

Edgar O. Lake

LITTLE RICHARD'S SECOND COMING



In the Dust Bowl street-lights
Hope rendered us in off-white
Sepia lines of starchy linens sprout
a forest of feathered hats

And, "Jesus-Jesus" hand-fans
Laced and lacy, converts wait
Despite the burning shoes

Across from Hamilton Court
where St. Nicholas snakes like a river
and snips at Seventh Ave at 'Hund'er'd
N' Sis-teenth Street: comes Li'l Richard
"Hallelujah, Bless His Name!"
'Lived long enough to see it! -
from Hollywood to Harlem, 's-right!

Up the ramped stairs, outside
The platform 'bout-to-take-your-breath
These women been here, done took-off
from White Women's Long Island homes
"He Won't Forsake Us, Nor...."
All around the 25th Precinct, blue sedans wailing
Niggers' knives cutting every lottery-winner

Crowded like the Hindenberg, the fans rotate
The perfume's choking like a gas chamber
'Bout to ask God's children for their prayers,
- and one tithing-tenth - for the off'ring
"Sinner! - Saved by Grace!"
Sweet Daddy - Bishop McCullough's nearby

trombones, blaring: draped in white, the ratings game

But, the Faithful wait for the King of Pommade, Tuti
The Monarch of Mascara, pre-Pink Floyd, Tuti-Fruti
He's turned his back on Hollywood – protesting!
He's the King of Rock-and-Roll – will take it back –
 “This Little Light of Mine – Say What?”
The tired Daughters of the Carolinas toss their curls
Little Richard's seen the fork in the road – and took it

Praise his name!