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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