

A Moment, Please

by Sam Allen

WHEN I GAZE AT THE SUN

I walked to the subway booth
for change for a dime.

AND KNOW THAT THIS GREAT EARTH

Two adolescent girls stood there
alive with eagerness to know

IS BUT A FRAGMENT FROM IT THROWN

all in their new found world
there was for them to know

IN HEAT AND FLAME A BILLION YEARS AGO,

they looked at me and brightly asked
Are you Arabian?

THAT THEN THIS WORLD WAS LIFELESS

I smiled and cautiously
for one grows cautious
shook my head.

AS, A BILLION HENCE

Egyptian?

IT SHALL AGAIN BE,

Again, I smiled and shook my head
and walked away.

WHAT MOMENT IS IT THAT I AM BETRAYED,

I've gone but seven paces now

OPPRESSED, CAST DOWN,

and from behind comes swift the sneer

OR WARM WITH LOVE OR TRIUMPH?

Or Nigger?

A moment, please

WHAT IS IT THAT TO FURY I AM ROUSED

for still it takes a moment

WHAT MEANING FOR ME

and now

IN THIS HOMELESS CLAN

I'll turn

THE DUPE OF SPACE

and smile

THE TOY OF TIME?

and nod my head.