

14. 2. 1972

You fucking ungrateful Bajan rass hole, you!

I going explain the letter-writing thing that you harping on 'bout these two, three letters now I get from you! I going show you what the position is wid me here when all like you cutting up rough 'bout one and two page replies from me. I going settle you' rass hash and criticism of my so-called under-replies, even though you usual get a lot of pages from me in the ol' days which you forget too fucking conveniently. I going drop the real hard truth o' my set up right pon top o' you mind! So, here goes, papa!

Man, Austin, do you know what is the average morning mail that you' brother get every born day, in this London Town place? Some thirteen to fifteen letters, papa! And, do you know, that every one get reply to before I leave for work in the morning? Every Gawd one o' them get reply to, by my own hand, no secretary, no wife, no brother, just me one and me ten fingers! So, now, Mr. Rass Clawt!

When yours come through the door, it come also wid twelve or thirteen others, from my beloved Havana, Cuba, from my baleful Kingston, Jamaica, from as far afield as Columbia, Chile, Tanzania, unexpected ones from people wanting to know about CAM and Caribbean cultural affairs, from Sweden, Germany, East Germany, Russia, and all 'bout. For instance, today, name day, along with yours come from America, one from Canada, three more from Jamaica, another five from Trini, Guyana and St. Vincent. And I done write them back, before nine o'clock, this morning. I was in the studio by nine-fifteen, doing script that I work pon until four yesterday morning! Fuck wid that, now! Then, that is not to mention the heaps of local London notes and things that come through the post from the brothers and sisters and our organisations in this town. And the 'phone calls I got to make in between writing the fucking replies, and all before I take me insulin injection and swallow me breakfus, you see. **MAN, AUSTIN, YOU FUCKING LUCKY THAT YOU EVEN GET THE LONG REPLIES THAT YOU GET, ALL THE TIME! AND THEY LONG CONSIDERING THE REPLY LOAD I GET THROUGH DAILY.**

For instance, this very morning, I hads was to read and correct a whole fucking ms. of seventeen pages for a little brother in St. Vincent who burs'ing he arse wid Naipaul an' Lamming an' THE WEST INDIAN NOVEL. I wake up by 'bout six-thirty, after going to bed by 'bout two-thirty or three o'clock, four o'clock in the morning, and I hustle to post by seven right into me study wid a basin o' hot black coffee, an' I gets down to it like a fucking Toussaint-Che-Fidel-Marcus-Malcolm-Cabral-Julius-Salkey rolled into one, an 'dawg nyam you supper, if you think you ever see man box 'way a work like me, during them early morning hours. **SO, DON'T NAG ME NO MORE, YOU HEAR, MR. RASS!**

By the way, how much letter you reply to on daily average? How much? I think you only got this one brother who you love enough to sit down and write 'nough regular like, you know. And how time you got? Don't you got sort o' enough, between lectures an' so? I sure that you not into my unconscionable bag! I sure o' that!

Boy, Ismith Khan, the Trini novelist and ol' time pasero o' Sam Selvon write me today from University of California, San Diego, begging me to bring me whole family so that I could do a lectureship thing for ten weeks! The thing nice, yes. Me don't get that sort o' offer, at all, not from me loving brother Austino, not from Janoush Carew, not from Orlando,

not from Sathorne, not from nobody who suppose to be me frien' an' heartland brother. But, I going watch Mr. Fucking Ismith to see if he bluffing. He write an' ask to replace some recordings I did make one time of Louise Bennett dialec' poems and which he rub off by mistake two weeks ago during a lecture. I going watch to see how he come up wid the action! Pat and me and Eliot and Jason would go, yes! The ten weeks would jus' suit we nice as ninepence! We wouldn't even have to rent out the flat or nothing. In any case, I don't want a Gawd soul in f'me flat 'mongst we things an' f'me books, if I not there! Nobody non'tall! So, papa D, that's that. And is gone I gone, until nex' time, when you write, yes. I leavin' you wid me love, plenty from the heart.

One love,
Andrew.