One Hand Can't Clap  
By Vanessa Melody   
  
Pass the bottle of rum, Don't sit down  
Time for celebration, We de go a England   
  
we start kin teet for, We glad bag bus  
Madda send come call fe we, to board de Empire Windrush   
  
Give we opportunity, to build up de country   
Not only that but some ah we   
We get chance to learn ah trade    
get good pay   
When dem sign off we papers, gi we status  
Put before and back a we name a string a letters  
Eh aayy   
  
No more dan 5 years we were going to stay  
Well it never turn out fe nuff of we that way.  
For Fascination wid we never take no time    
To turn to rejection when place to live and work we de try to find.  
  
With nat a thing to show?  We couldn't just go home soh!   
So no matter the length of time, we set we self  
An like the man weh ride donkey we decide to bide we time.   
  
With we load, we stroll we up and down street, road and Ave  
But what is this we deh see here for true?  
Paper mark up, put up inna window.   
No daag we understand, for a out door them live weh we come from but what is wrong with the Irish an black, man an woman.   
  
We eventually for two pounds a week manage to get one one room to rent. Not without a whole heap of predicament.  
For bathroom and kitchen we have to share  
And where we wash we cutlery plate, pat an pan,   
lawd have mercy! Same place some want to wash dem hair.   
  
Racism discrimination mek we have to work on and off, long and hard for many more years  
Cold breeze blow Rain and snow fall   
But The sun shine in we heart dry up a lot of we tears   
And the environment though so harsh couldn't penetrate we melanated skin an make we go commit no sin  
Far we know how to handle hardship, navigate the storms, the battle we were determine to win   
Yes man   
  
Yes man, we know how to  go down on we knees and talk to Massa Gad, Sing out loud  
Dance to de blue beat rock steady and laugh hard  
Eh eh sah  
We use what we know to succeed, to survive,   
We know when and how to mek pickney shirt fit   
To mek de best out a  life   
  
What labour we could get we tek and we seckle  
For we know seh every mickle mek a muckle  
We stay humble  
We work on the hospital ward and improve the standard, yes  
For we know seh cleanliness  
Is next to Godliness  
  
We kibba we mouth, an put we shoulder to the wheel and likle by likle we culture and traditions start reveal   
Some never like it but some see how it sweet  
The fascination come back some start to attach   
want know how we do dis and we do dat   
how we buy so much with the likle we gat   
A 'pardna' we throw tek we up af fa we back.  
  
So look at that! Unity!  
Side by side some of the English march with we in protest,  
Inequality based on skin colour to address  
Bristol Bus Boycott   
Change the race relations Act   
De trigger for that when the Jamaican Guy Bailey was refused employment on de bus   
  
We pave de way for de next genetation  
Though them too  had to fight and struggle with all sector of the British system and   
On top of that emotional distress for they say they don't know where they really come from  
We continue to encourage dem  
To strive hard fe what dem want   
For we know they can achieve all the dreams they hold in dem heart.   
  
74 years we deh yah an  
We travel back home when we ready  
We devote we self and contribute so much to dis country  
Evidence of that all round just open your eye, look and see.   
  
The future is bright if we continue to unite  
Commit to a vision, speak up and do the right  
We never come here to stay  
But much we have given and much we have gained.   
  
So much more to achieve  
Let us not look back and grieve  
Look forward plan for what more is to be done  
As we embrace each other  
Support each other   
love up each other  
For Out of many we are all one.   
So if we want to continue to celebrate  
Live by de things  
Weh mama used to say  
Try nuh forget  
Put up oonu han  
Yes put up oonu han  
And follow me   
(Audience participation)  
Yes remember  
And One han cya clap.   
Vanessa Smith May 2022  
For Windrush Day   
Fairfield House Commission.  
  
  
Creativity political scientific  
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