

**Lift Every Voice and Sing** by James Weldon Johnson, 1871 - 1938

Lift every voice and sing, till earth and Heaven ring,  
Ring with the harmonies of liberty;  
Let our rejoicing rise, high as the listening skies,  
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.  
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,  
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;  
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,  
Let us march on till victory is won.

Stony the road we trod, bitter the chastening rod,  
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;  
Yet with a steady beat, have not our weary feet,  
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?  
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered,  
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the  
slaughtered;  
Out from the gloomy past, till now we stand at last  
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

*James Weldon Johnson, born in Florida in 1871, was a national organizer for the NAACP and an author of poetry and nonfiction. Perhaps best known for the song "Lift Every Voice and Sing," he also wrote several poetry collections and novels, often exploring racial identity and the African American folk tradition.*