

James A. Randall won a Hopwood Literary Award for Poetry at the University of Michigan. His poetry has been published in DIE NIEWENEGER, an anthology of writings by Black Americans published in the Hague, as well as in American periodicals. He writes for TIME magazine in Montreal and is listed as one of Time Magazine's contributing editors.

THE VISIONARY

Risen out of his horse's lather, a man
Of fire and inflection,
In the bullring at Cordoba
And under the hot lemon trees . . .
He wanted revolutions

To strain from peasant's mud.
His eyes were quarry stone,
His jaws creased into
River beds. He became
The landscape slowly,
Like a canvass becomes a painting.

If you had seen him much later,
Old on the falling-down balcony,
Host to no one, the fish-smell
In the market below,
The acre of stinking never shut
Eyes set in the lopped heads, and how
He calculated the distance
That was between his eyes
And the proof of manliness
Before he crashed down
And became nothing . . .