Poetic Reflections on Caribbean Culture and History

A Reading

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

"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)