

Delores Gauntlett

LAMPLIGHT



Lampshades, their temples lapped in *Home-Sweet-Home*,
one for each room, all washed and dried,
wicks trimmed: *Jane and Louisa will soon come home*,
soon come home; I close my eyes,
passing in memory the high grass weltering in dew,
the ruminating cows in the bright field,
the red hibiscus that softened the cut-stone wall,
that time of day when the crickets break out sawing in the wind
pitched between petal and thorn—*My dear*,
will you 'low me to waltz with you?—

I begin here, with my methodical aunt
whose inward eye browsed through me
as through the uncut pages of a book

for something particular,
as if my soul were something to be flipped over
and deciphered like a map spread flat—
my aunt, for whom the Psalm sent up its balm
like a fire's whirling spark
over the cancer already altering her veins,
for whom the tambourine shuddered its muse...

She was the first to go and to have said aloud
what this poem does not want to name,
though what she said, at that window under the hill,
would become the fuel that powered my lamp of dreams.
Those firewood days of Beechamville come back
fresh as the moon to an evening stream.

Calabash

A JOURNAL OF CARIBBEAN ARTS AND LETTERS

Volume 3, Number 2 / Fall-Winter 2005

Information about this work:

LAMPLIGHT

By: Delores Gauntlett

Start Page: 146

URL: <http://www.nyu.edu/calabash/vol3no2/0302146.pdf>

Calabash: A Journal of Caribbean Arts and Letters is an international literary journal dedicated to publishing works encompassing, but not limited to, the Anglophone, Francophone, Hispanophone and Dutch-speaking Caribbean. The Journal is especially dedicated to presenting the arts and letters of those communities that have long been under-represented within the creative discourse of the region, among them: Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles, Maroon societies, and the Asian and Amerindian societies of the region. Calabash has a strong visual arts component.

Calabash is published by New York University. Please contact the publisher for further permissions regarding the use of this work. Publisher information may be obtained at:

<http://www.nyu.edu/calabash/about.html>

Calabash: A Journal of Caribbean Arts and Letters

© 2005 New York University