

# The White City

Claude McKay

I will not toy with it nor bend an inch.  
 Deep in the secret chambers of my heart  
 I muse my life-long hate, and without flinch  
 I bear it nobly as I live my part.

- 5 My being would be a skeleton, a shell,  
 If this dark Passion that fills my every mood,  
 And makes my heaven in the white world's hell,  
 Did not forever feed me vital blood.  
 I see the mighty city through a mist—  
 10 The strident trains that speed the goaded mass,  
 The poles and spires and towers vapor-kissed,  
 The fortified port through which the great ships pass,  
 The tides, the wharves, the dens I contemplate,  
 Are sweet like wanton loves because I hate.

## Textual Note

This poem also appears in *The Liberator* (October, 1921).

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3 ,] *om. Lib.*  
 3 flinch] , *add. Lib.*  
 9 —] . *Lib.*

11 spires and towers] towers and spires *Lib.*  
 11 vapor] vapour *Lib.*