



Bonnie Tolson writes predominantly about African American life in the inner city and is the author of a poetry book *Naturally Nappy*. Her written portraits and characters are as poignant and diverse as her subject matter.

Besides being a writer, Bonnie is also an educator and counselor, education is a life-long adventure for her. Versatile, she is also a performance artist and successful writer.

Often employed as a speaker, Bonnie shares her message of personal and spiritual empowerment with many audiences each year from elementary schools, colleges, universities and community organizations, parent workshops and staff development seminars. Through her inspirational speeches that include poetry rap, Bonnie encourages and motivates her listeners.

Naturally Nappy

Got a naturally nappy
attitude
just like my hair
it defies
konks
relaxers
hot combs
and blowouts
no matter how it's
straightened
or yanked about
it goes back
to black pride
though a house
divided
these persistent kinks
are too tight to care
just as Samson
power
is naturally
in my
nappy hair

Bangin

You'd better
know the
symbol before you
put it on
if you drop
your pants
and sag them
bag them
if your bibs
hang right
or wrong
you think
it's pretty
harmless
with your cap
swung left
right
your star's
dusted
clean outta
sight

Church

She winched
at my black
out stretched hand
avoiding
greeting eyes
pretending
not to see
following
thirty minutes
of praise
turning
she shuttered
not with the
Holy Ghost
but with disgust
shoulders raised
to heave
then doubled
clutching her
stomach
holding on
to her
make believe

The Cross

Prospect
at 39th Street
checks cashed
no questions asked
loitering
sizing up
women walking
stalked
by eyes glazed
bodies sway
to some off beat
sound
standing
at the crossroad
Golgotha!