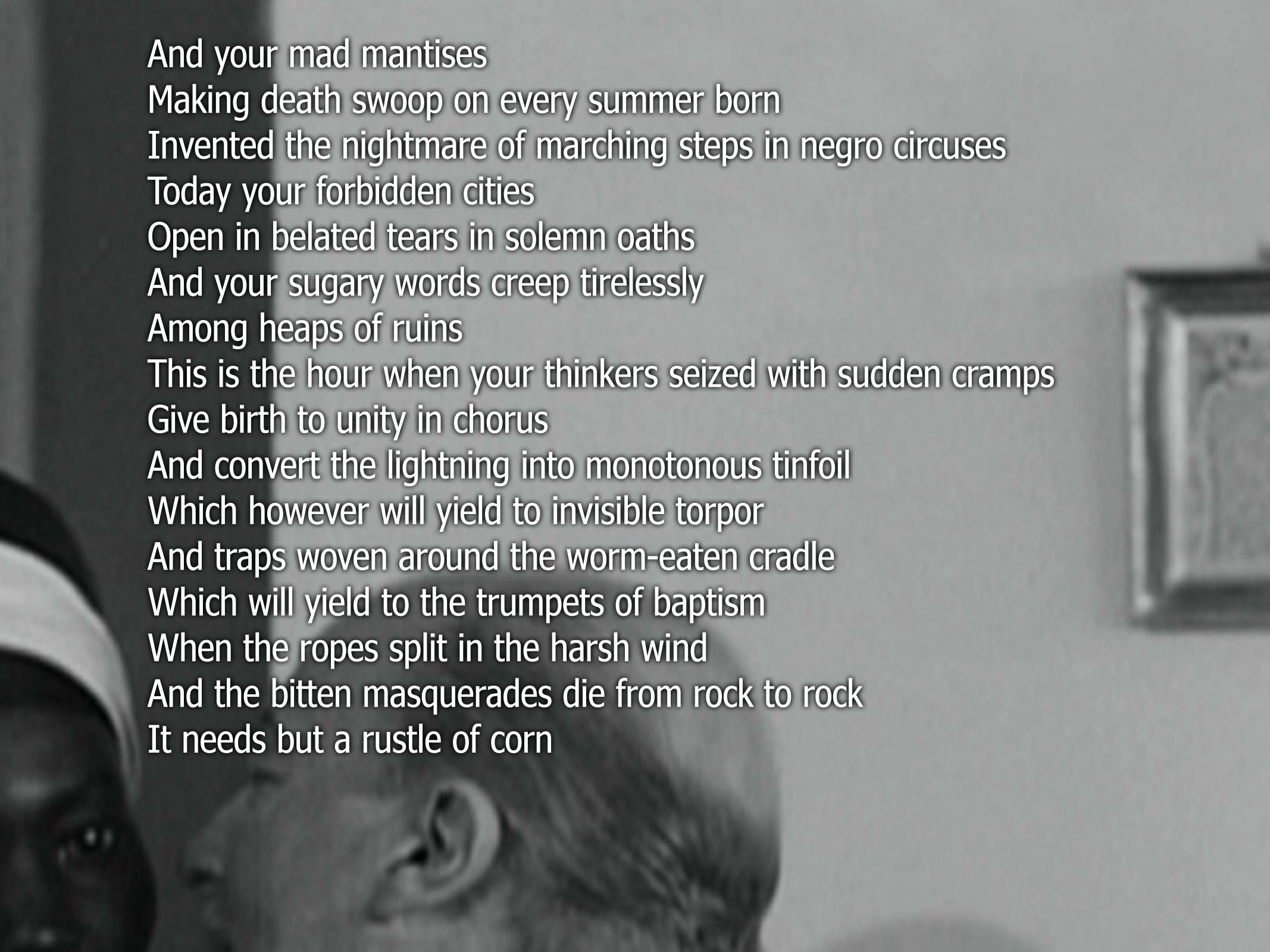


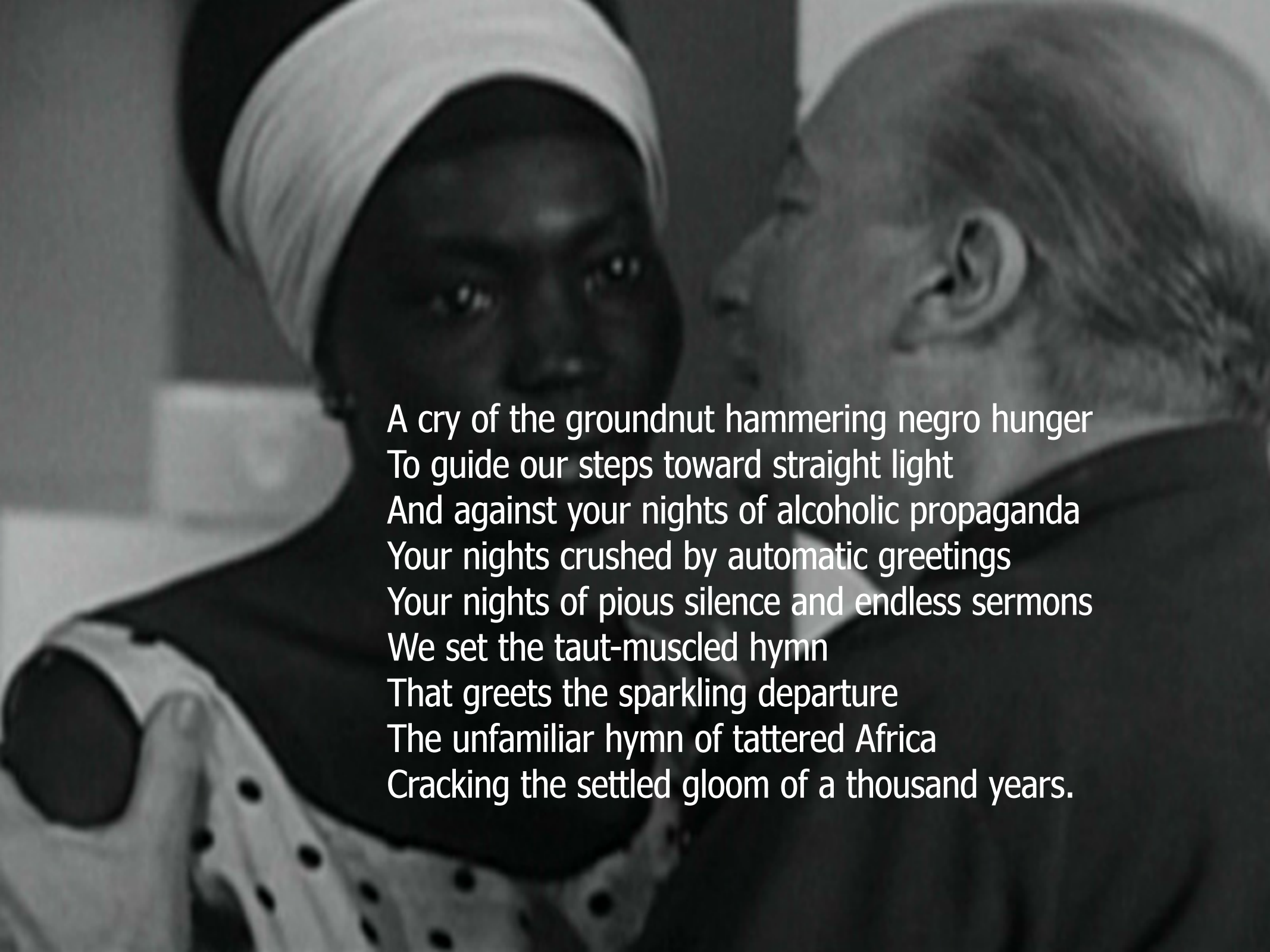


To the Bamboozlers

Cynical monsters flashing cigars
Riding on flights of orgies
And parading equality in an iron cage
You preached sadness chained to fear
Melancholy song and renunciation



And your mad mantises
Making death swoop on every summer born
Invented the nightmare of marching steps in negro circuses
Today your forbidden cities
Open in belated tears in solemn oaths
And your sugary words creep tirelessly
Among heaps of ruins
This is the hour when your thinkers seized with sudden cramps
Give birth to unity in chorus
And convert the lightning into monotonous tinfoil
Which however will yield to invisible torpor
And traps woven around the worm-eaten cradle
Which will yield to the trumpets of baptism
When the ropes split in the harsh wind
And the bitten masquerades die from rock to rock
It needs but a rustle of corn

A black and white photograph showing a Black woman on the left wearing a light-colored headwrap and a patterned garment, looking towards a white man on the right. The man is shown in profile, looking back at the woman. The background is blurred.

A cry of the groundnut hammering negro hunger
To guide our steps toward straight light
And against your nights of alcoholic propaganda
Your nights crushed by automatic greetings
Your nights of pious silence and endless sermons
We set the taut-muscle hymn
That greets the sparkling departure
The unfamiliar hymn of tattered Africa
Cracking the settled gloom of a thousand years.



Time of Martyrdom

to my dear brother-in-law, with affection

The White killed my father

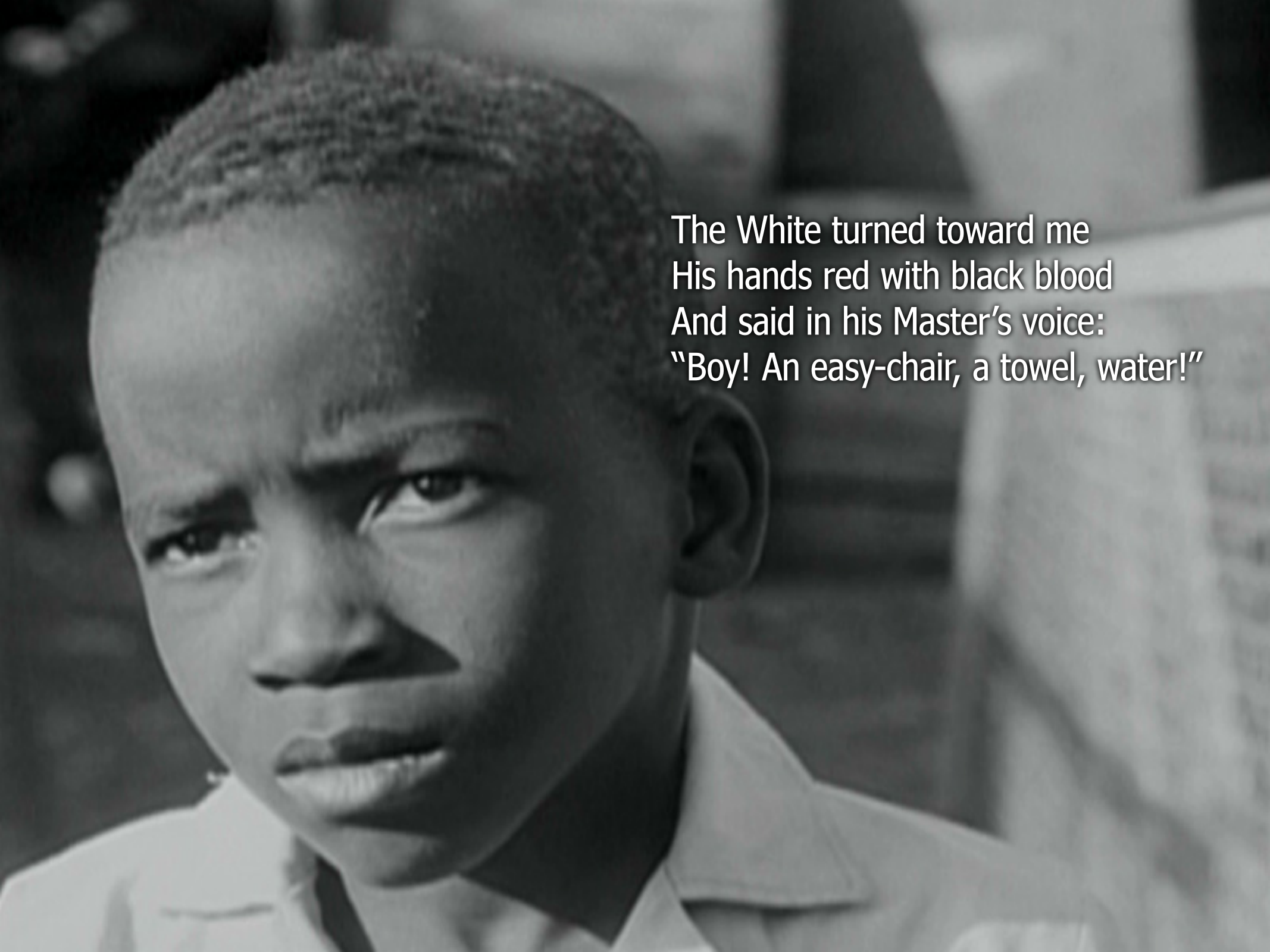
My father was proud

The White raped my mother

My mother was beautiful

The White bent my brother under the sun of the roads

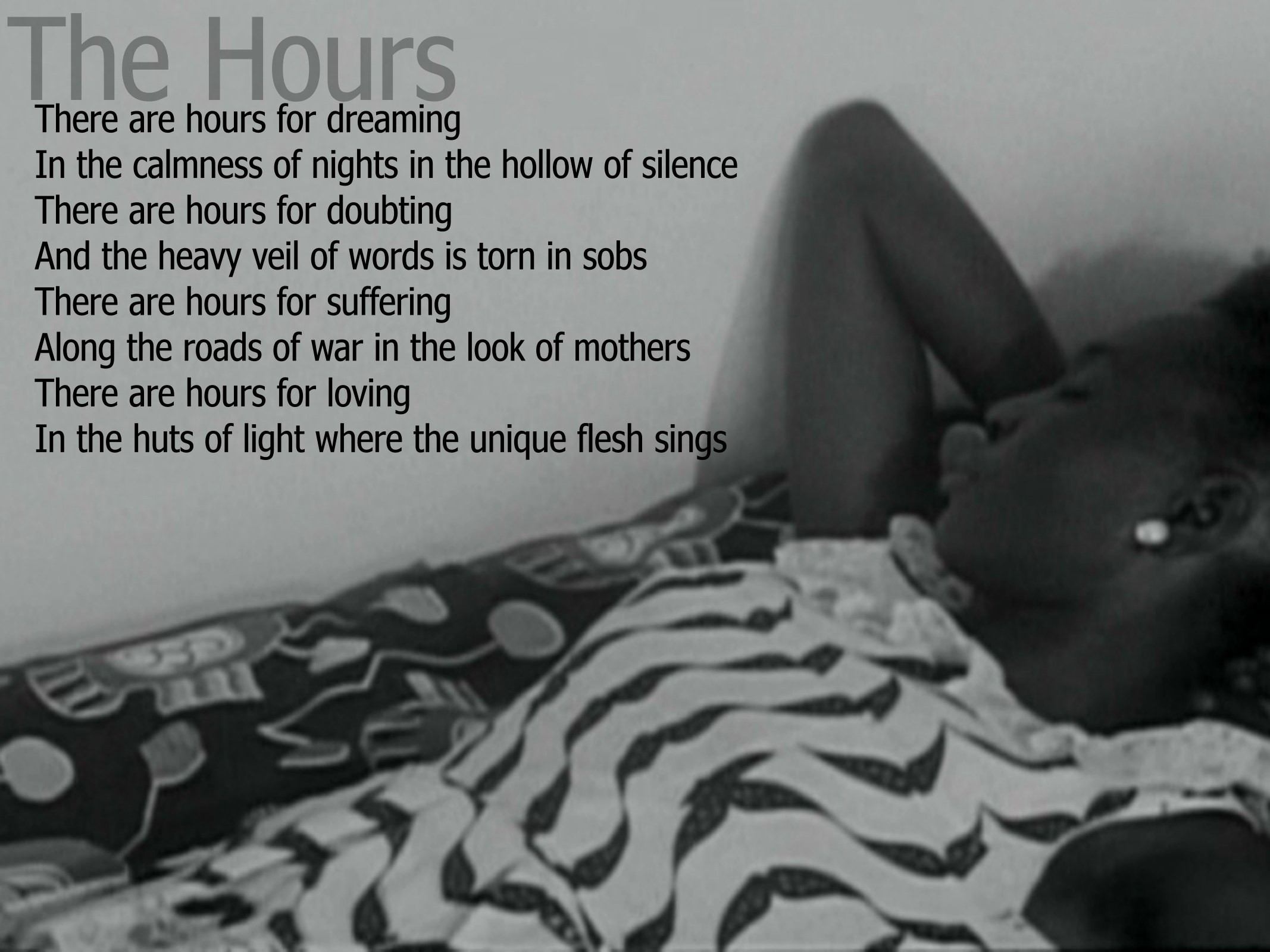
My brother was strong



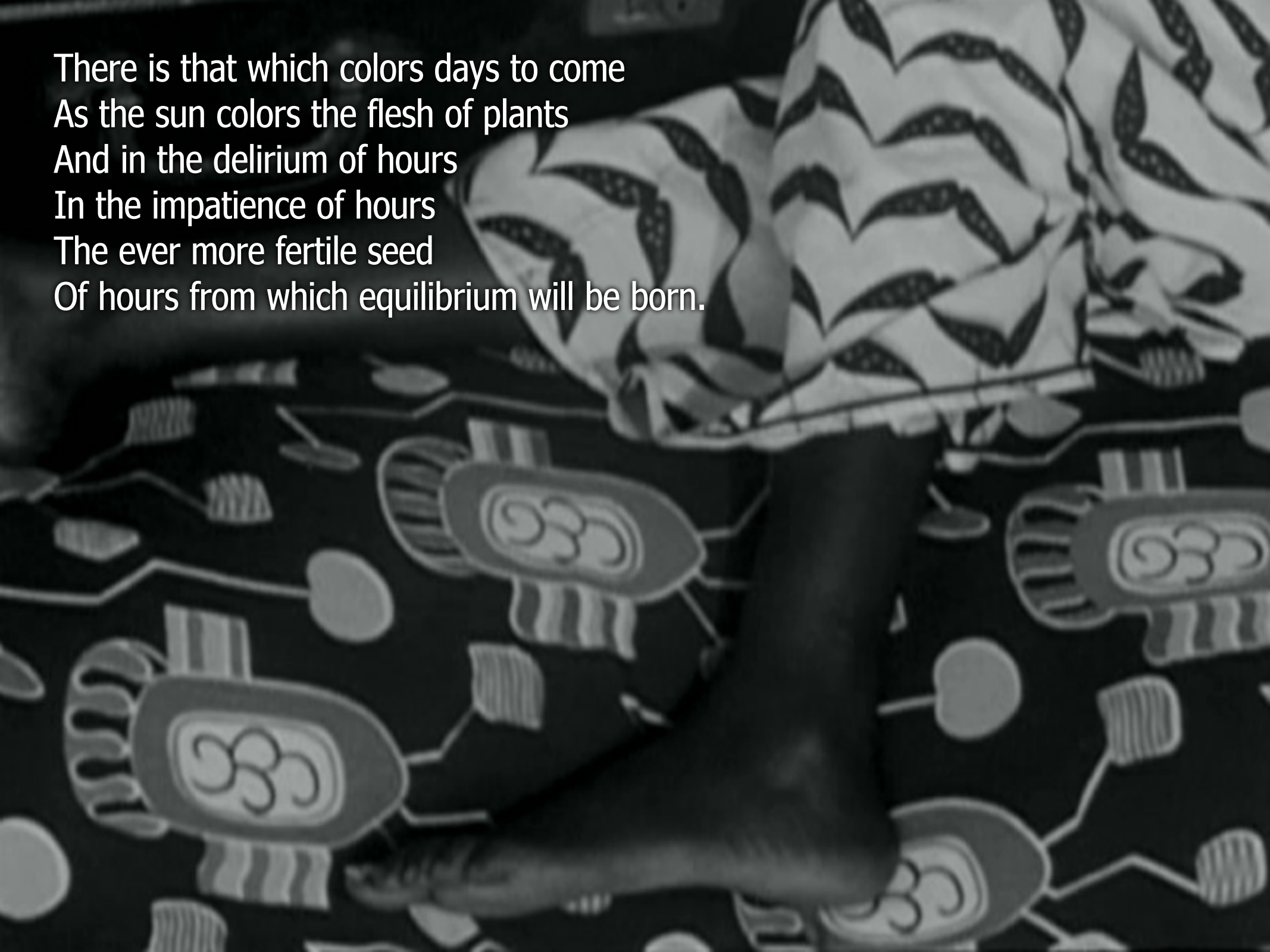
The White turned toward me
His hands red with black blood
And said in his Master's voice:
"Boy! An easy-chair, a towel, water!"

The Hours

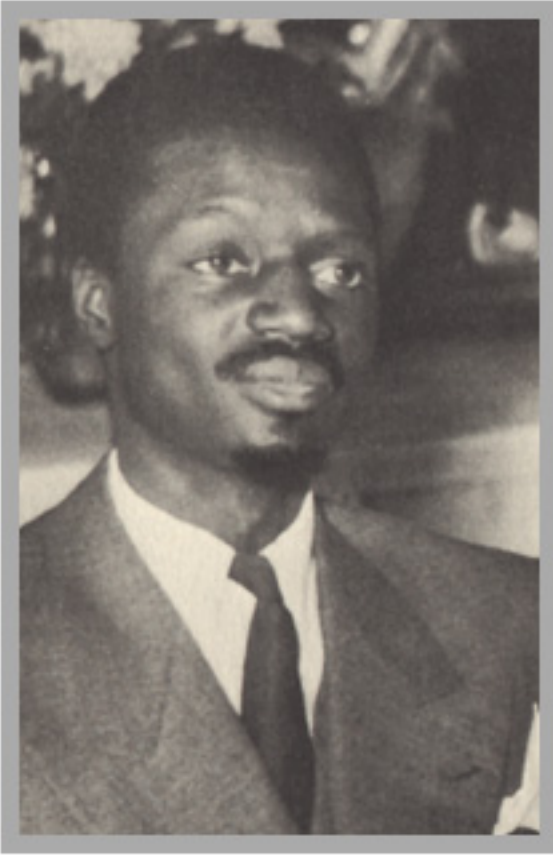
There are hours for dreaming
In the calmness of nights in the hollow of silence
There are hours for doubting
And the heavy veil of words is torn in sobs
There are hours for suffering
Along the roads of war in the look of mothers
There are hours for loving
In the huts of light where the unique flesh sings



There is that which colors days to come
As the sun colors the flesh of plants
And in the delirium of hours
In the impatience of hours
The ever more fertile seed
Of hours from which equilibrium will be born.



David Mandessi Diop

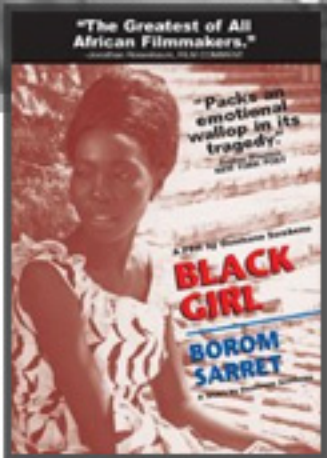


The words, the poetry, in fair use in this free publication come from David Mandessi Diop, born in Bordeaux in 1927. For academic purposes only, it must be said that Diop would be of that school of “negritude” so ridiculed, we are eagerly told, by such greats as Wole Soyinka. Soyinka proclaims, “A tiger does not sing its tigritude.” Though this “tiger” is not spectacularly “biracial” in the dramatic, American sense of the term, we might see the subtle cultural mix in his very name: **Mandessi** comes from his Cameroonian mother while **Diop** comes from his Senegalese father. Without regard for racial classification from, well, racists, it should be clear that David Mandessi Diop chose to embrace his Africaness—and this movement had to be done from afar confined **in the French language**. When we judge ourselves by the content of our character and our thick European accents, Diop’s journey is not that much different from a “biracial” child seeking an authentic and satisfying maturity.

Ousmane Sembène



The stills in fair use in this free publication come from the great talent who is often called “the father of African film,” Ousmane Sembène, born in Senegal in 1923. These images come from his second internationally recognized film, **La Noire de... (Black Girl)**. This 60-minute, French-language film is said to be first feature-length film released by a natural-born African (who are distinguished here from European “immigrants,” the Afrikaners). **La Noire de...** is based on the professional literary work of Sembène, one of his short stories. It is said that Ousmane Sembène turned to film because he saw that his literary work would only be enjoyed by a small cultural elite of Senegal. It follows that his films are meant to be accessible to a larger Black African audience.



**Poems translated from the French by
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