

Linton Kwesi Johnson, Reggae Fi Dada

galang dada
galang gwwaan yaw sah
yu nevvah ad noh life fi live
jus di wan life fi give
yu did yu time pan ert
yu nevvah get yu jus dizert
galang goh smile inna di sun
galang goh satta inna di palace af peace
o di waatah
it soh deep
di waatah
it soh daak
an it full a hawbah shaak
di lan is like a rack
slowly shattahrin to san
sinkin in a sesa af calamity
where fear breed shadows
dat lurks in di daak
where people fraid fi waak
fraid fi tink fraid fi taak
where di present is haunted by di pass
a deh soh mi bawn
get fi know bout staam
learn fi cling to di dawn
an wen mi hear mi daddy sick
mi quickly pack an tek a trip
mi nevvah have noh time
when mi reach
fi si noh sunny beach
wen mi reach
 jus people a live in shack
 people livin back-to-back
 mongst cackroach an rat
 mongst dirt an dizeez
subjek to terrorist attack
political intrigue
kanstant grief
an noh sign af relief
o di grass
turn brown
soh many trees
cut down
an di lan is ovahgrown
fram country to toun
is jus tissel an tawn
inna di woun a di poor
is a miracle ow dem endure
di pain nite an day
di stench af decay
di clarin sights
di guarded affluence
di arrogant vices
cole eyes af kantemp
di mackin symbals af independence
a deh soh mi bawn
get fi know bout staam
learn fi cling to di dawn
an wen di news reach mi
seh mi wan daddy ded
mi ketch a plane quick
 an wen mi reach mi sunny isle
 it woz di same ole style
 di money well dry
 di bullits dem a fly

plenty innocent a die
many rivahs run dry
ganja planes flyin high
di poor man im a try
yu tink a lickle try im try
holdin awn bye an bye
wen a dallah cyaan buy
a lickle dinnah fi a fly
galang dada
galang gwaan yaw sah
yu nevvah ad noh life fi live
jus di wan life fi give
yu did yu time pan ert
yu nevvah get yu jus dizert
galang goh smile inna di sun
galang goh satta inna di palace af peace
mi know yu couldn't tek it dada
di anguish an di pain
di suffahrin di prablems di strain
di strugglin in vain
fi mek two ens meet
soh dat dem pickney coulda get
a lickle someting fi eat
fi put cloaz pan dem back
fi put shoes pan dem feet
wen a dallah cyaan buy
a lickle dinnah fi a fly
mi know yu try dada
yu fite a good fite
but di dice dem did loaded
an di card pack fix
yet still yu reach fifty-six
before yu lose yu leg wicket
' a noh yu bawn grung here'
soh wi bury yu a Stranger's Burying Groun
near to mhum an cousin Daris
nat far fram di quarry
doun a August Town