

Enslaved

Claude McKay

Oh when I think of my long-suffering race,
 For weary centuries despised, oppressed,
 Enslaved and lynched, denied a human place
 In the great life line of the Christian West;
 5 And in the Black Land disinherited,
 Robbed in the ancient country of its birth,
 My heart grows sick with hate, becomes as lead,
 For this my race that has no home on earth.
 Then from the dark depths of my soul I cry
 10 To the avenging angel to consume
 The white man's world of wonders utterly:
 Let it be swallowed up in earth's vast womb,
 Or upward roll as sacrificial smoke
 To liberate my people from its yoke!

Textual Note

This poem also appear in *The Liberator* (July, 1921).

1 ,] *om. Lib.*
 6 birth,] — *add. Lib.*

8 this my race that has no home on earth] my race, my
 race, outcast upon the earth *Lib.*