



Donna M. A. James

# WEYMOUTH FALLS

BY GEORGE ELLIOT CLARKE

Weymouth Falls, founded in 1815 by Black Refugees, is a village in Digby County, It is a snowy northern Mississippi, with blood, not on magnolias, but on pines, lilacs and wild roses. This homespun spiritual is one of its first songs.

I'm singing a grassy song when Timmy gets up, staggers into the wet blues, and drinks roses from the trumpet, and Shelley, that snug and warm home for some happy man, brews coffee in the corner of dreams. I taste steam, maybe her, or Muriel's squash sprouting from the wooden chair. I can see buds on the chair legs, and something is about to flower.

Lester takes out his life insurance, a bottle of beer, and writes his autobiography with the barley and hops. Then Mum hollers "Praise God, what's all the racket?" Just a gang of drunken angels swimmin' through the thick air of the senses stunned, and bangin' into the floor. Some knock on it like it's a door, but if it opens, they just plop right into a nest of worms, a phony womb, dark and moist; so, we pick 'em up and lay 'em out to dry on beds. Slowly, they resurrect, looking more beautiful and not a bit sorry.

Then, muscled Graham, Shakespeare of song, hums through his harmonica, "Wherefore art thou, old Suzanna", and raindrops stream from the ceiling. We think they're musical notes but they're soft and silvery like the tears of innocence. Could be that God's cryin'...

Graham yells out George Jones, "Sweet moon, sweet moon, shine on!" And I dream Shelley faints; or is it just love? I catch her in my arms, her heavy breasts weight her down; I fall too, happy.

Maybe someone snaps fingers or the door opens. I walk into an orgy, a whorehouse, of raspberries, sucking these like proverbs or breasts. And red bleaches from the rose, pours onto Shelley's Negro lips.

Later, green Lester comes at me out the corner of some music, I see him climb over the woodpile with the moon. His weight falls like dew upon the grass. I dodge in time, smile, and scribble more leaves for Shelley, a beauty dark like night. Then Lester gets up and slurps more brass (or is it beer?) while the stars stick out like prostitutes until dawn chases them away like a court order.

I wake up afraid, not wanting to leave this jungle of maple and pine, wanting to study the capentry of braches nailed to blue sky. So, Timmy says, "I told you; look, boy, it ain't no damn good," and mum whoops an aubade, while her green-eyed just grins some crimson joy, her brown skin shimmering like water, light bending through its surface tension like a lover.

We are all here together, breathing the same air, using the same language, needing the same ideal our genitals teach us is liberty, equality, community. Damn the doughfaced Tories and the bug-eyed Methodists!

Then, I get drunk and walk on the Sissiboo River, dreaming the bullrushes are strange, limpid marijuana, and watching my perfect Cinnamon yodel in the cream of night; and I wanna taste her love, but stare into books, those pools where meaning sinks to the bottom while words ripple; and that's why no two readings are alike. Every breath of being passing over the page is a fresh wind disturbing the surface calm and distorting the meaning below. Close the book, and words drip, spill out, leak into your mind.

Back at Muriel's Mousie stands up with her Digby County guitar, its strings rooted in the Sissiboo, its frame imposing order like the poor House, its shingles catching and rebuffing her tears, and lets her fingers ripple that blue-green river. Suddenly, a chorus is born: first, a little wail, then, a huge cry, spanked into being by Mousie's own gasps and sobs.

Lester starts to get ignorant, so Muriel hollers, "Not in my house!", and we go outside, into the summer night stuffed with dark green. I fall on a pillow of roses, or Shelley, and roll in her earth like a puppydog:

When a man loves a woman  
Can't think of nothin' else...

Then George Jones bays at the moon, and Buck traipses in from the corner of the page, yelping for attention. And Timmy leaves, slamming the door. And this song is Black literature.

