# One-Way Ticket

## Langston Hughes

ILLUSTRATED BY JACOB LAWRENCE

Alfred A. Knopf · New York





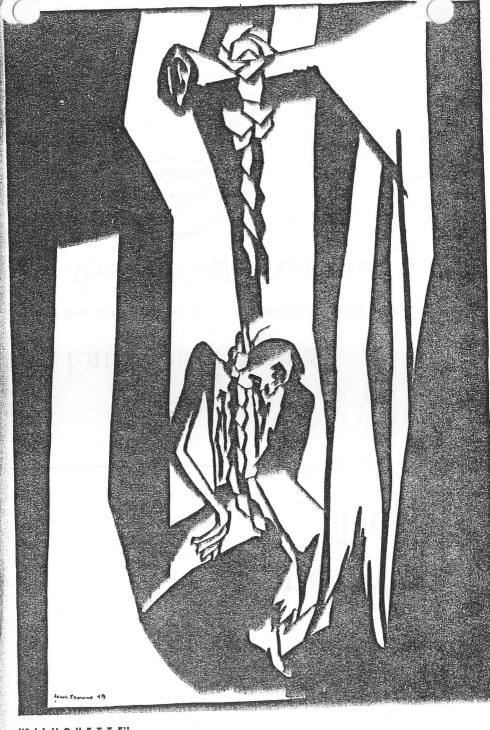


#### SILHOUETTE

Southern gentle lady, Do not swoon. They've just hung a black man In the dark of the moon.

They've hung a black man To a roadside tree In the dark of the moon For the world to see How Dixie protects Its white womanhood.

Southern gentle lady, Be good! Be good!



#### ONE-WAY TICKET

I pick up my life
And take it with me
And I put it down in
Chicago, Detroit,
Buffalo, Scranton,
Any place that is
North and East—
And not Dixie.

I pick up my life
And take it on the train
To Los Angeles, Bakersfield,
Seattle, Oakland, Salt Lake,
Any place that is
North and West—
And not South.

I am fed up
With Jim Crow laws,
People who are cruel
And afraid,

Who lynch and run, Who are scared of me And me of them.

I pick up my life And take it away On a one-way ticket— Gone up North, Gone out West, Gone!



"ONE-WAY TICKET"

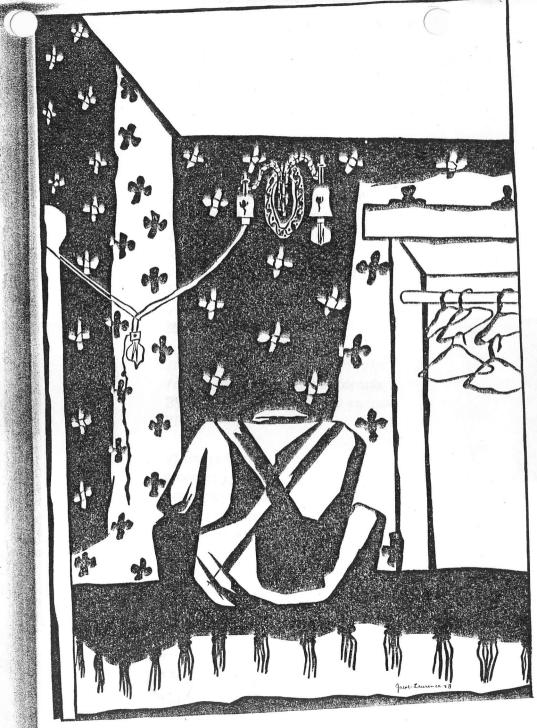
### TOO BLUE

I got those sad old weary blues. I don't know where to turn. I don't know where to go. Nobody cares about you When you sink so low.

What shall I do? What shall I say? Shall I take a gun And put myself away?

I wonder if
One bullet would do?
As hard as my head is,
It would probably take two.

But I ain't got
Neither bullet nor gun—
And I'm too blue
To look for one.



"TOO BLUE"

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#### GRADUATION

Cinnamon and rayon, Jet and coconut eyes, Mary Lulu Jackson Smooths the skirt At her thighs.

Mama, portly oven, Brings remainders from the kitchen Where the people all are icebergs Wrapped in checks and wealthy.

Diploma in its new frame:
Mary Lulu Jackson,
Eating chicken,
Tells her mama she's a typist
And the clicking of the keys
Will spell the name
Of a job in a fine office
Far removed from basic oven,
Cookstoves,
And iceberg's kitchen.

In the eyes once soft benighted And the cotton field is frightened A thousand miles away.

They draw up restrictive covenants In Australia, too, they say. Our President Takes up important matters Left by V-J Day. Congress cases Stalin.

The Tribune's hair Turns gray.

Daddy-o

Buddy-o
Signs his name in uphill letters
On the check that is his pay.
But if he wasn't in a hurry,
He wouldn't write so
Bad that way,
Daddy-o.

Mama says, Praise Jesus! Until then I'll bring home chicken!

The Diploma bursts its frame To scatter star-dust in their eyes.

Mama says, Praise Jesus! The colored race will rise!

Mama says, Praise Jesus!

Then, Because she's tired, She sighs.

