEBA: But you don't tell your mother, ma'am?  
That you going to married?

ELIZABETH JANE: You tell your mother 'bout your boyfriend  
Cuffie?

QUASHEBA: My mother dead and buried just after I born,  
ma'am  
And my grandmother raise me  
But Cuffie did ask her for me  
Before she dead, and she said yes...

ELIZABETH JANE: Your story different from mine.

My mother wouldn't say yes

If they crucify her

Yes, to the half-black man my father

Want me married to.

*She beckons her to come and sit beside her. QHASHEBA does so.*

ELIZABETH JANE: (*Whispering.*) The whole of Kingston know  
about it, but my  
Father want to keep it secret from my mother

Until after the wedding over and done with.  
 You see, the man is going to put money in my  
 Father's business so it can save.  
 His wife died last year  
 And she didn't give him any children  
 So he want to marry me  
 To try one more time.  
*(She laughs.)* But he so old you see Quasheba!

*QUASHEBA laughs.*

QUASHEBA: Then why you want to married to him. To take  
 him make joke?

ELIZABETH JANE: My father want it!  
 Not me.

QUASHEBA: But how you feel 'bout it Miss Elizabeth?

ELIZABETH JANE: Cho! I just glad to get  
 Away from this house  
 And from my mother  
 She is a miserable old bitch!  
 An old higue!

QUASHEBA: *(Shocked.)* Don't talk like that about  
 Your mother ma'am  
 God will curse you!

ELIZABETH JANE: You don't know my mother, Quasheba.  
 That's why I going to marry  
 Old Moses Campbell.  
 To get away from her!  
 And to see her face  
 When she hear about the wedding!  
 And that my husband  
 Is a half-black man!

QUASHEBA: You like him, ma'am?  
 Even a little bit?

ELIZABETH JANE: Not even a little bit.

But he spend his money like water on me!  
 He open an account at all the Kingston stores  
 And I buy everything my eye light on!  
 Indian silk at Nathan's and ruby earrings and silk shawls  
 at Fuertado...  
 And look, look at the ring.

*She takes a shawl, the earrings and a ring from a bag, drapes the shawl about her shoulders, then begins to put them on.*

QUASHEBA: The ring pretty for true!  
 And the earrings and the shawl  
 I like the feel of the silk.

*She feels the shawl.*

ELIZABETH JANE: I have to hide everything downstairs  
 So my mother won't see.  
 What Cuffie give you?

QUASHEBA: *(Slowly, as if realizing it for the first time.)* Cuffie  
 don't have anything to give...

ELIZABETH JANE: Then what you marrying him for then?

QUASHEBA: *(Slowly.)* Well...my grandmother did say yes  
 when he did ask her for me and...

Well...

ELIZABETH JANE: Well, what?

QUASHEBA: Well, it just like all of a sudden,  
 I blaze up ma'am, like dry leaf fire  
 In August sun.

ELIZABETH JANE: I did feel like that once.  
 Just like that. Like I was just blazing  
 And blazing and I wanted to stop  
 And I couldn't stop...

*Pause.*

My mother make us stop. *(Pause. Fife begins.)*  
 He come up into my room

Like I tell him to, late at night.  
 Maud hear us, wake my mother  
 My mother come in and catch us.

QUASHEBA: She catch you?

ELIZABETH JANE: He was the gardener man son  
 And they make the gardener man  
 Beat him half to death. (*Pause.*)  
 They send him away to the country  
 Where the gardener man come from. (*Pause.*)  
 I never feel like that again  
 Since they lost him away  
 In Portland mountain!

*Pause. Fife continues Jane and Louisa' theme.*

QUASHEBA: (*Seeking for something to say to dispel the mood.*)  
 That's where Cuffie come from ma'am,  
 Portland mountain.  
 And I come from the sea  
 Near Port Antonio.

ELIZABETH JANE: I know Port Antonio.  
 We drive through there  
 When I used to go and spend  
 Holidays on my grandmother's  
 Property in the country.  
 I use to love it there you see.  
 Up here in town  
 My mother corset me.  
 But in the country I live free.  
 In the country at Christmas  
 I even jump Jonkunnu.

QUASHEBA: Jonkunnu, ma'am!

ELIZABETH JANE: The children of the people  
 Who work on my grandmother's land  
 And me at Christmas, we get up

A Jonkunnu band  
 And I dance the Queen...see.

*Jonkunnu music. ELIZABETH JANE dances as Queen. MAUD returns. She stands with her broom, watching.*

QUASHEBA: I going to play Queen, too, ma'am.  
 This Christmas I going  
 To play Queen in Mr Driver  
 Jonkunnu band...see.

*She joins ELIZABETH JANE. They dance.*

A VOICE OFF: (*Stern.*) Elizabeth Jane.

*ELIZABETH JANE stops at once. So does QUASHEBA.*

VOICE: Elizabeth Jane, don't you hear me calling you?

ELIZABETH JANE: Yes, Mama.

*ELIZABETH JANE slowly takes up her embroidery, and begins to hum Jane and Louisa' mutinously.*

VOICE: How many times must I tell you  
 Not to wrap up with these  
 No good worthless black people?

*ELIZABETH JANE stops her ears and keeps humming softly. She signals to QUASHEBA to do the same.*

And out there burning up  
 Your white skin in the sun!  
 You want to lose your chance  
 To marry off to an English gentleman  
 With future, money, prospects  
 Make your home in England  
 And leave this black people land  
 Come inside I tell you!  
 Come inside from the sun!

*ELIZABETH JANE with her hands over her ears, her embroidery on her head, and still humming goes inside.*

QUASHEBA: (*Singing softly to herself.*) My love will you allow  
me  
To pick a rose  
Oh to pick a rose  
Into this beautiful garden!

*CUFFIE has entered behind her. He comes up and puts his hand over her eyes.*

QUASHEBA: Cuffie?

CUFFIE: (*Taking his hands away.*) Who else?

*They take hands and waltz as if still in the children's game. QUASHEBA sings softly as they sway, holding hands. He looks at her, not singing, but entering her mood. The fife picks up the tune, and the CHORUS sings.*

CHORUS and QUASHEBA: My love will you allow me  
To waltz with you  
Oh to waltz with you  
My love will you allow me to waltz with you  
Into this beautiful garden.

*CUFFIE and QUASHEBA walk off, swinging hands, in time to the song.*

CHORUS and QUASHEBA: My love will you allow me to pick a rose  
To pick a rose, to pick a rose  
My love will you allow me to pick a rose  
Into this beautiful garden.  
My love will you allow me to waltz with you  
To waltz with you, to waltz with you  
My love will you allow me to waltz with you  
Into this beautiful garden.

#### SCENE 4

LOVEY: (*To audience and CHORUS. Dub.*)

What Driver don't know  
With all his plot and plan

Is that Cuffie enter  
Quasheba garden already!  
Cuffie pick Quasheba rose  
Already and  
Like a bee that sip  
Honey and drunk on it  
Cuffie tie to Quasheba  
Like drunk man  
Tie to rum bottle!

BOY: Cuffie enter Quasheba garden  
Cuffie pick Quasheba rose! First!

LOVEY: Driver blind his eye  
Don't want to know  
That is how the story go!

BOY: Driver see the peadove  
He cry mark. He aim!  
He fire! Pam!

LOVEY: But he keep his back turn.  
And don't see  
The other hunter  
That did mark the dove  
That did aim first!  
And fire! Pam!

BOY: The other hunter  
That did stake his claim!  
Before the Driver even mark the dove!

*The lights go up on BRAINSY's shop. The latter is measuring DRIVER. DRIVER is holding in his waist, with great effort.*

BRAINSY: If you don't let out your breath  
And I make the tunic too tight  
One slash you slash the stick, the tunic rip!

*DRIVER hastily lets out his breath.*

BRAINSY: (*As he measures.*) You can go on with your story now.  
What this complication 'bout?

*Drums and dub under the narration that DRIVER gives, so that it's like a production number rather than strictly a mere 'realistic' scene, with DRIVER talking and miming to the rhythmic beat.*

DRIVER: Let me tell you first

How we start out the negotiation  
Before we stumble on the complication.  
Now, Deaf-Mute, you are Quasheba.

*He puts a shawl around DEAF-MUTE.*

And I am Mr Driver, deck out  
In all the splendour  
Of Mayor Mitchell's driver!  
Seated high up in the carriage.

*He puts on his tail coat, his top hat, his boots, takes his gloves, his whip. He and DEAF-MUTE mime the scene.*

DRIVER: She stand there inside the gate  
Seeing every move I make. So I start the act!  
First, I take off my gloves, then  
I put one back on, the right hand one.  
Then I take that hand and lift my hat  
And catch her eye. I look straight at her:  
I don't blink.  
Later, I say to her. Not one word else.  
Then I drive off.

BRAINSY: But if you drive off  
That negotiation  
Seem like if it is conclusion?

DRIVER: Hold your horse. Not so fast.  
That was only scene one.  
I wait that night until moonlight  
Paper everything in silver  
For scene two to take place.

I drive slow – clip clop  
Clip clop past her gate –  
And I clip the clop so she could hear  
Then I turn back and find her  
Waiting there as I know  
She would wait...

BRAINSY: How you know she would  
Come out?

DRIVER: Other people study for doctor  
You study for tailor  
I study for woman hunter.

BRAINSY: So what happen after that?

DRIVER: I just bend my little finger  
And she come up in the carriage  
And we drive clip clip clop  
Way out of the dirty lane  
Right along Palisadoes  
Right along the sea.

BRAINSY: And the sea-breeze and the moonlight  
And the clip clop, and the luxury of the carriage  
Work the trick!  
Tricknology! You have  
Your doctorate in it.

DRIVER: When I tell you her eye light up!  
She nestle into the seat and stroke  
The velvet curtain with her fingers  
And when I make the horse gallop  
She hold onto me tight tight  
And laugh with delight  
And wrinkle her face like kitten  
And I feel her body, tight  
Next to me.  
And I know this was it!

BRAINSY: (*Breaks rhythm*) Like all the other it?

DRIVER: This is a different it

From all the other ones  
But how you to know?  
You never love yet.

BRAINSY: (*Dryly*) No.

DRIVER: Don't let it get you down  
Brainsy, is nothing to do with you.  
The way I look at it God make people as if  
He cast them for a role  
In Jonkunnu maskarade.  
Give every one part to play  
That suit them!  
Now look at you!  
Is plain God cast you  
To play the fool, and everybody  
Agree, Brainsy the tailor  
Is the best Pitchie Patchie  
Of any Jonkunnu band in Kingston.

*DEAF-MUTE who has been reading DRIVER's lips, nods enthusiastically, Jonkunnu music under as he dances and mimes like Pitchie Patchie, using the latter's whip.*

DRIVER: You see! Even Deaf-Mute says yes.

Pitchie Patchie suit you down to the ground  
And you play the part well.  
But the problem is this.  
How you expect any woman  
To fall in love with a fool?

BRAINSY: Then how they fall in love with you?  
What role God cast you for?

DRIVER: A king, Brainsy.  
The kind of king who don't win  
War with gun, but win it

At the negotiations  
After the war come.

BRAINSY: That's what you catch the women  
With then? Your negotiations?

DRIVER: Go to the head of the class!

In my own way, I am an artist.  
The same science  
You put into sewing,  
Is the same science I put into  
Hunting woman.  
And, Brainsy, let Dr Driver  
Give you lesson number one  
When you go to hunt a peadove  
To get her out the bush  
Into your hand, you have to  
Know how to play her  
The way a master-drummer  
Play a Jonkunnu drum!

*Jonkunnu drums. Fast rhythm. DEAF-MUTE mimes QUASHEBA as DRIVER illustrates.*

DRIVER: You have to know just how to beat  
The rhythm, soft, tough  
Slow quick, slow rough, quick, quick, quick...

BRAINSY: Alright! So you catch another one  
You prove you are a hell of a man!  
So what?  
You catch her, have her, tired of her  
Then dash her 'way like banana skin.  
It's time you start to act your age!  
Every time bucket go to well  
One day, one of them young gal  
Going to pull you so deep you drown!

DRIVER: This not any young gal

This time special!  
She make me feel that  
At last everything add up.

BRAINSY: How you make her feel?  
A young girl like that?  
What you have to offer  
To blind her eye with?

DRIVER: (*He seats himself on the throne.*) I have a throne,  
Brainsy.  
A Jonkunnu kingdom and  
Crown of gold. And she want one thing more  
Than anything else in the world.  
She want to be Jonkunnu  
Queen!  
That's the offer  
I have to give.

BRAINSY: What the hell you mean  
Have?

DRIVER: (*Interrupting.*) I going to dress her in the finest Queen outfit  
You ever make!... People going to swoon  
When they see it.

BRAINSY: But...?

DRIVER: You can open your hand and spend  
Like water. Money no object.  
Velvet, satin, silver star  
Sprinkle all over her frock  
Gold earrings for her ears  
Silk shoes and gloves to match!  
Show what you can do!  
Show the world what you make of... (*Pause.*)  
What happen? You can't make frock  
Like that? (*Pause.*) Chance like this  
Don't drop in your lap everyday...

BRAINSY: (*Torn.*) That's not it Driver!  
And you know it.  
If you make this young girl Queen  
What about Miss Gatha?

DRIVER: What 'bout her?

BRAINSY: Good God, Driver! How can you ask me that?  
Who in this damn town  
Don't know Agatha Franklin  
Ten years now the best Queen in any  
Jonkunnu band in Kingston!  
People still call her name  
When they talk 'bout Jonkunnu...

DRIVER: That was a few years back.  
You shut up here in your shop  
Don't hear the word going round!  
Queen not what Queen was  
People say!  
Agatha Franklin did pretty once  
But she over the hill now!

BRAINSY: Then what, you just going to  
Turn her out to pasture?  
Like that?  
Ten years add up to something.

DRIVER: Ten years add up in another way!  
(*Pause.*) To tell you the truth  
I still don't understand what happen  
Nor how it turn out so!  
But you see her for yourself.  
Gatha turn sour! (*Pause.*)  
Like life disappoint her  
So she take it out on me.  
Some time we don't exchange  
Two word for the day.

BRAINSY: Perhaps if you did have children...?

DRIVER: Like she didn't really want any!

I never see woman like that!

Just wrap herself 'bout me

Expect me to do the same...

(Pause.) After the first time I carry

On with a little girl, and I see

She take it hard, I tell her honest:

Gatha don't invest yourself in me!

Connect up yourself

With other people!

Take one of your friend Maud's children.

Go to church, become church sister,

Fall in love with the parson

Like other women... (Pause.)

But it was no use... (Pause.) Like I talk to a wall.

(Pause.) So what she expect me to do?

I can't change for her. (Pause.)

So when it happen about three more time

Like she just change overnight!

Day in, day out she

Just sit in the chair and rock

And wait for me to come back

Fix me with her eyes like stone. (Pause.)

As if the whole thing is my fault!

That life didn't turn out

The way she want!

BRAINSY: If you take away her chance

To play Queen it will be worse!

DRIVER: It can't be worse than it is now!

A man would have to be made out of sugar

To stand up to her bile!

She get old and second hand

And she know it! The crowd know it too!

That's why we not drawing crowd with  
Our Jonkunnu the way we used to!

You just wait and see what a difference

It will make if we get

A new Queen!

If Quasheba say yes

To the proposition I put to her

Last night.

BRAINSY: If she have to sleep  
On the great woman-hunter  
Proposition, like you having difficulty?

DRIVER: No difficulty, man! Not me!

Just a little stumbling block

A little complication

With the boyfriend that

Trying to make out with her already.

BRAINSY: Wallo. Another hunter call out Mark:  
Take aim. Stake his claim!

DRIVER: My plan is to circumvent

That problem

Spoil his aim and steal his claim.

He had a Jonkunnu Band and

They come from Portland

To seek fame and fortune

So I tell her to offer him

To join his Jonkunnu band

With the best Jonkunnu band

In Kingston.

BRAINSY: (Angry.) But how you could do

A thing like that

Without consulting me? What the rass

You think it is at all?

The Jonkunnu band

Don't belong to you

For you to do as you please with?  
 How come we know if  
 This country bumpkin band  
 Can jump Jonkunnu?

DRIVER: We not going give most of them  
 Any big part, man.  
 They just fill out the scene  
 Help out the numbers.

BRAINSY: And the boyfriend going  
 Content with that?

DRIVER: I have a cure for that sore too.  
 I tell her to offer him,  
 What no sane man  
 Can refuse. Tell him  
 I tell her, that he  
 Can play Actor-Boy  
 Number Two.

BRAINSY: The Prince?  
 Then what the hell part  
 Slim going to play?  
 Like you give way  
 The whole maskarade  
 And don't ask me a word 'bout it?

DRIVER: Cool it, Brainsy.  
 Think what's in it for you.  
 As for Slim as long  
 As he gets the same pay  
 It won't matter to him  
 What part he play!  
 And the same with  
 Ratsy!

BRAINSY: So you have it  
 All cut and dry?

DRIVER: Cut and dry, seal and sign,  
 All ready to deliver!  
 Jonas gone to country  
 And fall sick  
 Slim can play his part  
 As Executioner. As for Ratsy  
 He always wanted to  
 Play Horsehead and  
 Take over from me.  
 And since Marcus joining Church  
 And turn his back on Jonkunnu,  
 Gatha can play Jack-of-the-Green  
 And help you collect  
 The money.

*BRAINSY gets up, disturbed.*

BRAINSY: I don't like it, Driver!  
 Miss Gatha...going to raise  
 Worse than hell!

*DEAF-MUTE nods dolefully.*

DRIVER: She can raise all the hell she want!  
 See if I care! I only have one worry  
 And that is how to work it out  
 So that before the make-believe over  
 And Quasheba eye open,  
 I can hit the mark!  
 That's where your part come in...

BRAINSY: What the hell you mean, my part?

DRIVER: Your part in the plan  
 To get this bird out of the bush  
 And right in my hand  
Before the maskarade finish and be done!  
 The plan is this (*Confidentially.*)  
 Every night after rehearsals

I going to take me peadove with me  
 For a drive on Mayor Mitchell carriage  
 When the moon turn the sea  
 Into silver...  
 That is when the time will be ripe  
 And iron hot to strike...  
 All I want is a little time  
 To get her to  
 Turn her back on Cuffie  
 And come and live with me.

BRAINSY: How you going to get her to come to you?  
 What's the bait?

DRIVER: The landlord want his rent money.  
 She don't have any, nor the boyfriend!  
 For every drive she come for a drive  
 I put half the week rent money  
 In her hand,  
 Tell her I lend till after  
 The show she pay it back!  
 I lend her the first week rent last night!

BRAINSY: So is rent money you  
 Blind her eyes with?

DRIVER: Rent and romance...

BRAINSY: The boyfriend just going to stand by and  
 Let you romance off his woman?

DRIVER: That is where you come into the act!  
 We going to start rehearsal early.  
 Send off everybody else by nine-thirty  
 Then I will keep Quasheba back to practice  
 Her scene...

BRAINSY: And the boyfriend going to agree to that?

DRIVER: Use your brains. Ask the question.  
 What rumshops there for? And a friend?

Especially if I pay for the rum?  
 In advance.  
 So what's the plan?

BRAINSY: (*Slowly.*) The plan is that every night  
 When rehearsal finish early for everybody else  
 I must take off the boyfriend  
 To tour rumshop, pour  
 White rum down his throat  
 While you scamp off with his woman?

DRIVER: Go to the top of the class.

BRAINSY: Now you answer me one question  
 Why you think I going  
 To play the part you  
 Write for me?  
 You solve that problem!

DRIVER: Because this is the chance  
 You waiting for.  
 All these years.  
 The chance to open you hand  
 Spend money to dress the show  
 The way you really want!  
 To show this town  
 What you can really do!  
 To get the notice  
 People like us don't get  
 No matter how good we good!  
 To know what it feel like  
 Up there at the top.

For even one day! (*Pause.*)

Ah tired! Tired of  
 This second-hand life  
 That box me up with the Mayor Mitchell him  
 Day in, day out, shouting!  
 Drive here! Go there! Whoa!

You don't hear me say 'Stop', you black jackass!  
 And I, man, have to stand there  
 And take it!  
 Day in, day out!  
 And the Mrs Mitchell, she, with her stick!  
 Ruling the whole of us. (*Pause.*)  
 Driver, bring my medicine  
 This minute! Rat tat!  
 Maud, empty my chamberpot  
 Rat tat!  
 As if the whole earth  
 Is their own  
 The rest of us? Just catch!

BRAINSY: For now. But a time will come...  
 Their rule will pass. Like Rome pass.  
 Then lowly people like you and me  
 Will find our chance at last.

DRIVER: We won't be here when it come.  
 The one life I have  
 Will be over and done...  
 So you got to understand, Brainsy man  
 When I see her, touch her  
 Like a force beyond me open the jail.  
 I no plaything of Mayor Mitchell then!  
 I'm what God make me for! I'm in command!  
 I have a universe of my own  
 Cut to my measure and fit.  
 And a part fit for a man to play in it. (*Pause.*)  
 Not no bargain basement role  
 Dress up in their coachman's clothes! Like this!

*He flings the hat and gloves away violently. There is a pause.  
 He is embarrassed. The depth of his bitterness leaves a charge.  
 Change of tone as he struggles to gain control. BRAINSY signals to  
 DEAF-MUTE who brings DRIVER some rum and water. DRIVER*

drinks. *The music begins under. The 'business' gives time for a shift of mood.*

DRIVER: That's why it's different

This time Brainsy...

*DRIVER will sit and sing this part of his song, then get up for the more rhythmic second part.*

DRIVER: (*Sings.*) This time it's real

Root deep I swear  
 This time it's real!  
 I feel a force  
 That's pulling me  
 I don't know where...  
 Up until this  
 I pledge I'd be  
 Devil may care...  
 Love here, love there  
 But love and leave  
 And who grieve, grieve!  
 So I never dream  
 The day would come  
 I'd feel a love that's leading me  
 I don't...know...where  
 And what's more  
 I don't care  
 And what's more  
 I don't care.  
 For I spy that peadove  
 High in the sky  
 She is my true love, my heart's desire.  
 Oh, I can't forget her  
 Don't care how I try,  
 I can't resist her  
 I'm all on fire! Fire! Fire!  
 So I'm out to win her

Cost what it cost  
I'm out to get her  
With no holds barred!

*CHORUS joins in with back-up*

DRIVER: The one fact I figure  
This world belongs  
To those who grab her  
And force her hand!  
Don't you let them fool you  
'Bout the good reward  
The good are losers  
They end up last!  
So I'm going to win her  
Cost what it cost!  
For I can't resist her!  
I'm all on fire!  
She's my heart's desire  
I'm all on fire!  
Fire! Fire! Fiyah! Fiyah!

*CHORUS keeps up the 'Fiyah' until it dies away.*

BRAINSY: Let me do some deduction  
If I don't take part in the plan...

DRIVER: No money for costume.  
Besides, we are friends.  
Done?

BRAINSY: (*Hesitating, then as they shake hands.*) Done.

*DRIVER puts on his top hat and gloves.*

DRIVER: I have to run put the other  
Part of the plan  
Into operation.  
I have to meet Quasheba and her boyfriend him at  
Mayor Mitchell house.

*He leaves.*

BRAINSY: (*To DEAF-MUTE.*) You know, Deaf-Mute  
I don't like it.

*DEAF-MUTE looks back at him. Shakes his head. Doleful.*  
Alright, alright, so maybe  
Driver making a fool of himself.  
Young gal pull him down  
Make him lose his sense...

*DEAF-MUTE agrees enthusiastically.*  
And I know that it tough  
For Miss Gatha and him  
She don't have a child  
And all that matter to her  
Is Driver and Jonkunnu.

*DEAF-MUTE agrees, miming 'Poor Miss Gatha'.*  
But what you expect me to do?  
I am not God!  
I only fool in Jonkunnu  
Besides, Driver have a point, too.  
A man got to feel  
What it's like to be a winner  
Even for one day in his life!  
I can't get sentimental  
About Miss Gatha and  
Spoil my chance.  
And yours too, Deaf-Mute  
You going to get new costume  
As houseboat.

*DEAF-MUTE points to himself, delighted, leaps, twirls.*  
Yes, new costume for you too,  
New costume for everybody!  
More money for everybody all around!  
A great great chance for me to

Dress this band as band never dress before!  
 Miss Gatha is Miss Gatha  
 But this chance is what matters! Agree.

*DEAF-MUTE nods slowly to himself.*

Deaf-Mute, me son!  
 On Christmas morning, 1841  
 On that morning I tell you one thing!  
 We going to shake this town!

*DEAF-MUTE nods with enthusiasm.*

We going to rock this town!  
 We going to rock this town!

*DEAF-MUTE does a series of houseboat leaps, while BRAINSY moves down in position for his finale number, finale of Act 1. The CHORUS joins him downstage. As BRAINSY takes up his whip and drapes his old Pitchie Patchie costume about him, the CHORUS joins him as they sing and dance.*

CHORUS: Dress! Dress! Dress!  
 Show! Show! Show!  
 Dress! Dress! Dress!  
 We're going to dress this show  
 And show this town  
 What they never see before  
 For it's our turn now  
 To call the tune  
 Our turn now  
 To lead the dance!  
 Our turn now  
 Our turn!  
*Blackout.*  
*End of Act One.*

## Act 2

### SCENE 1

*Lights up on LOVEY and BOY. Their narration carries the pacing and briskness of last scene. They clap hands as they comment.*

LOVEY: Chicken merry! Hawk is near!

Driver hunting peadove! Death hunting Driver!  
 People hunting Driver money!

BOY: New costume in Jonkunnu for everybody!

LOVEY: More pomp! More show! More pride!  
 More more money!

BOY: Reams of dreams, but some people dream the story one way...

LOVEY: And other people dream it different!

BOY: Different! Different!

LOVEY: Two people who everybody forget.  
 Two people who don't catch up  
 In the same dream net!  
 One is Miss Gatha!

BOY: And the other is Cuffie!  
 Driver forget one fact!  
 Cuffie is a Maroon!  
 And Maroon born for war! Ach!

*The Ashanti-African dub begins here. LOVEY's style becomes more formal.*

LOVEY: Now Maroon people come like the rest of us,  
 From another world called Africa,  
 From a different page that turn  
 Before the one we live now!

BOY: We can take that page as read.  
 Go on to Cuffie.

LOVEY: Cuffie's generation, long-time back  
 Come from Ashanti-fighting stock!  
 Different from the rest of us.

BOY: They catch and get sell  
 Like the rest of us, Ashanti or not!

LOVEY: And passage the passage  
 Across the sea that  
 Salt like grief,  
 Like the rest of us!

BOY: All that over and done with!  
 Water under the bridge!

LOVEY: Water under the bridge for the rest of us.  
 We settle for the little we can get  
 And come to terms.

BOY: Only Maroon one hold out! Stubborn!

LOVEY: They have cause to stubborn!  
 When they sail away from the old land  
 They hide the Oxehead mask that dance the dead  
 That dance the gods.  
 They sail the mask on the sea with them!  
 Carry the old power in the hold with them!

BOY: War Power!

*Lights up on the Maroon version of the Maskarade. The ceremony will be like the one Bowditch describes. It features the Oxehead Mask, the mask of the ancestors. Its formality and gravity separate it from its cultural offspring, the Jonkunnu. War horns. Powerful drums. Dread. Colours of Earth. Colours, muted tones quite unlike the explosion of colour of the Jonkunnu itself.*

War power!

*Drums alone. Oxehead tied with rope, as he whirls. Sense of dread.*  
 So hold your breath. Look away. Take care.  
 When the Oxehead dance in their masquerade  
 Is not man dance like you and me...

LOVEY: Is the gods!

*Formal, short powerful dance, but muted. Formal drums. No other sound. Then it breaks off all at once. Mood and lighting back to everyday.*

BOY: Driver forgot one factor in the equation  
 Cuffie that meek young boy you see  
 Hanging round Quasheba  
 Love sick like puppy, not no stray dog,  
 Not no mongrel!

LOVEY: Cuffie trace his generation  
 Right back to  
 The warrior-chief John Konny that  
 Born and live in seventeen hundred...  
 And something.

BOY: Is his name give name to Jonkunnu?

LOVEY: Him same one. John Konny the self same  
 Ashanti chief that partner up with the Prussians  
 To fight off the Dutch, beat up the British!  
 He and the Prussians were in business.  
 Monkey business. Black flesh business!  
 Fighting and catching, buying and selling  
 Any black man that wasn't one  
 Of Konny's people!

BOY: (*Outraged.*) And it's his name  
 We celebrate  
 When we dance our maskarade?

LOVEY: Him same one!  
 In those days in the old land  
 One rule govern.  
 Inside the lineage, everything!

BOY: Outside the lineage...?  
 LOVEY: Tough!  
 BOY: So once the guns begin to flow...?

LOVEY: It was sell or be sold!

Lineage fight lineage like the Dutch fight  
The British. The British fight the Prussians.  
Inside the nation everything.

BOY: Outside the nation?

LOVEY: Tough! The Prussians

At the Dutch throat  
Till the day they sell out  
Their black flesh share  
To the Dutch, sell out  
Over Konny's head!  
The Dutch come with  
Their bill of sale!

BOY: Not a damn, Konny say!

LOVEY: The Dutch attack.

BOY: Single hand

Seven long years  
Konny beat them back  
Seven years Dutch skulls  
Rattle in the dust  
At his gate  
Whisper his name (*Imitating a Dutch accent.*) 'Bevair! John  
Kanaus. Bevair!'

LOVEY: (*With nostalgia.*) Seven long years that

Konny name noise up in the air!  
Black man sing of his fame!

BOY: But times change.

LOVEY: And like a great tree that the wind break

Konny crash! Konny dead!  
(*Chanting. A lament.*) Konny crash! Konny dead!  
Konny dead oh!  
Like a great tree that  
The wind break!

Konny crash and his people sell!

Konny dead!

BOY: Konny dead?

How Konny can dead  
When his lineage  
Carry his fame  
Across the saltwater of pain!

LOVEY: For they turn into a new lineage now

The lineage of those who catch and sell  
The lineage of those who lose out!  
Their story turn to a different page now  
And freedom became the force now!

BOY: The force of Konny's name.

LOVEY: Konny men run away  
Join up with the Maroons.

BOY: The black slave runaways  
They call the wild ones  
The men that  
Whip can't tame  
Treadmill can't break.

LOVEY: The Maroons that set up  
Kingdom in the mountain  
Fight off the British!  
Beat them back, hunt  
Down the Redcoats!  
War after war!  
Till the British concede,  
Maroon free! Whilst  
Other black men still in chains  
Freedom was the force  
Of Maroon name!

BOY: But times change and  
Now like everybody else.

LOVEY: They pour into Kingston  
Doing another kind of hunting.  
Hunting work, hunting money  
Hunting fame – like Cuffie.

BOY: But work, money, job  
Or not, Cuffie stubborn!

LOVEY: Nothing else don't worth  
To him except  
The pride of his  
Maroon name.

BOY: And Maroon born for war! Ach!  
Born and bred.

*Lights down on LOVEY and BOY. Up on MAYOR MITCHELL's front yard. MAUD is heard sweeping the yard off. CUFFIE and QUASHEBA are seated on the bench. They are eating from a cloth bundle that QUASHEBA has untied on the bench. Bread and fried fish. They are in a close mood. QUASHEBA brushes away some crumbs from CUFFIE's mouth with her hand.*

CUFFIE: I dream a strange dream  
Last night...

QUASHEBA: What you dream?

CUFFIE: I dream I wake  
And it bright twelve o'clock  
Outside  
I hear you call my name  
But I can't see you nowhere  
I hear you say:  
The story over, Cuffie, I gone now  
You walk away.  
I see two shadow on the ground  
One is yours, the other is not mine.

QUASHEBA: But...

CUFFIE: I try to reach you

I can't move  
I try to beg you  
My mouth dumb!  
I try to touch you  
I can't find you.  
I strike blind!  
My life crash.

*Sings. Reggae beat.*

You are my man's dream  
You are my pride  
You are my reason to live or die.  
You're sweeter than honey  
And when my lips taste you  
You tie up my heartstrings  
You brand me for life!  
So don't ever leave me  
Don't turn your love from me  
Don't let your eyes see  
No one but me!  
I won't ever leave you  
Can't stop from loving you  
Never there will for me  
Be no one but you  
No one but you!  
So don't ever leave me  
Don't turn your love from me  
Don't let your eyes see  
No one but me!

CUFFIE: Only one thing I want in my life  
For you and me to stay together like this!

QUASHEBA: That is my big dream too, Cuffie  
But there is another dream that I have  
On top of that  
A little dream...

CUFFIE: What dream is that?

QUASHEBA: (*She sits back on her heels. She has been stooping at the ground at his feet.*) To be Queen, Cuffie.  
 To be the Jonkunnu Queen  
 In the Kingston Maskarade make-believe (*Pause.*)  
*(Eager.)* You will say yes then  
 Yes to the proposition?

CUFFIE: I will make up my mind  
 When the man come.  
*(He explodes.)* And if the damn man don't come soon  
 I not even going to be here to say yes or no!  
*(He gets up, angry now, working himself into a fury.)*  
 I am not a stray dog  
 For this man to keep me hanging  
 'Bout the yard where he work!  
 Who tell him that he can take any  
 Step with me? I not any mongrel!  
 When he come you can tell him  
 To take his Jonkunnu and stuff it!  
 I gone.

QUASHEBA: (*Firm.*) Don't bother to come back.  
*He returns threatening.*

CUFFIE: What you mean?

QUASHEBA: What I say. If you don't say yes  
 We won't have anywhere for you  
 To come back to.  
*(They look at each other.)* The rent we pay last week  
 Is the rent money  
 He advance me already.  
 This week rent due  
 This self-same evening...

*MAUD enters, with broom. QUASHEBA breaks off. Turns to her.*

QUASHEBA: What you think keeping

Mr Driver, ma'am?

MAUD: Nothing. Is so Driver stay.  
 He always late. By the way,  
 What's this I hear you tell  
 Miss Elizabeth  
 About you and Driver and Jonkunnu?

QUASHEBA: He ask Cuffie and me  
 To join our Jonkunnu band  
 And ask me to play Queen

MAUD: (*She stops what she is doing.*) You to play Queen?  
 You sure?  
 Driver want you to play Queen?

QUASHEBA: Yes ma'am.  
 And Cuffie to play Prince.

MAUD: Then tell me something.  
 If you play Queen  
 What happen to Agatha Franklin?

QUASHEBA: Agatha Franklin, ma'am?  
 MAUD: Yes. Agatha Franklin!

The best Jonkunnu Queen  
 In Kingston. And my long-time friend.

QUASHEBA: But Mr Driver...

MAUD: (*The penny begins to drop.*) He never tell you 'bout her?  
 He never tell you that  
 Agatha Franklin, the woman he live  
 With these past ten years  
 Is usual to play Queen in the band?

QUASHEBA: He only tell me ma'am  
 That he decide to get  
 A new Queen this year  
 Since the Queen they have  
 Not drawing the crowd any more.

MAUD: That's Driver alright!

That's Driver kind of story  
Driver don't cut straight  
When he can cut crooked...  
Just wait till Gatha hear!

*CUFFIE explodes on QUASHEBA.*

CUFFIE: You see what I tell you!

The old man going push out the Agatha Franklin  
To make way for you  
Is you his eyes catch fire for.

QUASHEBA: Not so loud! Cuffie!

CUFFIE: What the hell you mean  
Not so loud?

You don't see what I did tell you?  
You don't see what the old man up to?  
I want no part in this deal!

QUASHEBA: But the rent money, Cuffie?

CUFFIE: (*After a while.*) I have land, Quasheba  
Up in Portland mountain.  
We can go back  
I can plant yam  
You can reap and sell in the market.

QUASHEBA: That's what I come to Kingston  
To get away from.  
I have enough of that  
Hand to mouth life.  
I not going get old before my time  
Like my grandmother.  
You can go back to that.  
Not me.

CUFFIE: That life have something else  
Quasheba.

QUASHEBA: You tell me one

Thing that that

Bush life have  
That I want?

CUFFIE: It have pride.  
No man to tell you  
What you can  
Or can't do.

QUASHEBA: Times change  
Maroon musket  
And mountain bush land  
Don't signify anymore.  
You not different from anyone else.  
You will have to change with it.

CUFFIE: And Maroon name,  
Over three hundred years,  
That don't mean anything anymore?

QUASHEBA: That name can't sell for a cent  
In the Chinaman's shop...

CUFFIE: I never know  
Life could back a man up  
Against the wall, corner him  
Like that.  
Since we set foot in Kingston  
Like I can't catch my life in my hand.  
Can't even call back to my mind sometimes  
What I was nor who I am.  
Waiting here for that old man  
For charity at his hand...  
Taste in my mouth like gall.

QUASHEBA: I know. But as Grannie used to say  
Hand in a lion's mouth, take time take it out  
You have to stand on crooked to cut straight!  
(*Pause.*) Besides you don't see, Cuffie?

If the old man have scheme  
We can have scheme too.

CUFFIE: Scheme! Nothing but scheme!  
Can't understand how  
In this man's town  
It's the self-same song:  
Give, so you can get  
Take all you can. Scheme for what you want  
Not like where we come from  
A man eat, his neighbour eat  
That is the law that  
Make man, man. (*Pause.*)  
I not no stray dog  
Scuffling for a day's work  
From hand to hand.

QUASHEBA: But you don't see, Cuffie?  
This is our chance now!  
Our chance came round at last!  
Once the Jonkunnu over and done with  
We will have money to set up a little something  
To make a little life for ourself, then  
We can tell the old man to go dream his  
Old man dream by himself!

CUFFIE: I can't do that!  
I am a man.  
Without pride a man is not a man!  
QUASHEBA: Money is pride now, Cuffie.  
Money pay the piper,  
Money call the tune.  
We have to go the way the world goes  
We have to dance its dance!  
But once the play over and done  
With money in our hand  
We won't have to

Make believe nor form the fool!  
It will be our turn then!  
Our turn to call the tune  
To lead the dance.

CHORUS: Our turn now to call the tune  
Our turn now to lead the dance  
With the money  
In our hand  
It will be our turn  
Come at last!  
Our turn to lead the dance  
(Repeat throughout scene change.)

## SCENE 2

BOY: Scheme upon scheme! And reams of dreams!  
But some people dreaming one dream  
And other people dream it different.

LOVEY: Chicken merry. Hawk is near.  
For the one he should most remember.  
Fire catch in Miss Gatha eye  
When she hear the news  
Like dry grass catch with tinder!

*DRIVER and MISS GATHA's yard. MISS GATHA's Jonkunnu's Queen dress hangs on the line in the sun. She is seated in a rocking chair sewing on some of the beading that is loose. MISS GATHA is a tall, sombre woman. She is handsome. DRIVER enters with the tunic of his new costume over old trousers. He carries a swordstick. There is a piece of mirror stuck up over a box on which there is a basin. He begins to practice, trying to see how the tunic looks in the mirror as he moves. MISS GATHA looks at his tunic, looks down at the dress in her lap. Spot on LOVEY and BOY. The latter plays the tune of 'Fire in a Miss Gatha Eye' on the fife. A soft lighting also remains on GATHA and DRIVER. As BOY speaks GATHA begins to look steadily at DRIVER. The latter tries to appear nonchalant, as he lunges with the swordstick.*

BOY: What a bitch when  
 She begin to suspect  
 The Dolly house mash up now!  
 Her life with Driver  
 Over and done with  
 Throw away like scrappes  
 On dry leaf fire!

*Fade off BOY. Fife alone, soft under this scene. MISS GATHA shakes the folds out of the dress. She holds it up, looks at it. Quiet.*

GATHA: Driver, look!

DRIVER: Look at what?  
 You don't see I am practicing?

GATHA: I tell you, look!

DRIVER: Look at what?

*GATHA gets up, goes to him. Holds up her dress besides his tunic.*

GATHA: This? What kind of pappy-show  
 You think I'm going to look beside you  
 With the old satin frock yellow-up  
 Besides your new costume!  
 If you are going to make a jackass of yourself  
 Playing Actor Boy at your age  
 The least you can do is buy a new frock for the Queen.  
 How you expect me to appear beside you in this?

DRIVER: You not going to beside me.

GATHA: What you mean?

DRIVER: You not playing Queen.

*A long pause. She crosses to the rocking chair, drapes the dress on it.*

GATHA: Since when?

DRIVER: Since now.

GATHA: Who say so?

DRIVER: I say so. Is my band. I decide. (*Pause. He begins to be uneasy as she stares at him.*) I make up my mind it's time for a change.

I find a new Queen!

GATHA: (*She goes up to him.*) A new Queen?

*DRIVER moves away from her, goes over to the mirror stuck over the box with the basin, looks at his face, strokes his hair.*

DRIVER: I ask a Jonkunnu band  
 To join up with me this year;  
 Bring fresh blood, excitement  
 Fresh face to  
 Coax more money out of people hand!

*She goes up to him, touches his hair, looks at her fingers.*

GATHA: (*Gentle.*) You been using Brainsy's bootblack

Black up your grey hair again  
 I well know what that mean. (*Pause.*)  
 So it's time for a change?  
 She must be young, eh, Driver?  
 So that the young can wash off  
 On your old age?  
 (*Pause.*) I can imagine how she feel!  
 How you excite her up  
 And full up her head  
 With dream (*Pause.*)  
 So you get yourself a new Queen  
 For the play?  
 And afterward?  
 For your bed and board?

DRIVER: What you think?

That I up to any funny business?  
 This is strictly business  
 Is not just the girl, I ask  
 Her boyfriend to play

Actor Boy Prince. How I could  
Be up to anything  
With her boyfriend in the play?

GATHA: A big part is a big bait.

(Silence.) So what part you decide  
For me to play?

DRIVER: (*He gets up and goes inside. Brings out a large box.*)  
*He opens it.* See it here. A brand new costume.  
*She says nothing. Does not even look at the costume.*

DRIVER: You can help Pitchie Patchie

Collect the money  
And share it out after.  
Everybody know you honest.  
That they can trust you  
With the money.  
What you looking like that for?  
If men can play women  
In Jonkunnu  
Why women can't play men?  
(Pause.) I make Brainsy buy  
The best material for it.  
Why you don't take it?

*She takes the costume. But hangs it on the line without looking at it.*  
*As she speaks DRIVER takes out the Executioner's costume and hangs it on the line beside the Jack of the Green costume.*

GATHA: (*After a pause.*) How life turn out different?

Different from what you expect?

(Pause.) Queen. Christmas morning

1830.

I was nineteen and ripe  
As a poiciana  
Flaming fire in the sun  
Fresh and young.  
No man hand touch me yet.

And pretty!

(Pause.) Agatha Franklin you pretty true  
People would say!  
I did think pretty  
Was something that you just had  
That would never end.

DRIVER: I did think so too.

That I would always  
Go on  
As I was.  
That nothing would different.

GATHA: But you were the best looking man  
I ever see!  
I couldn't really believe it was me  
You really want.

DRIVER: (*Overlapping.*) All that over and done with  
It's best to forget.

GATHA: Driver Ransom wanted nobody else.  
Same way it was for me too.  
Don't care how the young men beg me.  
On their knees!

*She begins to get in the mood of her song. She becomes radiant in that past that is more real for her than the now.*

GATHA: What a time that was!

All the men, every jack one  
Begging and pleading  
All the women, vex with me. Not one of them  
Could hold a candle to me!  
It was my time then!  
I was the Queen of Hearts  
I call the tune and centrestage,  
I lead the dance!

*This is her big number. She takes the stage over. She is no longer MISS GATHA whom life has frustrated but AGATHA FRANKLIN, Jonkunnu Queen, toast of the town. There is a kind of transfiguration in the actress playing the role. She is joined by DRIVER and the CHORUS as her dub begins. Sings.*

GATHA: What a sensation! What a commotion!

When I step out on the town  
In my Sunday frock  
With the train that sweep to the ground  
And the big bow at the back!  
What a carry go bring come!  
Oh, what a commotion!  
Who's that? People say,  
Who is that dressed to kill?

CHORUS: Agatha Franklin her name

GATHA: The word go round!

CHORUS: Agatha Franklin her name

GATHA: The name come round  
What a confusion! What a botheration!  
Not a man in the town  
Young man, old man, high man, low man  
That not in love with me!  
What a confusion  
Men just bowing, men just scraping  
Begging and pleading  
Falling all over their feet!  
All for the love of me!

CHORUS: Agatha Franklin is her name!

GATHA: Was the word on their lips!

CHORUS: Agatha Franklin her name!

GATHA: Was the dream that they dream

With their eyes open wide  
Was the dream that they dream at night!

CHORUS (MEN): You should hear them sigh  
When she walk down the lane

CHORUS (WOMEN): You should hear them cry  
When she sweeps with her train

GATHA: How they beg me! How they plead!  
How they all want to marry to me!  
I give the same answer to all of them  
My heart I said was fancy free,  
(Spoken.) And I was out to keep it that way!

CHORUS: That's what she said!  
Till she meet her match!  
And Agatha Franklin free no more!  
*Dance bridge.*

GATHA & DRIVER: What a sensation, what a commotion  
When we stepped out on the town  
You in your Sunday frock  
You in your top hat and cravat  
With my train sweeping the ground  
As I tilted my hat!  
You should hear the carry go bring come  
All about the town!  
Match meet match! Yes sir!  
How the world go around  
Love meet love! Fire hot!  
Match meet match  
Oh, what a time that was

GATHA: I was the Queen of Hearts,  
And lead the Jonkunnu dance  
What a time that was...

*DRIVER has turned away abruptly. GATHA only now noticing the change of mood, that he has broken out of the spell of the past in which she had caught him up, breaks off. A silence. She looks at him.*

GATHA: All that...over now...

DRIVER: Times change.

GATHA: I...can't change.

DRIVER: (*After a pause.*) Look, I have to go.

*DRIVER goes, then turns.*

DRIVER: If Slim pass by later

Give him the costume

For the Executioner.

Tell him to come to Brainsy's shop

Three nights from now

Dressed and ready for rehearsal.

(*Casual.*) And one other thing.

Since in your part

You only jump Jonkunnu

And collect the money

You don't have to come to rehearsal.

You hear me?

*She looks at him.*

DRIVER: Alright. Don't answer.

Do whatever the hell you want.

Just give Slim my message.

And for the little time

I have to remain here

Try not to look at me like that!

Your face so damn sour

It could curdle vinegar!

CHORUS: (*First time whispered. Second time sung soft and breathy.*

*Fire' spoken on alternate beat throughout.)*

Fire in a Miss Gatha eye

Edo, edo.

Fire in a Miss Gatha eye

Edo, edo.

Send for the fire brigade

Put it out, edo, edo  
Send for the fire brigade  
Put it out, edo edo.

### SCENE 3

*The tune of 'Fire in a Miss Gatha's Eye' is played on the fife. A different mood.*

LOVEY: (*Sombre.*) Fire flame, trap set!

Driver with his eye  
Blinder than mine blind  
Walking right into it.

BOY: Every night rehearsal dismiss  
Early, early.

LOVEY: Only Quasheba Driver  
Keep back, saying  
They have to practise  
In private!

BOY: Private! Private!

*Drums begin to set mood.*

LOVEY: Every night Cuffie  
Eye blood red with fury  
When Brainsy drag him off  
To visit rumshop and Driver  
Boldface

BOY: Tell him not to worry  
For he will drive  
Quasheba back!

LOVEY: The blood fly to Cuffie eye!  
Driver feel the blood fly  
Smell trouble draw at his back!  
But all of a sudden

LOVEY: Driver don't care for nothing!

BOY: Don't give a damn

For God nor man!

LOVEY: For the old crook get  
Caught at last  
And meet his Waterloo.

*Lights off. Up on BRAINSY's shop. DRIVER and QUASHEBA alone.*

DRIVER: You light a spark in my heart, Quasheba.  
You blaze my body like bonfire  
I want to blaze like that  
For the rest of my life.  
Quasheba... (He embraces her.)

QUASHEBA: But...

DRIVER: No more buts. Make up your mind.  
Take your choice  
Young man without prospect  
Or old man with experience!

QUASHEBA: I can have a little time  
To think it over...?

DRIVER: Between now and tomorrow night.  
If you say yes, I put the world at your feet!  
If you say no, after the dress  
Rehearsal, Brainsy  
Can let down the new costume  
And Gatha can play Queen.  
She know the part in her sleep.

*BRAINSY run in.*

BRAINSY: Driver! Driver! Cuffie...

QUASHEBA: Cuffie!

BRAINSY: He give me the slip.

DRIVER: No problem. I was just leaving  
I have to pick up Mayor Mitchell  
At his girlfriend place.  
See you tomorrow.

*DRIVER goes out. BRAINSY looks from one to the other, puzzled.*

QUASHEBA: (Calling after DRIVER, distraught.) And I wouldn't  
be Queen  
Mr Driver?  
You really mean that?

DRIVER: Remember Rule One of Teacher  
Quasheba?  
You can't get, if you don't give!  
*He leaves.*

BRAINSY: (Gently, he gives her his handkerchief.) Don't pay Driver  
any mind Quasheba.  
Come, since we have the chance  
Let me fit the sleeve of your costume  
Come...

*He gets a sleeve and begins to fit it on her hand.*

QUASHEBA: You are a good man, Mr Brainsy.

BRAINSY: Not good Quasheba

But wise  
Because I play the fool.  
In Jonkunnu, in love, and in life!

QUASHEBA: The fool, Mr Brainsy?

*He suddenly springs into his Pitchie Patchie role.*

BRAINSY: (Leaping.) Dress! Make way!

For Pitchie Patchie  
King of Clowns!

And Clown of Jonkunnu!

(Change of tone.) You see, Quasheba

Fool dream like other men

To wing a bird

That fly high in the sky.

But the fool know his reach.

The fool don't try

Instead

(He takes out the sleeve.) That length is fine Quasheba  
 You can go now  
 Good night...

QUASHEBA: What the fool do instead, Mr Brainsy?

BRAINSY: He take aim at his  
 High-flying dream  
 Mark. Aim. Fire! Shot! Drop!  
 And the fool laugh you see  
 Laugh at the dream that died!

*Laughs at himself. Jonkunnu music held under.*

QUASHEBA: (Defiant. Transformed.) My dream not to dead.

Mr Brainsy, I swear to God.  
 If it's the last thing I do  
 I am going to be Queen  
 In the Kingston of Jonkunnu!  
 When I step out on  
 Christmas morning people all  
 Up and down will say  
 'She's as good as Agatha Franklin.'  
 And some will whisper  
 'No, she's better.'  
 And some will shout it loud  
 She's the best Queen  
 Now, and forever!  
 I am going to be Queen  
 Of the Kingston Jonkunnu  
 Come hell or high water  
 Come flood or fire!

*She whirls to see CUFFIE who has entered and is standing behind her. He looks at her, grimly.*

QUASHEBA: (Half pleading, half-defiant.) For it will be our turn  
 then  
 You don't see!

It will be our turn then  
 To lead the dance.

*Still grim, he goes off. After a pause she runs after him.*

CHORUS: Fire in Quasheba eye edoh, edoh

Fire in Quasheba eye edoh, edoh  
 Send for the fire brigade  
 Put it out edoh, edoh  
 Send for the fire brigade  
 Put it out edoh, edoh.

#### SCENE 4

*Lights up on the previous setting. BRAINSY has brought the dummy centre stage. QUASHEBA's costume is fitted on the dummy. BRAINSY is kneeling in front, pinning up the hem.*

BRAINSY: There now. I almost finish

I almost have it done.  
*(Pause.)* Come flood or fire, eh!

Miss Quasheba?

*(He looks up at the dummy.)* So your dream not  
 Going to dead like mine?  
 Your dream not going dead?

*He pulls the stool behind him, gets up from the kneeling position, takes a bottle of rum, pours a drink, drinks.*

It wasn't true what  
 I say to you, you know Quasheba...

*His theme song, i.e., 'The Fool's Song' begins to be played under with a beat which paces BRAINSY's speech.*

I not wise at all!  
 Just a damn fool  
 Like every man else  
 Who light on you!  
 My eye catch fire  
 For you Quasheba

Catch fire with the best of them  
 Just like the rest of them  
 Driver, Cuffie  
 Only they can show it  
 Who going to believe that a Fool  
 Like me could dream  
 Of a girl like you.  
 A pitchie patchie fool  
 They would laugh you see.

*Soft laughter from CHORUS. He pours another drink, gulps it down, prepares himself for his half-drunken song.*

BRAINSY: (Sings.) I not going to cry!

When you say goodbye  
 I not going to cry

CHORUS: (Laughing.) He not going to cry!

BRAINSY: For true. And

I'll laugh in their eye  
 When they say  
 That I am the one in love with you.

CHORUS: In love with you? With who? He?

BRAINSY: I'll make sure to hide  
 What I feel inside  
 I'll make sure to hide

CHORUS: What he feels inside?

BRAINSY: What I feel for you  
 And I'll laugh in your eye  
 If you realize  
 I am the one in love with you!  
*(Rhythmically spoken.)* What a Fool can do  
 Loving someone like you  
 Marking a bird that wing  
 High in the sky?  
 What can a Fool do

Aiming his heart at you  
 What can a Fool do  
 But let his dream die?

*Lights off. Up on DRIVER's yard. MISS GATHA is seated in a rocking chair. MAUD, the servant has come to comfort GATHA but is uneasy in the face of GATHA's unresponsiveness. LOVEY and the BOY set the stage for what is to follow.*

LOVEY: Reams of dreams  
 But everyone dream their dream different!

BOY: And a dream can dead  
 Just like me and you.

LOVEY: When a dream dead and smell to high heaven

BOY: Some take it make laugh, like Brainsy

LOVEY: Some take it make something else  
 Like Agatha Franklin!

*MAUD fans herself with her headtie. She is nervous. GATHA's composure unsettles her, the latter's hauteur also unnerves her. The scene is played to a dub rhythm, so that the line between singing and speaking is erased. This gives it a formal 'blues' quality.*

MAUD: (As she fans herself.) I did forget how far the walk far  
 From Mayor Mitchell to your  
 And Driver's yard. (Pause.)

*GATHA gets up. Without a word, she pours water from a clay jar placed on a box under the tree. She brings the glass to MAUD. As the latter drinks, GATHA returns to her rocking.*

MAUD: Is the Queen's frock that you have in your lap?

GATHA: Yes.

MAUD: You...going to rehearsal  
 This evening then?

GATHA: No.

MAUD: (After a pause.) I hear say plenty money spending  
 For new costume for Jonkunnu?

GATHA: Yes.

MAUD: A new Queen frock in it too?

GATHA: Not for me.

MAUD: (*After a pause.*) So you...know.

GATHA: Yes.

MAUD: That's what I did...

GATHA: Come to tell me?

MAUD: Yes.

GATHA: You could have saved yourself the trouble.

MAUD: It wasn't any trouble. (*Pause.*)

After all is a long time  
Since you and me was friend. (*Pause.*)

From we was children

Playing game in the sun

Besides when trouble

Lick my life, left, right

Up down

Not always you

To whom I turn? (*Pause.*)

No trouble at all

For me to come up here. (*Pause.*)

I truly sorry for what I hear

Gatha, I want you to know.

*She gets up, comes closer to GATHA.*

I know it hard, Gatha!

We who feel it know it!

But that is woman's lot

So take time, take care!

Just band your belly and bear! (*Pause.*)

One day before you know it

The whole thing pass!

Over and done with.

One day you hear the name Driver  
It don't even echo in your heart  
One day come, you don't even  
Remember who the damn man was:  
You free, free at last.

GATHA: One day not now. (*Pause.*)  
I desolate, Maud.  
I desolate.

*Pause. MAUD senses the depth of GATHA's mood, reacts angrily, quarrelling with the world, her usual defence mechanism, but with a great tenderness for GATHA.*

MAUD: Driver going to pay!  
For all that he do to you.  
Driver make a bad mistake!  
The day he join up with those Maroon  
From Portland Mountain!  
From the day I listen to that boy  
Cuffie and watch him good  
I say to myself, this time  
Driver out of him depth!  
Maroon people like that not  
Like the rest of us. They deal  
In heavy science and witchcraft! (*Pause.*)  
(*She whispers.*) I hear say the Jonkunnu  
They take out at Christmas  
Not Christian. It African  
From way back!  
And in their maskarade  
Is the dead and heathen god  
That dance the mask.  
Maroon people heathen.  
Not like you and me.  
They don't make joke!  
Driver better watch out.

(Pause.) As for the Quasheba she,  
 Driver don't know what trouble  
 He troubling when he push you out  
 To make way for a scheming young  
 Good for nothing like she!  
 You of all people!  
 The best Jonkunnu Queen  
 In all of Kingston history!  
 I don't know  
 What the world is coming to!  
 I vex you see! I vex!

GATHA: All that over and done with now  
 All that make-believe puppet show.  
 From now on the part I play is real!

MAUD: What you mean?

GATHA: Everything happen for a purpose  
 Man only have to read the signs  
 Then put his hand  
 To do what he have to do!

MAUD: Gatha, take my advice. Let go of Driver.  
 Put him out your heart  
 Lock the door, dash away the key!  
 Driver not worth it!  
 The man fell on your life like a curse!  
 All we other girl did know,  
 Growing up with you, God  
 Make you special! (Pause.)  
 You don't know how I did proud  
 That is me one you did select  
 To be friend with. Maud miserable  
 People say, have bad mouth and bad mind!  
 Only you know there was  
 More to Maud than that!  
 More than quarrel and spite and curse!

Only you know what I have  
 To put up with, day in, day out!  
 With the three children  
 To feed and clothe  
 And not a man  
 To lend a hand.  
 Only you one know!  
 And you help me out  
 And not a soul know! (Pause.)  
 Yet still and all  
 I want you to know  
 The best gift you  
 Gift me with  
 Was when my eyes beheld  
 You step out as Agatha Franklin.  
 The best Queen  
 Of the maskarade show.  
 When I see you dance  
 The world open before me  
 Like a fan.  
 I pretty again and I fly  
 Like a kite in my hand!  
 Nothing in my life  
 Since and again  
 To match or beat  
 The way I feel  
 When I see you dance  
 The Jonkunnu Queen.  
 Whatever happen  
 I thank you Gatha  
 I thank you for it.

*MAUD is crying silently. GATHA comes to her and wipes away her tears with the back of her hand. MAUD turns to go, then swings back. Quiet, but vehemently.*

MAUD: So who dance or who won't dance  
 Queen in this year Jonkunnu  
 For me and other Kingston people  
 There will never be another Queen like you!  
*She turns to go. She is weeping for the lost potentialities of their youth, the non-realization of their hopes. At the gate, she turns.*

MAUD: Nothing! Before or since!  
 As when you dance  
 The Queen! Nothing!  
*MAUD goes quickly. GATHA has already forgotten her. As MAUD leaves, SLIM enters.*

SLIM: Afternoon, Miss Maud, Miss Gatha!  
 I am in haste  
 You have the costume Driver leave here for me?  
 But, by the way  
 What this I hear  
 About Queen?

GATHA: Yes.

SLIM: Then what part you playing then, Miss G?

GATHA: This year I write my own play, Slim  
 This year I play my own part  
 In my own scene.  
*Puzzled, SLIM watches as GATHA deliberately sits in the rocking chair, stroking the Queen's frock on her lap. As she rocks, she sings.*

GATHA: Edoh, edoh, edoh oh  
 Oh! Oh! Oh!  
 Edoh, edoh...

CHORUS: (*Softly to beat.*) Man must pay  
 What man owe  
 That is the law  
 The earth write down  
 And what go up  
 Must come down

To her ground!  
 GATHA: (*Sings.*) Sun hot bright outside  
 And I am all alone.  
 Sun hot bright outside  
 And I am on my own.  
 Edoh, edoh, oh, oh oh!  
 Edoh, edoh! Oh...

CHORUS: For fire that light  
 Must burn and burn  
 Catch who it catch  
 Hurt who it hurt!  
 Fire that light  
 Must burn and burn  
 And only blood  
 Can put it out!  
 Only blood!

GATHA: (*Sombre, powerful.*) Edoh, edoh, edoh!  
 Oh, oh oh!  
 Edoh, edoh  
*Blackout.*  
*End of Act Two.*

## Act Three

## SCENE 1

*Music: GATHA's 'Edoh' tune used, with drums reinforcing the 'edohs'. Then the fife or flute. This narration is more formal than the others. The pattern is that of a calypsonian like Chalkdust who uses the calypso form to put across complex ideas.*

LOVEY: Now the other face appear!  
 The face that hide behind our maskarade!  
 The factor in the equation  
 That everyone forget  
 Is that life too have its hand in this affair!  
 Life too have its plan and purpose, one  
 That go far beyond their schemes and dreams  
 Driver's, Cuffie's, Quasheba's.  
 For the fact that Life keep back  
 Like a wild card in the situation  
 To play it like joker, come the time, come the  
 Occasion  
 Was the fact that Gatha  
 Didn't dance Queen in Jonkunnu  
 Dance it the best, like a woman possess  
 Dance it all these years for nothing!  
 The fact that Life keep back  
 Was that when Gatha step her step  
 One step forward, two steps back  
 It's the Earth herself that dance that step.  
 The Living Law that make man man  
 That embody in her flesh! Rhythm  
 It's commandment  
 In the pattern of her step!

*The BOY joins him, clapping rhythmically.*

BOY: And as the rhythm step, the rhythm say:  
 Share! Share my earth in common!  
 Share food as you share my rain!  
 Life's chance as you share my sun.

LOVEY: Or...I...the Earth  
 Will wipe you out!  
 BOY: Now in ordinary time  
 What the earth say?  
 No sweat! In everyday time  
 You look out for number one.  
 Grab all you can? That's cool!  
 Go on! As for you that rule,  
 Ordinary time is YOUR time,  
 Come on strong. Power enthroned!  
 Hog up all of life's chances  
 Wealth, woman, for you one!  
 Who complain  
 Thump them in their mouth!  
 Lick every teeth down their throat!  
 But wait until ordinary time done!

LOVEY: Wait until the edges  
 Of the year have met  
 When three hundred and sixty days  
 Of ordinary time pass and gone.  
 Then the time that mark  
 By the wax and wane of the moon  
 Appear at last!  
 The five feast days  
 That are out of time  
 The holy days, the maskarade time.

BOY: Ordinary time reverse!  
 Power uncrown! The king dethrone!  
 Number one out for the count.  
 The Queen Mother rule in.

The rule reverse!  
The rule is share!  
The rule is love.

*Jonkunnu music begins under.*

LOVEY: All over the world,  
In Egypt at the festival of Zed  
With the river boat of Isis,  
In the Sumer of King Goudea  
In the New Year of China  
The Apo of the Ashanti  
The Purim of the Hebrew  
The Hussein of the Mohammedans  
The Mardi Gras of New Orleans  
The Incwala of the Swazis,  
The Calypso of Trinidad,  
The Maracatu  
From the Congo to Brazil.  
All over the world  
The rule is share  
The rule is love  
In the time that time reverse!

BOY: Laugh! All over the world  
The rule is laugh  
The fool enthrone  
As lord of all and give command:  
Break down all ranks,  
Bring all men to the ground  
Purge all hate! Remove all grudge  
Let love flow! And dance, dance  
To the rhythm of life's pattern!

LOVEY: Here is where, now is when  
Life trump with her ace.  
For since Life know  
That when Gatha step her step

In our maskarade play  
Is the old Law that write  
In the rhythm of her step,  
Life plot it  
So that the new Law  
The Driver champion

BOY: That say 'take!'

LOVEY: Come into confrontation  
With the old Law  
That Gatha stake her claim on!

BOY: That say 'share'. Give back!

LOVEY: Or I the Earth will wipe you out!

BOY: (*Serious.*) That is the other face that hide  
Behind our maskarade!

LOVEY: Let that other face appear!

BOY: Let the Jonkunnu come in!

LOVEY: Let the Maskarade begin!

*Spot off LOVEY and BOY. Brilliant light on stage as the Maskarade troupe explodes onto the stage. Jonkunnu music under. PITCHIE PATCHIE dressed in a brilliant new costume, with a peaked cap, bells, and a whip, followed by JACK OF THE GREEN with a collecting bowl, and by the HOUSEBOAT and HORSEHEAD. They circle, PITCHIE PATCHIE using the whip to 'Dress back the crowd'. Since PITCHIE PATCHIE's opening speech is always topical it can be changed with each production to incorporate new and topical allusions. In a sense, very subtly, whilst the King and the Prince are the official heroes, the production must begin to build up PITCHIE PATCHIE since in the end it is he who will win the 'girl'. His style is as formalized as a clown or as a Calypsonian. Once again it must come clear that BRAINSY is the real 'artist' of the Band. In his role as PITCHIE PATCHIE he is transformed, a man come alive. He whirls and talks quickly.*

PITCHIE PATCHIE: (*As he hits with the whip.*) Room,  
Room, Kingstonians all

Please give us room we pray,  
 As we come to play our Maskarade  
 This merry Christmas Day!  
 In the year of our Lord, 1841

*The HOUSEBOAT mask dances, leaping, whirling.*

We are the best Jonkunnu band  
 That this town ever know.  
 In our Jonkunnu Houseboat  
 We carry good medicine  
 To purge the world  
 Of all greed  
 To let good feeling  
 Freely flow!  
 From you to me.  
 From me to you in return!  
 And on top of that  
 We offer good luck  
 At cut price!  
 Good luck for Christmas!  
 Success in the New Year!  
 Low prices, high wages  
 A pocket full of money  
 Cheap houses  
 Honest politicians  
 The negation of  
 Inflation  
 The Soviets out of Afghanistan  
 The Americans out of the Caribbean!  
 A dollar worth a dollar  
 A cent worth a cent  
 Peace on earth  
 Good will between men!  
 And in return for all this  
 Only a few cents

To meet our expense!

*JACK OF THE GREEN goes round with the bowl.*

Put a few cents in Jack of the Green's bowl  
 Times hard  
 Money small.

*People on stage begin to throw cents etc. also from the audience.*

Throw, throw  
 A comet up in the sky  
 Show that once and for all  
 This is world crisis  
 Or 'God's time'.  
 So take a break from disaster  
 Share a few cents  
 See our pleasant play  
 Let Lord Laugh drive away all hate  
 A few cents! That's it!

*JACK OF THE GREEN busily collects as drums and fanfare.*

BRAINSY: Now here begins our play:  
 Step in fair Queen. Clear the way!

*QUASHEBA enters with her ladies. They step around the stage, dance the Jonkunnu step. She seats herself on throne.*

BRAINSY: Enter bold King.

*DRIVER enters, addresses audience.*

KING: I am the king of courage bold  
 Who with his sword win a crown of gold  
 And with this fight win as my prize  
 Everything all at once:  
 House and land, kingdom and throne,  
 Rising stock dividends, taxes cut to the bone,  
 And you, the fairest of Jamaica's daughters!  
 View me, my Queen  
 My time is short

The criminal Warwick waits.  
Wanting to rob me of this love  
I have grabbed from life  
To guard my age against the dark.

QUEEN: My Lord, my King, I beg you  
Please not to leave me.

KING: I would not, love  
But Death waits  
Saddled and bridled outside my gate.  
If fate's lottery should spin 'gainst me  
Don't fret.  
We will soon be together again  
In an executive heaven  
Where all the voters vote Republican  
And stay the course with President Reagan.  
Angels will police the streets,  
Lock all losers out from destiny  
And bar them from our lives.  
Then you and me can live in peace, my Queen  
With no more challengers to fight!  
Then me and you can love, my Queen  
In storybook style! Kiss me.

BRAINSY: Make way for the Grim Executioner!

KING: Executioner, these are my orders:  
Keep your axe edge keen and bright,  
Guard the Queen!  
Kill all covetous knights  
Whilst I fight the fight of my life.

BRAINSY: Kingstonians, clear the way!  
Yonder come Warwick, the Prince.

*CUFFIE enters with his accompaniment. Appropriate dances, etc.*

PRINCE: Madame, my Queen and soon to be  
My love

With the strength of this, my sword  
And my right hand  
As challenger  
I stand before you now  
A poor man of this land  
Condemned to be, through no fault of my own  
Out of work  
And what is worse  
Condemned to live without a destiny!  
As a challenger I come to fight  
For them who from the day they born  
Lock out from life's chances.  
In their name I stake my claim.  
I hope to win love's fairest prize:  
A crown and a throne; a job and a Toyota  
And you ruling the kingdom of my heart!  
And if I must tear this kingdom down  
I will tear it to the ground  
But I shall not lock out  
From Life's chance ever again!

*Shift of tone. He kneels.*

I shall not lock out from love. (*Kisses her hand.*)  
So I kiss your hand, my Queen.  
I will return! Till then I beg  
May your eyes not see anyone but me.

*CUFFIE starts to go off to duel. Stops, then says:*  
Remember, Quasheba, what I tell you  
Don't play me no play.  
If he touch you up  
And you don't push 'way him hand  
As far as I concern, the play mash up.  
You hear me?

*EXECUTIONER/GATHA advances, lowering the axe. CUFFIE wheels away to the KING.*

PRINCE: Guard your body  
Mind your head  
Watch how my sword will strike you dead!  
*They prepare for battle.*

BRAINSY: Don't weep for them, my pretty love  
All men are fools.  
But I am a fool that knows I am a fool.  
And so, whilst they prepare to fight  
I'll take the chance to woo.  
They'll tell you it's for the love of you  
They draw their pretty swords  
It's no such thing, my love  
Power is what they want.  
The old one is afraid of death  
The young one afraid of life  
But I love you  
With the love of a fool,  
And the love of a fool is wise.  
The love of a fool will make you smile,  
Put laughter, like sunshine in your eyes.

*Although BRAINSY as PITCHIE PATCHIE begins his wooing as part of the play, he should become quite earnest and convincing by now. It should be indicated that he really is falling in love with QUASHEBA.*

QUEEN: You plead a cause that's all in vain,  
You offer sunshine for my love,  
But I sold my love for joy and pain  
And my love is not for sale again.

BRAINSY: Love as you will, love as you will.  
For what lose I?  
The folly of a foolish love  
The folly of a dream that died.

*KING and PRINCE fight with their sticks using the movement of the Warwick stick dance, moving to the music. The crowd seethe with excitement and make encouraging comments. They fall silent as PITCHIE PATCHIE holds up his whip.*

PITCHIE PATCHIE: One shall die,  
One shall live  
This is the challenge that we do give!  
*He brings down the whip and the KING and the PRINCE fight with their sticks using the movement of the Warwick stick dance, moving to the music. As they fight, lights on to LOVEY.*

LOVEY: Couple sparks flying here and there,  
But so far, so good.  
The play still playing according to the pattern.  
They fighting now  
And just as it should turn out  
The young prince supposed to win.  
Touch the old king with his stick,  
The old king fall down on the ground  
Pretend him dead.  
The Queen run to him  
Call for a doctor to bring him back to life.  
This is the pattern of the Maskarade Play  
That did work out  
When the Negro people  
Take the pattern of  
The Maroon Oxehead  
And mix it in with  
The Horsehead Festival  
That the English people  
Bring with them.  
So in the play  
In England as in Africa  
A king dead  
And a king resurrect;

Then all sing and dance  
And shout hooray!  
That is the pattern of the play.

*Lights off LOVEY and BOY.*

QUEEN: Oh woe is me! Oh woe is me!  
My husband's dead and gone away  
On the cold ground he's laid.

PRINCE: Now that he's dead  
And his body is cold  
We'll take him to the Church Yard  
And bury him in the ground.

QUEEN: But the doctor has his part to play  
In the Christmas Maskarade.  
Tell the doctor to hurry come.  
I'll pay any amount to bring my king back,  
To love and life,  
To save him from the cold, cold ground.  
Where the doctor? Where? Where?  
A doctor! A doctor! My kingdom for  
A doctor.

*She runs distractedly up and down, peering into the crowd. Everybody cranes to look, shading their eyes from the sun. Enter BOY dressed in DOCTOR outfit. Mimes as in the traditional Chinese Theatre manner, round and round the stage, urging on an imaginary mule. Spot on him. He carries a hearing aid like a tube and speaks in a loud voice as if deaf. The QUEEN is still wringing her hands in an over-theatrical way.*

DOCTOR: Where's the patient? Show me him.

ONE OF THE CROWD: See the patient  
Here, doctor  
The patient is the king.

DOCTOR: A King, eh? That not going to be cheap.  
Where's the patientee?

ONE OF THE CROWD: The patientee

Doctor? What you mean?

DOCTOR: How you mean what I mean?

The patientee? The person who is going  
To pay me  
My big fat fee.

QUEEN: I will pay you, doctor,  
I am the Queen!  
I will pay you anything, doctor, anything  
If you can bring him back to me.

DOCTOR: Can? What you mean can?

I can cure a jackass who dead  
For seven long years  
What says a poor broken down  
Rickety ramshackle King!

QUEEN: I know you can do it, doctor,  
So do it for me.  
You are well known  
As the greatest doctor of medicine in this town.

DOCTOR: What you mean doctor of medicine?

Doctor of medicine come a penny a dozen.  
I am a doctor of genetics!

QUEEN: What kind of doctor is that, sir?

DOCTOR: The only kind of doctor  
Worth a cent!

Other doctors work to cure the sick body  
Some even work to cure the sick economy  
But I cure the body politic!

QUEEN: But what that have to do with  
My dead husband, sir?

DOCTOR: What you want with that broken down  
Old man you call you husband?  
If it's a heir to the throne you want

Pay me \$10,000  
 And I provide you with a test tube  
 Full of freeze-dry, freeze-fresh  
 Class A, genius sperm from my bank...  
 You want the millionaire model instead?  
 We have that too.  
 Take your pick! Which brand?

QUEEN: But doctor, it's my husband you came to revive!

DOCTOR: Cho! For \$10,000 extra  
 I finish him off with an injection  
 So he never revive again.  
 Bring the cash. Give the word.

*He takes out needle; prepares to make the injection.*

QUEEN: But doctor, he's my husband!  
 And I love him!

DOCTOR: Love a loser! That's dysgenic!

QUEEN: Dysgenic or not, doctor  
 That is what write in the script  
 For me to say!  
 And it write in the script too  
 For you to revive him.  
 So that play have happy ending!  
 So you have to make him live!

DOCTOR: If you say so...  
 One pill called Instant Life,  
 One drink called Instant Growth,  
 A few drops of Development and Supply-side  
 Productivity.  
 Now, I put a drop on his temple, a drink in his throat,  
 A pill in his mouth. Pass a candle over him body.  
 Instant magic! Voodoo economics! You see?  
 He begin to move already!

*KING groans, sits up, wipes his eyes.*

KING: Where am I? In heaven? Or hell?

Or in love?

DOCTOR: Company, look on my good work:  
 I am a celebrated doctor of genetics  
 See how my instant magic works.  
 Rise up, you King. Join him, young Prince.  
 Come one, call all.  
 Join the dance of life lost  
 And life and love regained.  
 Come now, Mr Music Man,  
 Strike up the dance.

*They all join in a circle. The KING with his arm round the QUEEN, the PRINCE on her other side. They dance with arms linked.*

CUFFIE: Don't touch up my woman, I warn you!  
 Stop it. This minute.  
 Or I take this stick and break your head!

*Not only the music, but everyone stops.*

DRIVER: Which your woman?  
 She says yes to my proposition!  
 She is my woman now!

CUFFIE: Not a damn!

DRIVER: (*Putting his arm around her.*) Stop me.

*Silence. CUFFIE springs at DRIVER with his stick, and they begin the stick fight. But this time not as a dance. At the moment when DRIVER hits away CUFFIE's stick, leaving him defenceless, everything freezes. Lights on to LOVEY.*

LOVEY: Driver hit away Cuffie stick now?

BOY: Yes, sir.

*We see the actions as a gestural mime as LOVEY questions the BOY.*

LOVEY: Driver forget himself now  
 Turn the sharp end of the stick,  
 Run it right into Cuffie...?

BOY: (*Hushed.*) Yes, sir.

LOVEY: Driver come back to himself now

Realize what he do

Draw back...?

BOY: Yes, sir.

LOVEY: Ah.

*CUFFIE has fallen to his knees, his hands clutching at the stick, pulling it out. The Executioner moves forward, stamps the long-handled axe on the ground before CUFFIE, who draws himself up on the axe, swings it high above DRIVER, brings it down, as DRIVER reaches for CUFFIE's throat. The axe comes down. They fall dead together. Silence.*

LOVEY: The two of them, King and Prince

Slide over the edge of the light

And into the dark.

Two Actor-Boys, stone cold dead

On the cold ground.

Christmas, 1841.

Dead, stone cold dead.

*Silence. The BOY, awed, moves away from LOVEY. He recounts the next events in a voice something like that of a radio commentator, but he whispers so as not to break the mood. The KNIGHTS take their sticks to each other in the dance fight, and the BOY's narration is done to the clicks of their sticks. The lighting on the KNIGHTS is dim, so that the focus is on the BOY.*

BOY: Then the Knights of Driver

Take them stick to Cuffie's Knights

And Cuffie's Knights lick them back.

The fight spread like contagion

To every Jonkunnu band in Kingston.

It was war all right!

Mayor Mitchell vex out of him mind

Declare Jonkunnu abolish.

Kingston people blood up

Riot bruk!

Soldier pour into Kingston town.

Scarlet coat, fire and smoke

Blood! All around.

Till under the shadow of the gun

Kingston grow quiet.

Under the prow of the cannon

Kingston stay quiet!

*As DEAF-MUTE places the axe in the basket, BRAINSY goes up to the EXECUTIONER, spins him round to face him.*

BRAINSY: Alright, Slim!

So you give the boy the axe

What the hell you think?

GATHA: Not Slim.

BRAINSY: So Slim?

GATHA: Play the part of Jack of the Green

BRAINSY: And you?

GATHA: I do what had to.

Must and bound.

Measure that deal out

Must deal back in return.

BRAINSY: But...

GATHA: I write a different end

To a different play.

*GATHA moves over to where QUASHEBA sits on her knees. GATHA gazes at the feathered headdresses, picks up the King's headdress, then puts it back. She takes off the Executioner's robe. She leaves. BRAINSY begins to fold the robe carefully. DEAF-MUTE has picked up everything else except the two headdress masks. QUASHEBA continues to hold onto them and says to DEAF-MUTE, as if trying to convince herself.*

QUASHEBA: I did love Cuffie, you know

I did love him bad.

I didn't feel anything for the old man at all.  
 Cuffie didn't believe me  
 But I didn't feel a thing.  
 It was only the rent money he was going to  
 Give me.

*Not hearing her, not noting her, DEAF-MUTE relentlessly draws away the headdresses.*

Why I was going with him  
 For a drive, in a carriage by the sea.  
 Sweet like a dream  
 In the silent silver kingdom of the sea.

*BRAINSY comes over.*

BRAINSY: But the play over now.  
 Come.

QUASHEBA: But the dream dead, Mr Brainsy!  
 You don't see!  
 What left for me to do now?

BRAINSY: Come home...with me.

QUASHEBA: You...?

BRAINSY: With the Fool.

*QUASHEBA hesitates.*

The dream have to make over  
 Now. Again.  
 You don't see? (*Pause.*)  
 Who left to do it?  
 But we ourself... Come!

*BRAINSY helps her up, taking the feathered headdresses of the King and Prince from her. They exit. Lights back on LOVEY and BOY.*

LOVEY: So, the one we least expect  
 The Fool gets the girl.

BOY: (*Interrupting.*) So this is where Life's plot come in!

*He begins to rise, more and more carried away by the excitement of his discovery.*

This is what Life did see  
 That the time of the Prince  
 And the King, of the sword  
 And the gun, of the fairy story  
 That all's well that's lost for love  
 For honour, glory, and even money  
 That that page over and done.

LOVEY: (*Approving.*) Now...you initiate!

BOY: (*Still working out his discovery.*) And the time of the Fool  
 Who make life worthwhile to live  
 For every woman, man, and chile.  
 Who laugh away the old tales  
 That tell say  
 That those on high who box in  
 Lowly people's chance to realize  
 The bright and dazzling in our lives  
 Do so by right!  
 And the time of the Fool  
 Who cut that right  
 Down to size  
 With the weapon of his smile.  
 Who retell the old tales  
 So as to change in men's hearts  
 The feel of what is right!  
 (*Pause.*) Who reverse ordinary time  
 To maskarade time  
 With the laugh that he laugh  
 In the sun! (*Pause, wondering.*)  
 That time...the time of the Fool...  
 Me! Has come!

LOVEY: (*Handing the BOY the necklace that is the insignia of his trade.*) Here...you graduate

So take the tools of your trade.

BOY: I...am...?

LOVEY: You license now  
You are a full-grown spinner of dreams.  
A Master teller of tales.

*BOY leaps into the air with a great shout, then suddenly remembers. Concerned.*

BOY: But you?...

LOVEY: I pass on to you  
The tale that pass on to me.  
It's your turn now  
To turn the new page  
To sing the strange, the new  
The different verse! My task is done.

*Pause. As it sinks in, the BOY gives a great leap. The finale music begins under the BOY and CHORUS as they chant and dance to the rhythm of the music.*

BOY: Jonkunnu play over?  
Jonkunnu play just begun!  
And it's my turn now  
To carry on  
The maskarade that first began  
In Africa with  
The birth of man!  
Before the Sahara  
Turn to desert sand!  
Long before Sumer, Egypt, or China!  
Long before Genesis or Greece!  
So let the dream spin again  
And let the tale retell.  
Till we reinvent  
A lineage  
New, of man!

Till we reinvent the first invent  
That we invent!

CHORUS: Ourselves!

BOY: So let the dream spin again  
Let the tale retell  
Till we all know who we are  
Till we all know  
Where we are from.  
We're the lineage of the stars  
And the universe is ours.  
We are of high royal estate  
And shall not know  
Want or pain!  
Ever again!

CHORUS: Never! Ever! Again!  
So we are serving notice now  
We shall take this old world up  
We shall turn it upside down  
And remake it as our own!  
And no one shall ever know  
Want or pain! Ever again!

BOY: So let the dream spin again  
Let the tale retell.  
Let us rhythm to the pattern  
That the Earth has set!  
Let us dance clan by clan  
In the maskarade of man!

CHORUS: The maskarade of man!

BOY: For we shall dance  
Clan by clan

CHORUS: Yet all as one

BOY: So that the maskarade of man  
Will go on!

CHORUS: Go on!

BOY: Maskarade play over?

CHORUS: Maskarade play just begun!

*Everyone in the cast dances.*

*The End.*

## Notes to Maskarade

- The spelling of *Maskarade* is intentional. The playwright wishes to convey the cadences of the Jamaican pronunciation of masquerade.
- An early version of *Maskarade* appeared in a 1979 Jamaica Information Service 'West Indian Plays for Schools' booklet, volume 11, edited by Jeanne Wilson.
- A screenplay by Lloyd Reckord exists: *Queen of Jonkunnu* based on the stage play *Maskarade*, music by Harold Butler, lyrics by Jim Nelson, book by Sylvia Wynter (© 1990. Reckord Films).

## Appendix:

The Jonkonnu Festival: What exactly is Jonkunnu as practised in Jamaica?

- **Cheryl Ryman:** 'Jonkonnu masquerade bursts forth from the pages of history as the earliest traditional dance form of African descent still to be found in Jamaica.'<sup>1</sup>

'Simply put Jonkunnu is traditional street festival based on age old rituals brought with the African slave on his Middle passage. It takes place at Christmas time. Several members of a troupe elaborately, often frighteningly costumed as traditional characters such as Cow Head, Horsehead, Pitchie Patchie, King, Queen, Bellywoman, The Devil, Houseboat amongst others use dance, mime, gestures and masks harking back to memories of an African homeland and culture to enrich the ritual and heighten the effect. This festival, once widely popular in Jamaica, currently takes place on a much reduced scale, amidst a culture rife with centuries of racial exploitation. In the parade (or performance) music, (usually from drum and fife), is an essential element. One enduring object of the Parade is to elicit donations from an appreciative crowd of onlookers...'.

Sylvia Wynter's paper 'Jonkunnu in Jamaica: Towards the interpretation of Folk Dance as a Cultural Process', which was published in part in the *Jamaica Journal* Vol. 4.2 in 1970 and is a detailed consideration of Jonkunnu is too lengthy to include the entire text here. However below is a selection of excerpts from this paper to aid appreciation.

'The Jonkonnu or John Canoe festival had its beginning in a cultural process that (Hans) Sloane<sup>2</sup> witnessed and described in the seventeenth century.

The rise of sugar on the world market made Jamaica a sugar society. Each Estate was an enclosed world and although the refusal of the Jamaican planters to Christianize their slaves (...)

<sup>1</sup> *Jamaica Journal* February 1984, Vol 17, No 1: 'Jonkonnu: A Neo-African Form' by Cheryl Ryman.

<sup>2</sup> Hans Sloane: A voyage to the islands Madera, Barbados, Nieves, St Christophers and Jamaica privately printed in 1725.

prevented the later acculturation that would take place, there were points of contact between the English, Scotch and Irish indentured servants, and particularly the bookkeeper class. It was through this class, poor, cut off from much contact with their fellow-whites, living in concubinage with African, creole, and mulatto women, that some sort of cultural fusion must have occurred.

The Morris dance is part of the spring festival, where young men dance for the renewal and continuance of life. It is, in effect, 'medicine dance' handed down through the European counterpart of the secret societies 'which practised the medicine religions that conditioned life in Europe before Christendom'... Each Morris group had a leader. There were several characters who made up the group. The hobbyhorse, which became the Jamaican horsehead was only one of several animal men. The dance distils the medicine 'in rhythmic waves which reach the trees and animals and houses and people, quickening to life, washing them clean and making them whole. Another type of Morris dance, the horn dance, was a fertility medicine dance. Apart from the spring rites, there were mid-winter rites. It is in these rites that we find the 'Sword dance-cum-Play' which was to become one aspect of the Jonkonnu. Like the Morris Dancers the swordsmen are seen as actors 'who once disguised themselves, blacking their faces or covering them with masks'. They, too, had the same retinue of characters: hobbyhorse, clown, the woman, a Dirty Bet, of sometimes a king or queen, lord or lady and often a quack doctor, and his man Jack.

The Egungun secret society of the Yoruba is a cult... An Egungun, which is, in effect, a Jonkonnu as mask, dancer and leader of the group, is seen as the embodiment of the spirit of a deceased ancestor who returns from heaven to visit his people. The word *Egungun* itself means 'masquerador'; in the Jonkonnu celebration described in 1925 the group referred to themselves as 'masqueradors', rather than Jonkonnu...

The Mask, i.e. the costume, must entirely cover the dancer. He carries a whip and speaks in a ventriloquial voice.

From Long's<sup>3</sup> description, the sword is in his hand, rather than the whip – and the fact that the dancer bellows out as he dances 'John Connou' – may suggest the influence of the English Sword-dance-cum-Play

The plays, like the English folk doctor-play had the power of transformation of reality. There is a fusion of procession and doctor-or-cucumby's play, which makes it an interesting parallel with the Jonkonnu, as writers after Long described it. The death and rebirth 'doctor-play' features as part of Jonkonnu by 1801 when Lady Nugent described it. 'On Christmas Day', she writes, 'the whole town bore the appearance of a masquerade'. There are many 'Johnny Canoes' and many 'strange processions' and groups, made up of 'dancing men and women'. Apart from the processions, 'there was a party of actors. Then a little child was introduced...a king who stabbed all the rest...some of the children...were to represent Tippoo Saib's children and the man was Henry IV of France. After the tragedy they all began dancing with the greatest glee... The tragedy was the 'doctor-play' mock duel at the end...'

It is obvious from these descriptions that the version of the Sword-Dance-Play that had become popular in the Jamaican Jonkonnu was the version with the duel at the end, in which the two protagonists fight with swords; one is killed, but, revived by the music, gets up and dances – whether a sword dance between the two contenders, or a general dance. Excerpts from Shakespeare and other plays were then performed, but according to Belisario<sup>4</sup> – whose sketches and descriptions of Jonkonnu are invaluable – these excerpts were all fitted into the pattern of the folk play: their ending kept the same ritual and significance.

Whatever might have been their performance, says Belisario 'Combat and Death invariably ensued, when a ludicrous contrast

<sup>3</sup> Edward Long (August 23, 1734-March 13, 1813) was a British colonial administrator and historian, and author of an influential work, *The History of Jamaica* (1774).

<sup>4</sup> Isaac Mendes Belisario (1794-1749) born Kingston Jamaica, educated in England where at the age of 18 he had already exhibited at the Royal Academy. He returned to Jamaica in 1834 at the age of 40 and by 1837 his Sketches of Character were complete. These 12 sketches were hand-drawn hand-tinted lithographs of five rural Jamaican landscapes and seven Jonkunnu characters.

was produced between the smiling Mask and the actions of the dying man. At this Tragical point there was always a general call for music – and dancing immediately commenced – and this proved too great a provocation usually to be resisted even by the slain, and he accordingly became resuscitated and joined the merry throng.'

Belisario tells us that the concept of the competing sets and Set-Girls was brought to Jamaica from Haiti by the French refugees and their slaves and servants who accompanied them when the Haitian War of Independence began. In Haiti, the French Catholic Carnival, itself a rite similar in some concepts to the Jonkonnu, with pagan elements reinterpreted in Christian-Catholic terms, set the dominant patterns; but already infiltrated by African elements, such as the use of drums and rattle.

Through the French Set-Girls, the Creoles (i.e. Negroes born in Jamaica) began to dominate the Carnival. The Jonkonnu were still part of what Chambre terms the 'Johny Canoeing' on the north side of the island, which was a 'splendid affair' but they were a subsidiary part in Lewis' account; and even the costume of the Jonkonnu chief masked dancer was creolized in some aspects. 'Monk' Lewis describes the Jonkonnu chief dancer as 'a Merry Andrew dressed up in a striped doublet and bearing on his head a kind of pasteboard houseboat filled with puppets, representing some sailors, others soldiers, others again shown at work on a plantation.' Lewis was one of the earliest writers to describe this 'houseboat' mask.

From Belisario's sketches and descriptions of the Jonkonnu band, just before the festival in its more elaborate form disintegrated, it is obvious that the houseboat mask was a very special mask for the leader. The mask of the other characters such as COW HEAD, and HORSEHEAD were animal masks borrowed from the African and the English folk ritual. The mask of KOO-KOO or ACTOR BOY, while elaborate, does not seem to have any particular symbolism... The name KOO-KOO which has given rise to a most ingenious explanation recorded by Belisario, nevertheless seems most likely to derive from the Yoruba word – KU, which means 'a luminous spirit', i.e. that which a good man becomes after death. The word IKOKO,

related to the same root refers to the food, drink and meat offerings that are put on the graves in pots. This food is supposed to belong to the *Kas* or spirits of the dead. KOO-KOO is most likely related to both these words, since the Egungun cult was an ancestral cult; and in this context ACTOR BOY would embody the ancestral spirit. His pantomimic gestures in the Jonkonnu procession which seemed to refer to his hunger, would perhaps be intended to remind that the 'spirit' must be fed; and perhaps by implication that the group must be rewarded with good tips.

ACTOR BOY, Belisario also tells us, some ten years before (i.e. before 1837) played one of the main parts in the COMBAT-till-Death version of the doctor plays. He most probably played the part of the younger protagonist who gets killed, is restored to life, and joins in the dancing. But the creolized version of the Jonkonnu began to lose much of its original meaning, and by Belisario's time, ACTOR BOYS were 'reduced to displaying their finery' and 'to the performance of certain unmeaning pantomimic actions'. The significance of most of the other characters sketched by Belisario had also become confused. Yet a character like Jack-in-the-Green who stands with the Set-Girls in one sketch, carried religious connotations in both his English and his African meaning.

The Jonkonnu houseboat also carried religious connotations, as both Williams and Chambre indicate. The Horned mask, the Oxhead mask and its symbolism was clear. Why did this mask give way to the houseboat? Did the Jonkonnu figure sketched by Belisario, in 'mask, wig and military jacket, posing upon his head the house-shaped cap glittering with mirrors and tinsel and topped by a tufted dome or peak' still carry a religious connotation, in spite of his secular and European-type dress? Was the houseboat an African mask in an original form? Or has an old artistic form and function – the mask – been translated to the New World to create a new mask for a new reality?

#### Playwright's notes:

The characters Driver and Maud. Driver's split personality, Act 1, scene 4 (p40). This scene reveals the two sides of Driver. He reveals his real bitterness, his sense of entrapment in a secondhand life, his bitterness at his employers and the dominant middle-class white world which 'down-presses' him. Not giving him a chance to realise his potential. Thus his theme song is in two parts: (a) the Introduction which is more intimate and lyrical but with the ska-reggae beat that will explode in the second part; (b) the second part of the song will suggest that like Guede, one of the Odun Gods, he is moral, a life force whose ethic is his vitality and force-force in the biological and African ontological sense. Like John Konny, he is, from the Judeo-Christian perspective, ethically ambivalent.

Maud's ambivalence towards Gatha. Maud has a contradictory relationship with Gatha. She likes her, but feels that she is in strange territory with her, respects her, but resents the way in which Gatha keeps herself to herself, asking no quarter from anyone, compelling respect, remaining apart from the others. She pities Gatha on the other hand and identifies with her. We see her here (in Act 2) out of her servant role, the role imposed on her by the social order.

### **The setting for the play:**

The set must catch the opposition of the Blue Mountains, the plains and the sea. The two-level stage serves to mark the difference – interaction of past and present. When the play begins the Jonkunnu Festival has had to take refuge in the hills; to go underground like the Maroons. The sense of an underground existence needs to be brought out.

Alternative Cuffie song Act 2, Sc. 1

You are my man's dream  
You are my pride  
You are my reason to live or die.  
You're sweeter than honey  
Your lips seal the taste  
You tie up my heartstring  
You brand me for life!

Bridge:

So don't ever leave me  
Don't take your love from me  
Don't let my eyes blind  
Don't cut my heart strings  
Mash up my pride  
For if I should lose you  
I'd strike blind!

### **The Jamaican Maroons:**

The escape into the mountainous interior of the island by (some of the) slaves – especially the Kromanti – who were to become famous as the Maroons, began early under the Spaniards. The Maroons humanized their mountainous interior with adaptations of their own culture.

(In 1739-40 the British governor in Jamaica signed a treaty with the Maroons in which they were granted 2500 acres of land in two parishes of the island Portland and Trelawny. The single female National Hero of Jamaica is Nanny (?-1733), a Maroon warrior Queen who waged successful war on the British.)

### **Editor's notes:**

#### **DUB:**

Dub is the recording engineers' art of deconstruction where a reggae composition is stripped down to its drum and bass skeletal structure and reconfigured, recreated with fragments of other instruments, enhancing the danceability of the music. Linton Kwesi Johnson: *Writing Reggae: Poetry, Politics and Popular Culture* *Jamaica Journal*, Vol 33, Nos 1-2.

#### **TOPICALITIES (Anachronistic references)**

*Maskarade* records events in 1841. It is highly unlikely that black peasants jumping Jonkunnu in the streets of Kingston would refer in jest to the political landscape of the United States of America in 1983: e.g.

Now some people might think, say/That the tale we going to tell/Just a nice little piece of 'ethnic' business! /So let me warn you from the beginning/I'm not no folklore Uncle Remus/With a fake lore masquerade/For some of you to come and get/Your doctorate on.

Or as Brainsy says:

And the clip clop and the luxury of the carriage/Work the trick!/Tricknology! You have/Your doctorate in it!

Pitchie Patchie desires: Low prices, high wages/A pocket full of money/ Cheap houses/Honest politicians/The negation of/ Inflation/The Soviets out of Afghanistan/The Americans out of the Caribbean!

And the King admits to his worry about rising stock dividends and taxes cut to the bone but promises his love they will soon be together again in an executive heaven where all the voters vote Republican and stay the course with President Reagan. The doctor, a qualified geneticist who offers test tube designer babies through his freeze-dry class genius sperm bank, prescribes pills called instant life, a few drops of development and supply: Instant Magic: Voodoo Economics.

Thus, *Maskarade* employs a well-established Jamaican theatrical tradition which flourished in the annual local pantomimes where

the lead actors would engage in unscripted 'front of curtain' dialogue/banter commenting on the news/scandals of the day while successfully masking the changing of the scenes behind the curtain. These dialogues were called Topicalities. As this version of the play was performed for University audiences in the United States of America, the playwright has used 'Topicalities' which would amuse and have relevance for her audience.

**Jamaican dialect:**

Maugre: very thin, underfed.

(Page 42, Maud, 1<sup>st</sup> speech, line 8)

Johncrow: local name for a vulture.

(Page 44, Quasheba, penultimate line)

Old higue: a miserable cantankerous woman.

(Page 46, Elizabeth Jane, line 19)

BEDWARD

A PLAY IN TWO ACTS

BY LOUIS MARRIOTT



Charcoal portrait of Alexander Bedward  
by Ray Jackson