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National Museum of African American History and Culture

The Literary Corner: Introduction to African American Poetry with Eugene Redmond—Part I (side a)

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WEBVTT

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<i>Eugene B. Redmond</i>: Debt and the black as well as the national and international literary consciousness

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the real question, Folks is talking about the money, about the silver and the gold,

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all the time the seasons changing and the days is getting cold,

00:11:15.000 --> 00:11:24.000

and they's wondering about the metals whether we'll have one or two, while the price of coal is rising and there's two months rent that's due.

00:11:24.000 --> 00:11:42.000

Some folks say that gold is the only money that's worth the name, then the others rise and tell them that they ought to be ashamed and that silver is the only thing that save us from the power of the gold buzz raging 'round and seeking who he may devour.

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Well, you folks can keep on shouting with your gold and silver cries, but I tell you people [[hams?]] is scary and fowls is roosting high.

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It ain't the sort of money that has pestering my mind

00:11:57.000 --> 00:12:03.000

But the question I want answered is: how to get at any kind?

00:12:03.000 --> 00:12:10.000

<i>Eugene B. Redmond</i>: Dunbar lived to be to his mid 30 very tragic life unfortunately

00:12:10.000 --> 00:12:22.000

<i>Eugene B. Redmond</i>: but uh one of the major Afro American literary figures one of the major American figure literary figures he wrote in both the literary and the formal standard

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<i>Eugene B. Redmond</i>: excuse me literary English as well as the folk English as well as black dialect

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<i>Eugene B. Redmond</i>: but he wanted to be known for his poetry and literary English because he recognized the trap

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<i>Eugene B. Redmond</i>: that William Dean Howells who was the literary tsar of the united states and the last quarter of the 19th century had

placed him in when he praised him purely on the basis of his dialect poetry,

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<i>Eugene B. Redmond</i>: in other words, he said you know this is a black man black man on the right dialect poetry and dialect poetry you know

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<i>Eugene B. Redmond</i>: is either comic or pitiful so this was part of the tragedy of Dunbar's life but Dunbar was so influential so devastating so impactful until literally schools of writing in Afro-America.



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