

CEREMONY

Who put the mask of Whiteskin on?

"I," said the freckled,

"I," said the mottled,

"I," said the pinkcheeked,

"I," said the grayfaced,

"We put up our hands and we stopped the sun

And we put the mask of Whiteskin on."

Here one comes knocking without the mask.

"Closed," says the textbook.

"Packed," says the jury.

"Don't drink me," the water.

"Don't pass me," the front door.

"Only white dung,"

Cries the sacred outhouse.

"Is a pale hand upon me?"

Ask the mystic machines.

"It is death to enter and death to ask

If you come knocking without the mask."

Who dances this magic of race and face?

"I," said the hungry,

"Though hunger is skinless."

"I," said the fearful,

"Though fear has no face."

"I," said the safe one,

The loomlord, the landlord,

"Gave hunger a skin,

Gave fear a face.

Now take your place and remember your place

And dance to this magic of race and face."