

SAMPLE LYRIC – George Dureau (New Orleans)

Narrator: I spent a lot of time with George Dureau, the city's best known painter and photographer. Many of the paintings and most of the photographs are studies or portraits of black men. They are studied, becalmed, classic. In one, a black man of twenty with a hurt, sensitive, angry face stands in the nude, offering his superb body more as an insult than a gift. He has one arm that ends at the elbow, and resembles a broken antique statue.....

Voice 1:

Let me touch your secret sorrow
Let me soothe your secret pain
I will heal your scars with laughter
Make you whole again

In the stump of your withered arm,
Little negrito
Is the place where all the loneliness dwells
I will lie here beside you and listen
To all the stories it tells

Then I'll feel the inner recess
Reaching for the hidden bone
Make it feel loved and wanted,
Claim it for my own

I shall give it a silly name,
Make it my baby
Hold it up to be seen in the light
We will share it together; our secret
To wrap around us at night

We will love the part that's wounded
All the anger buried deep
Give your hurt a special welcome
Laugh ourselves to sleep

In the morning we'll rise again
And I will paint you
Put you down on a canvas in oil
You will stand there, my proud Abyssinian
Your lineage ancient and royal

There your everlasting image
Caught for all the world to see
Sends its message to the future
Perfect dignity.