

May 2004

Fresh Fish

Andrea Shaw

anthuriumcaribjournal@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholarlyrepository.miami.edu/anthurium>

Recommended Citation

Shaw, Andrea (2004) "Fresh Fish," *Anthurium: A Caribbean Studies Journal*: Vol. 2 : Iss. 1 , Article 18.

Available at: <http://scholarlyrepository.miami.edu/anthurium/vol2/iss1/18>

This Poem is brought to you for free and open access by Scholarly Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in *Anthurium: A Caribbean Studies Journal* by an authorized editor of Scholarly Repository. For more information, please contact repository.library@miami.edu.

A bell rings and a sea of white and indigo floods the city street
in front of St. Cecilia High, flowing towards the main road and city center
Crisp blue tunics, stiff as cardboard,
White starched shirts peeking out
But underneath our armor, bodies twitch and pulse
Dancing in school-girl anticipation
And me, I walk in determined strides, waiting to be named.

My uniform holds everything in place
The pleats do not become undone
During morning prayers, history, algebra, the daily sprint to the cafeteria
and even through our headmistress' afternoon announcement:

*Remember St. Cecilia girls,
You are representatives of your school
Uniforms at or below your knees
No jewelry except for a watch
Do not antagonize the girls from School of the Holy Virgin
No public displays of affection if you converse with young men from St. Michael's
And do not even speak to those technical school boys!*

Our indigo river flows into a multicolored sea in front of the bus stop
School of the Holy Virgin white, St. Michael's green, and the crushed uniforms of the boys from City
Technical.
The Technical boys line the sidewalk under Miss Edna's shop near the bus shed,
Balancing tight buttocks on the edge of soda crates in
creamy shades of khaki, bursting at the seam.

I approach Miss Edna's and slow down, so my naming ceremony will be slow and special,
The Holy Virgin girl in front of me races ahead too quickly,
Afraid of what the word might do to her ears, but me,
I am ready.
I saunter to the edge of the shop, pause, and then the ceremony begins.

"Cecilia Girl, psstst, what-a-way you looking nice today."
My steps remain paced.
"You lookin so good; how you goin on like you don't want to talk to me."
I lock my eyes ahead and sway my hips more distinctly.
"You looking like..."
Here it comes.
"... a nice fresh fish, a big snapper that I could eat right now."
My body burns red with delight under my blue sheath
as I turn to the khaki clad boy,
"Bite me, nuh," I say, reveling in my name.