

Press Release

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I'd Rather Be Mourning

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We're going to Mars for the same reason Marco Polo rocketed
to China
for the same reason Columbus trimmed
his sails on a dream of spices
for the very same reason Shackleton
was enchanted with penguins
for the reason we fall in love

It's the only adventure

We're going to Mars because Peary couldn't go to the North
Pole without Matthew Henson
because Chicago couldn't be a city
without Jean Baptiste Du Sable
because George Washington Carver and
his peanut were the right partners for
Booker T.

It's life seeking thing

We're going to Mars because whatever is wrong with us will not
get right with us so we journey forth
carrying the same baggage
but every now and then leaving
one little bitty thing behind:
maybe drop torturing Hunchbacks here;
maybe drop lynching Billy Budd there;
maybe not whipping Uncle Tom to death;
maybe resisting global war.

One day looking for prejudice to slip.....one day looking for
hatred to tumble by the wayside.....one day maybe the
whole community will no longer be vested in who sleeps with
whom.....maybe one day the Jewish community will be at
rest.....the Christian community will be content.....the
Muslim community will be at peace.....and all the rest of us
will get great meals at Holydays and learn new songs and sing
in harmony

We're going to Mars because it gives us a reason to change
If Mare came here it would be ugly
nations would band together to hunt down
and kill Martians
and being the stupid underserving life
forms that we are
we would also hunt down and kill
what would be termed
Martian Sympathizers
As if the *Fugitive Slave Law* wasn't
bad enough then
As if the so-called *War on Terrorism*
isn't pitiful Now

When do we learn and what does it take to teach us things
cannot be:

What we want
When we want
As we want

Other people have ideas and inputs
And why won't they leave Rap Brown alone

The future is ours to take

KARMA
INTERNATIONAL

And we will tell them what to do: To successfully get to Mars and back you will need a song... take some Billie Holiday for the sad days and some Charlie Parker for the happy ones but always keep at least one good Spiritual for comfort... You will need a slice or two of meatloaf and if you can manage it some fried chicken in a shoebox with a nice moist lemon pound cake... a bottle of beer because no one should go that far without a beer and maybe a six-pack so that there is life on Mars

you can share... Popcorn for the celebration when you land while you wait for your land legs to kick in... and as you climb down the ladder from your spaceship to the martian surface... look to your left... and there you'll see a smiling community quilting a black-eyed pea... watching you descend

Quilting the Black-Eyed Pea (We're Going to Mars)
By Nikki Giovanni