

AT THE CLOSED GATE OF JUSTICE

By James D. Corrothers

To be a Negro in a day like this

Demands forgiveness. Bruised with blow on blow,
Betrayed, like him whose woe dimmed eyes gave bliss
Still must one succor those who brought one low,
To be a Negro in a day like this.

To be a Negro in a day like this

Demands rare patience—patience that can wait
In utter darkness. 'Tis the path to miss,
And knock, unheeded, at an iron gate,
To be a Negro in a day like this.

To be a Negro in a day like this

Demands strange loyalty. We serve a flag
Which is to us white freedom's emphasis.
Ah! one must love when Truth and Justice lag,
To be a Negro in a day like this.

To be a Negro in a day like this—

Alas! Lord God, what evil have we done?
Still shines the gate, all gold and amethyst,
But I pass by, the glorious goal unwon,
"Merely a Negro"—in a day like this!