

James Crow

Part 1: The South

James and Jim

The North has fled; old Crow can stretch his wings
He rages on now with his brother James
Two blacks accused; but when the strange fruit swings
Among a crowd of faces with no names

Well, Jim is there when black runs into white
But James is he who brings the father down
And Jim calls James when black tries to unite
He strikes the blameless to make fear abound

And Jim will happ'ly jail an honest man
While James will take his life without a case
But James's raging hunger just began
And burns until James can his town erase

Though sirring may keep black away from Jim
The mobs will always strike at James's whim

James in the South

With Jim as Law and James as Status Quo

The Negro here will find he cannot rise

A doctor dressed as such will come to know

His upp'tyness will mean his sure demise

To check your spendings may result in pain

To call for change may mean a broken bone

And if you serve to earn respect in vain

You may just join the thousands lynched unknown

And Army doctors coming home may find

Their training means but little to their town

A fair skinned doctor is in black defined

A "Doc" instead; no doctor but a clown

The rules, unfair, are rules, so parents must

Inflict abuse to make their kids adjust

Migration

I'm through with Jim and James; I cannot stay
I wish to leave this land of living hell
But planter cannot know I'm going away
I'm only free within the planter's cell

Old Joe was beat for turkeys he ne'er saw
He's known for stealing things; but never these
Of course he's under James and Jim's strict law
Where planters treat their staff howe'er they please

We act as nothing strange is going on
As George leaves town for tickets far away
And in the night we gather thereupon
To safely leave the Jim Crow world, we pray

On board these chicken trains they pack us tight
The black-on-white to keep the black from white

Part 2: The North

james in the North

Past Paso now we're free from Crow at last
The black-on-white fades out, still no one moves
The border towns are same as those we've passed
Tho' Jim is gone, still james's pow'r improves

The rules in any place here left ambiguous
So james is free to rear his ugly face
Ask for a room; no vacancy
Empty motels packed tight
And Vegas shines
In white

To find a house up North
Don't try to buy near our homes
We have compacts so

When swimming here, be sure to watch for lines
Drawn o'er the water marking james's turf
For if you cross in his eyes you may find
The lighter-skinned will drown you in the wharf

Don't bother seeking justice from police
For they'll arrest you on a white man's word
And protest will but your troubles increase
As law enforcement joins the white man's herd
And lest you think these troubles far behind
Yet even now Chicago's blood runs dark
Their unions keep the peace through gags & force
For CPD can say they're colorblind
Their black & white vision shows their true mark
And body counts may stain their loud remorse

james calls us dumb, with education less
Our brothers North agree nevertheless