Talking with El Hajj Malik El Shabazz

Bryce Gypsy Rayne

Hey Malcolm, where'd you go,  
After the fire and fury?  
Years since I read your book,  
Listened to your words,  
Still your voice rages on.  
Still see you speaking,  
With Power  
With Love,  
And in Hope.

What would you think,  
Of this time?  
With its,  
Fine clothed prejudices.  
Would you make speeches,  
In great white halls?  
Would you argue as a lawyer?  
Bringing your views,  
To ones such as I,  
Hunched over a tattered,  
Torn paperback,  
In this blackened world of ours?

Are you,  
Amazed that a black woman,  
The highest paid performer?  
Astounded that a
Decorated Black man,  
Walks in front  
Of the American military?

X

Has the world changed,  
Since you’ve been gone?  
Not so different,  
So much the same.

X

Sadden you to know,  
Larry Byrd Jr. won’t be going home?  
Enraged when you see that racism,  
Is still alive and well,  
Angriest Black Man in America.

X

Returning home,  
Would you,  
Wander down,  
The unfashionable  
Streets of  
Darkest Harlem?  
Walk along,  
Brave Detroit Avenue?  
Past the peddlers,  
Past the pushers,  
Past the pimps,  
Same as always.

X

Tell me your thoughts,
On the way to the Mosque,
Questions about your time,
Tell me about growing up,
    All-American,
    African-American.
Time gives up perspective,
As we debate religion,
    Argue philosophy,
Wave to your daughters,
Visit your grandson,
    Mourn for Betty.

Malcolm you left us
    With a speech.
Silenced by ill directed
    Hatred and bullets.
A scapegoat for a
    Misapplied religion,
A Saint shut down,
    Too early–too late.

What would you think of me?
    A pale white boy,
    Aryan poster child,
Without a god,
    Writing about,
A red-haired black man,
    Who lives with his God.

Hey, Malcolm where’d you go?