

Way Too Long

It has been way too long since I talked to you, mama Africa

I try to remember you and your love for me

It was so long ago since we seen each other

I have missed you for generations now

I still do miss you

When I try to remember the last time I saw you,

I can only remember little things that are now big

When I was a little boy running along the sandy beach yelling at the ocean

You told me to be careful on the rocks

You told me that the ocean was powerful and that I could be swept away from you in an instant

But I was a little boy and there was nothing that made me afraid

Even the great crashing of the ocean at my feet did not make me afraid

I knew you were there

But you were right about the rocks and about the ocean dear mother

Like mothers always seem to be

You knew that rocks were harsh and sharp and would cause me to bleed

You knew the ocean only appeared calm and inviting

You knew it was not friendly to your children

And that the current would take a child away from you in an instant

I know now that it had happened to you before

You had lost many children to the ocean

Your advice was wise but I was too busy occupied to listen closely to your voice

I ran so fast and so far that I was breathless

And I was lost

*When I looked back to see you I found that you were no longer there
And I no longer heard your voice cautioning me about the rocks and the ocean
You were gone suddenly and I could no longer hear your voice
I wish I could hear it now, your voice, your kind and soothing voice
It has been way too long*

Asante' 4-19-08

Asante' aka Johnny Lake, Ph.D is a writer, counselor and keynote speaker helping professional groups become aware of attitudes and increase their knowledge to better participate and function in a multicultural society. His diversity trainings help people to communicate across cultures and to be successful in their personal, social and civic interactions. He is Chair, Oregon Governor's Commission on Black Affairs, and Educational Chair of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). He can be reached through his web site www.johnnylake.com.