

## Passing

On sunny summer Sunday afternoons in Harlem  
when the air is one interminable ball game  
and grandma cannot get her gospel hymns  
from the Saints of God in Christ  
on account of the Dodgers on the radio,  
on sunny Sunday afternoons  
when the kids look all new  
and far too clean to stay that way,  
and Harlem has its  
washed-and-ironed-and-cleaned-best out,  
the ones who've crossed the line  
to live downtown  
miss you,  
Harlem of the bitter dream,  
since their dream has  
come true.



## Shame on You

If you're great enough  
and clever enough  
the government might honor you.  
But the people will forget —  
Except on holidays.

A movie house in Harlem named after Lincoln.  
Nothing at all named after John Brown.

Black people don't remember.  
any better than white.

If you're not alive and kicking,  
shame on you!