

Contents

A Note on Humor by Langston Hughes vii

I. COOL COMICS—Contemporary Comedy

Little Cindy Ella <i>by Jackie Mabley</i>	1
Old Man Cassius <i>by Cassius Clay</i>	3
How a Cool Stud Jives His Chick <i>by Dan Burley</i>	4
A Letter from Mama <i>by Pigmeat Markham</i>	5
Not a Lick <i>by Butterbeans and Susie</i>	6
A Passing Nod <i>by Mantan Moreland</i>	7
How to Hail a Cab in New York <i>by Godfrey Cambridge</i>	8
Clearing the Color Bar <i>by Dick Gregory</i>	9

II. JOKES AND JIVE—From Then to Now

In-Jokes	11
Draft	13
Reversal	13
Poor Sam	14
Last Straw	14
The Devil's Hand	15
Right-O	16
What's in a Name?	16
A Bright Question	16
The Idea!	17

Transformation	17
Integrity	18
Arithmetic	18
Sister after Services	18
Young Lady's Plaint	19
Sister Goose	19
Sandwich	20
A Real Job	20
Shoe on the Other Foot	21
Hustler	21
The Difficulty	22
Name That Fits	22
Just a Snack	22
Leisure	23
In Wartime	23
Not My Business	24
No Time to Argue	25
Common Sense	25
Regrets	25
Error	26
Turn About	26
Real High	27

III. PULPIT AND PEW—Parsons and Parishioners

Thanksgiving	29
Nothing but the Gospel <i>by John H. Johnson and Ben Burns</i>	30
A Mother's Prayer <i>by Zora Neale Hurston</i>	<u>30</u>
Grace before Meal	31
Gospel Plus	31
Real Cool	32
A Bit of Correspondence <i>by E. C. L. Adams</i>	32
Farewell	35

IV. JUST FOR FUN—Pastime Verses

Benediction	37
Needs	37
So True	38
End	38
Fly	38
Billy	39
Sheep and Goat	39
Little Dogs	40
Grasshopper	41
The Old Hen Cackled	41
The Little Rooster	41
Jelly Roll Baker	42
Simon Slick's Mule	43
He Is My Horse	43
Old Man Dan	44
Old Man Know-All	44
New Way	45

V. DOWN-HOME TALES—Laughter from the South

Aunt Susan's Trip to Heaven <i>by J. Mason Brewer</i>	47
The Hornsby's Bend Teacher <i>by J. Mason Brewer</i>	48
The Palacios Rancher and the Preacher <i>by J. Mason Brewer</i>	49
Deacon Wright's Confession <i>by J. Mason Brewer</i>	51
How to Eat a Fish <i>by Zora Neale Hurston</i>	52

VI. LAUGH AND LIVE—Biography and Autobiography

Call Me Booker T. <i>by Booker T. Washington</i>	55
A Visit to Dunbar's Tomb <i>by Wendell Phillips Dabney</i>	62

Warrant for Arrest <i>by Roi Ottley</i>	68
Memories of a Pullman Porter <i>by Robert E. Turner</i>	71
An Island in Heaven <i>by Taylor Gordon</i>	78
Love <i>by Zora Neale Hurston</i>	82
Jim Crow Army (World War II) <i>with comment by L. D. Reddick</i>	84
Cincinnati Incident <i>by Jackie Robinson</i>	87
Faith and Experience <i>by Martin Luther King, Jr.</i>	88
Freedom Rider	88

VII. TELL IT IN RHYME—Ballads and Songs

Shine and the Titanic	91
Stackolee	93
A Most Important Matter	94
Reading the Deck <i>by Zora Neale Hurston</i>	95

VIII. NOTHING BUT THE BLUES— Traditional Couplets

Nothing but the Blues	97
-----------------------	----

IX. THE JAZZ PEOPLE—Tales of the Music World

Minstrel Man <i>by W. C. Handy</i>	103
Jelly Roll's Childhood <i>by Jelly Roll Morton</i>	111
Ashes to Ashes <i>by Louis Armstrong</i>	115
Fine Funerals <i>by Danny Barker</i>	117
On the Road <i>by Billie Holiday</i>	118
The "Dirty Dozen"	119

X. HARLEM PARTY CARDS—Rustling up the Rent

XI. SIMPLE SPEAKS HIS MIND—

Contemporary Commentary

Simple on Relatives <i>by Langston Hughes</i>	129
Simple on Dogs and Cats <i>by Langston Hughes</i>	131
Simple on Worriations <i>by Langston Hughes</i>	136
Simple on Gospel Singers <i>by Langston Hughes</i>	139
General Simple <i>by Langston Hughes</i>	141
Simple Writes Dr. Butts <i>by Langston Hughes</i>	143
Simple on Women <i>by Langston Hughes</i>	146

XII. POETS WRITE IT DOWN—From

Old New Orleans to Harlem

Epigram <i>by Armand Lanusse</i>	147
Angel <i>by Wendell P. Dabney</i>	147
Brer Rabbit <i>by James Weldon Johnson</i>	148
A Negro Love-Song <i>by Paul Laurence Dunbar</i>	149
In the Morning <i>by Paul Laurence Dunbar</i>	150
Bats <i>by Mary Effie Lee Newsome</i>	151
Motto <i>by Langston Hughes</i>	152
Bad Morning <i>by Langston Hughes</i>	152
Evil <i>by Langston Hughes</i>	153
Cora and the Judge <i>by Langston Hughes</i>	153
Life Is Fine <i>by Langston Hughes</i>	154
Epitaphs <i>by Countee Cullen</i>	155
Vet's Rehabilitation <i>by Ray Durem</i>	156
Respectful Request <i>by Ray Durem</i>	156
Friends <i>by Ray Durem</i>	157
To Satch <i>by Samuel Allen</i>	157
Sergeant Jerk <i>by Deborah Fuller Wess</i>	158
Dream <i>by Dorothy Vena Johnson</i>	159
Trilogy <i>by Mari Evans</i>	159
Think Twice and Be Nice <i>by Ted Joans</i>	162
Time <i>by Robert A. Johnson</i>	163

For Hettie by <i>LeRoi Jones</i>	163
Evolution by <i>George H. Bass</i>	164
Look at That Gal by <i>Julian Bond</i>	164

XIII. WRITERS GRIN AND BEAR IT— Fact and Fiction

Strip Poker by <i>Alston Anderson</i>	166
Slightly Mad by <i>James Baldwin</i>	168
Maybe He Ain't by <i>George Houston Bass</i>	168
Becoming a Jockey by <i>Arna Bontemps</i>	170
Odds against the Negro by <i>Dan Burley</i>	174
Mrs. James by <i>Alice Childress</i>	175
Interestin' and Amusin' by <i>Alice Childress</i>	176
Economy Corner by <i>Alice Childress</i>	178
The Pocketbook Game by <i>Alice Childress</i>	180
Dixie Belle and the Nine Little Wolves by <i>Alfred Duckett</i>	182
Miss Cynthie's Arrival by <i>Rudolph Fisher</i>	184
The First Sleep-In by <i>Len W. Holt</i>	188
'Tain't So by <i>Langston Hughes</i>	189
Sweet Chariots of This World by <i>Langston Hughes</i>	193
Speak Well of the Dead by <i>Langston Hughes</i>	198
Public Notice by <i>Zora Neale Hurston</i>	207
Georgia Dust by <i>John Killens</i>	211
Wake Me Up Gently by <i>L. F. Palmer</i>	212
The Dark Side of Hopkinsville by <i>Ted Poston</i>	214
What You Don't Know Won't Hurt You by <i>Richard Wright</i>	242

XIV. SEGREGATED INTEGRATION— Our Day and Times

Segregated Integration	254
Battle of Little Rock	259