

## Three poems by immigrants

### Not from here

You were not born, here,  
my child,  
not here.  
You saw daylight  
among our islands;  
the sun was always there.  
None could tap the light  
from your eyes,  
or dictate roofs into space,  
for your colour.  
There, in the middle of a hemisphere,  
you and I were born,  
down there.  
We were not in the exodus;  
there was no Moses;  
and this was no promised land.  
You may not know this, yet,  
my son;  
I sense that you sense it.  
Yet, what we leave  
we carry.  
It is no mud  
we dry  
on our boots .

*John La Rose*

### The Invisible

They don't even know  
That I'm here.  
They don't even feel  
That I'm here.  
They see me, but they don't see  
Me.  
I'm here.

*Rudolph Kizerman*

### Confession

I had a condition, she said.  
I was born in England, you see.  
Till last week, I was seventeen  
years old. I've never seen  
a Caribbean island, where my  
parents  
came from. But I was born to know  
black people had nothing. Black  
people  
couldn't run their own countries,  
couldn't take part in running the  
world.  
Black people couldn't even run  
a good two-people relationship.  
They couldn't feed themselves,  
couldn't  
make money, couldn't pass exams  
and couldn't keep the law. And  
black people couldn't get awards  
on television. I asked my mother  
why black people never achieved,  
never explored, always got charity.  
My mother said black people were  
cursed.  
I knew.  
I knew that.  
I knew black people were cursed.  
And I was one.  
All the time I knew I was cursed.  
Then going through a book on art  
one night, a painting showed me  
other people in struggle.  
It showed me a different people like  
that.  
Ragged, barefoot, hungry looking  
they were in struggle.  
I looked up.  
The people needed: other people  
needed.  
Or needed to remember their  
struggle.  
Or even just to know  
their need of struggle.  
No. Not cursed.  
Black people were not cursed.

*James Berry*