

Pascal J. Lafontant

RESTITUTION

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When I am dead
bury me in a raised grave
facing the bay of my birth.
Let me rest simply peacefully.

When I am dead,
give me back my hand-made
used tire sole sandals
worn off from walking
the long trying roads
the trade-winds had brought me to.

I will hold them tightly over my chest
while I walk again barefooted
on the dark red clay
of the hills of my youth.

Take my worthless manuscripts
of impotent libations,
but give me back my black magic,
my voodoo powers,
so I can dispatch rain clouds
to the thirst of my ancestors.

When I am dead, dress me
with a hat of my mother,
my father's watch, my grandfather's cane,
and bury me with my grand mother's
cloth coffee filter;

and were I to be cremated
transplant my heart first
into the trunk of a breadfruit tree.

When I am dead,
give me back to my memories,

my swirl of archipelagoes,
my country of rain and thunder,
so I can stay
awake;

for I have no desire to sleep,
but only to doze off, once in a while,
for there is nothing
more peaceful,
than the permanent thunders
of Augusts' storms.