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On a New York Street Corner: Canvas #14

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Even in the dim blue light of
creation's flame
it shines.
He's the silent songwriter of our
Apocalypse.
He keeps a Big John de Conqueror root
in his hip pocket & a lodestone
hidden neatly away in his vest
right beneath an old gold watch
on a tarnished silver chain
this powerful composer of the
syncopated ebony tune.

On a New York Street Corner: Canvas #14 / Quincy Troupe

sounds of four-four time
being played by a blind black
man jingling coins jingling
silver blood coins
in a battered tin cup on a corner
in mid-town manhattan a blood
black blue black blind man
nailed too a wooden white cane
noddin off behind dark glasses
a black kansas city man
a new york street blind black man
with a battered tin cup
playing four-four time
playing kansas city bird
prez count four-four time
head noddin diggin the music
of nineteen hundred
& ice cold thirty-four
a blood black man
a blue black blind black
man on a new york street
corner bebopin in time
bebopin on down grinin
a gold tooth crown

& a small head noddin
crowd gathered diggin
on his music

Richmond Barthé: *Meeting in Lyon* / Melvin Dixon

Lyon is a city of two rivers and Roman aqueducts
two thousand years old. I come by snake-roads
through the faces of three mountains; following
butterflies and the tracks of old bones.

I find you in the hour of molding and the time
of two rivers running here. Old fingers press
into clay; *the old ones touch the young*
and help them believe.

I look into eyes that have seen through stone,
I listen to lips that gave language to the clay,
I touch the spidered hands that bent bronze into blues.

Africa Awakening, Meditation, Shoe Shine Boy,
Your blood hardens into stone. "Study nature,"
you tell me in riverwords that pulse two veins in Lyon
and leave Roman remains.

It is why your young-old eyes are *thin-skinned*
and burning. Mississippi, New York, Jamaica, Italy,
Sweden and more fire. Bronze burning in black fingers
shed the thin skin, shed the twisted muscles, shed
teeth and tears, leave the *inner music* and the
mountain butterflies to show the way.

II

Two rivers swell in Lyon and clean the old dust.
History is stone polished black,
is blood and burnt bronze.

Your blood hardens into stone poems. "What color is art?"
and "What color is love?" The questions and your crisp
eyes clean me, let me know the years you read the muscles