

## Will V-Day Be Me-Day Too?

Over There,  
World War II.

Dear Fellow Americans,  
I write this letter  
Hoping times will be better  
When this war  
Is through.  
I'm a Tan-skinned Yank  
Driving a tank.  
I ask, WILL V-DAY  
BE ME-DAY, TOO?

I wear a U. S. uniform.  
I've done the enemy much harm,  
I've driven back  
The Germans and the Japs,  
From Burma to the Rhine.  
On every battle line,  
I've dropped defeat  
Into the Fascists' laps.

I am a Negro American  
Out to defend my land  
Army, Navy, Air Corps—  
I am there.  
I take munitions through,  
I fight—or stevedore, too.  
I face death the same as you do  
Everywhere.

I've seen my buddy lying  
Where he fell.  
I've watched him dying  
I promised him that I would try  
To make our land a land  
Where his son could be a man—  
And there'd be no Jim Crow birds  
Left in our sky.

So this is what I want to know:  
When we see Victory's glow,  
Will you still let old Jim Crow  
Hold me back?  
When all those foreign folks who've waited—  
Italians, Chinese, Danes—are liberated.  
Will I still be ill-fated  
Because I'm black?

Here in my own, my native land,  
Will the Jim Crow laws still stand?  
Will Dixie lynch me still  
When I return?  
Or will you comrades in arms  
From the factories and the farms,  
Have learned what this war  
Was fought for us to learn?

When I take off my uniform,  
Will I be safe from harm—  
Or will you do me  
As the Germans did the Jews?  
When I've helped this world to save,  
Shall I still be color's slave?  
Or will Victory change  
Your antiquated views?

You can't say I didn't fight  
To smash the Fascists' might.  
You can't say I wasn't with you  
in each battle.  
As a soldier, and a friend.  
When this war comes to an end,  
Will you herd me in a Jim Crow car  
Like cattle?

Or will you stand up like a man  
At home and take your stand  
For Democracy?  
That's all I ask of you.  
When we lay the guns away  
To celebrate  
Our Victory Day  
WILL V-DAY BE ME-DAY, TOO?  
That's what I want to know.

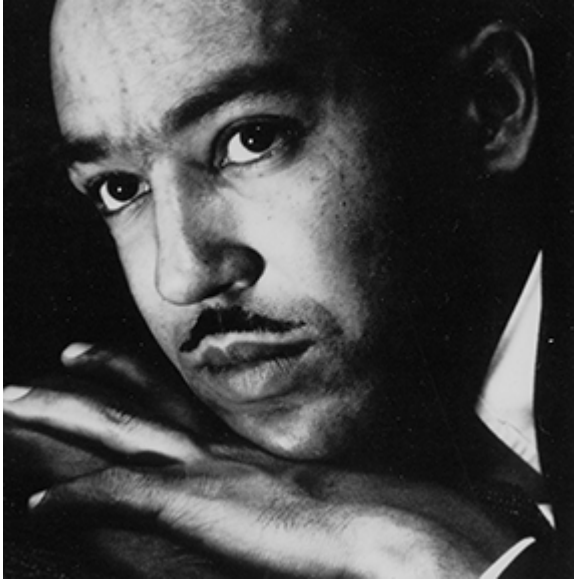
Sincerely,  
GI Joe.

**Credit:**

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**Author:**

## **Langston Hughes**



A poet, novelist, fiction writer, and playwright, Langston Hughes is known for his insightful, colorful portrayals of black life in America from the twenties through the sixties and was important in shaping the artistic contributions of the Harlem Renaissance.

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