

## Poetic Reflections on Caribbean Culture and History

### A Reading

"Lorna Goodison's new collection is a rooted, organic delight, true in its intonations to the Jamaican language she loves, fresh in its wit and pain and in the high, spiritual gossip of its leaves."—Derek Walcott

#### Speak of the Advent of New Light

On a night of no stars it will spark  
from the friction of a homeless woman's shoe  
slipping along the pavement as she stoops  
to stir her evening meal of trickledown  
in a paintpan over a fire of damp rubbish.

Simultaneously it will glow phosphorescent  
in the cupped hands of a night fisherman  
as he bends to test the waters off the bay  
near surrender, the wonder of the living water  
bearing footprints and currents of fresh beginnings.

And small children will come in from play  
pulling like kites behind them luminous  
streamers of light, infused with such colors  
as never the prism of the eye has reflected.  
New light succeeding dark is certain, is expected.

From *To Us, All Flowers Are Roses* (UI Press, 1995)

## Lorna Goodison

*Author, poet, and visual  
artist, Jamaica*

### March 4, 1997

Tuesday 4:00 pm

Room 407, Levis Faculty Center  
919 West Illinois Street, Urbana  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

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