

# Little Black Boy

By Jimmy Moss

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little black boy  
sit down.  
fold your hands into your lap  
and put your lap into order  
now cry me a little song,  
sing me a little note about me  
caring about what you care about,  
then dream me a little dream.  
and when your tears turn into  
oases and exposed rivers  
stand up  
and pour me a little cup  
fill it with every broken promise  
and the unfulfilled moments of  
belated birthdays and first days  
of the school year when your  
clothes were unkempt...then  
tell me a little secret  
about how--you wish your father  
bothered enough to be a father  
or fathered another version of you,  
so that you could have a friend  
and then  
write me a little poem.  
make me a little rhyme about  
the places you lived and the schools

you've attended  
the teachers you've impressed  
and the classmates  
you've offended...by simply  
being a little black boy  
who could read and speak well  
and vividly express himself,  
find clean shirts amongst the dirty ones  
and dress himself  
long enough  
to cover up his little pain  
and then bring me a little more  
of whatever it is that you have  
bundled up in your little hand,  
stashed away from piercing eyes,  
tucked inside of your little lap  
that you peek at every moment  
you are given a little slack  
a little chance and little hope  
a little grade for your little work  
just...put it in my hand...  
and trust me,  
little black boy  
i promise to give it back--in order.