

“Somebody almost walked off wid alla my stuff”

Ntozake Shange

¹ somebody almost walked off wid alla my stuff
not my poems or a dance i gave up in the street
but somebody almost walked off wid alla my stuff
like a kleptomaniac workin hard & forgettin while stealin

⁵ this is mine!

this aint yr stuff

now why don't you put me back

& let me hang out in my own

self

¹⁰ somebody almost walked off wid alla my stuff!

& didn't care enuf to send a note home sayin

i was late for my solo conversation

or two sizes too small for my own tacky shirts

what can anybody do wid somethin of no value on

¹⁵ a open market?

did you getta dime for my things?

hey man

where are you goin wid alla my stuff?!

this is a woman's trip & i need my stuff

²⁰ to ohh & ahh abt

daddy I gotta mainline number

from my own shit

now wontchu put me back& let me play this duet

wit this silver ring in my nose

²⁵ honest to god!

somebody almost run off wid alla my stuff!

& i didnt bring anythin but the kick & sway of it

the perfect ass for my man & none of it is theirs

this is mine

³⁰ her own things

that's my name

now give me my stuff

i see ya hidin my laugh

& how I sit wif my legs open sometimes

³⁵ to give my crotch some sunlight

& there goes my love my toes my chewed up finger nails

niggah

wif the curls in yr hair

mr. louisiana hot link

⁴⁰ i want my stuff back

my rhytums & my voice

open my mouth

& let me talk ya outta

throwin my shit in the sewar

⁴⁵ this is some delicate leg & whimsical kiss

i gotta have to give to my choice
without you runnin off wit alla my shit
now you cant have me less i give me away
& i waz doin all that
⁵⁰ til ya run off on a good thing
who is this you left me wit?
some simple bitch
widda bad attitude!
i wants my things
⁵⁵ i want my arm wit the birth mark
& my leg wit the bike burns
i want my calloused feet & quik language back in my mouth
fried plantains
pineapple pear juice
⁶⁰ sun-ra & joseph & jules
i want my own things
how i lived them
& give me my memories
how i waz when i waz there
⁶⁵ you cant have them or do nothin wit them
stealin my shit from me
dont make it yrs
makes it STO...LEN
somebody almost run off wid alla my stuff!!
⁷⁰ & i waz standin there
lookin at myself
the whole time & it waznt a spirit took my stuff
waz a man whose ego walked round like Rodan's shadow
waz a man faster than my innocence
⁷⁵ waz a lover
i made too much room for
almost run off wit alla my stuff
& i didnt know i'd give it up so quik
& the one runnin wit it
⁸⁰ don't know he got it
& i'm shoutin this is mine
& he dont know he got it/
my stuff is the anonymous ripped off treasure of the year
did you know somebody almost got away wit me?
⁸⁵ me in a plastic bag under their arm
me
danglin on a string of personal carelessness
i'm spattered wit mud & city rain
& no i didnt get a chance to take a douche
⁹⁰ hey man!
this is not your prerogative
i gotta have me in my pocket
to get round like a good woman shd

& make the poem in the pot or the chicken in the dance

⁹⁵ what i got to do

i gotta get my stuff to do it too

why dont ya find yr own things

& leave this package of me for my destiny

what ya got to get from me?

¹⁰⁰ i'll give it to ya

yeh i'll give it to ya

round 5:00 in the winter

when the sky is blue-red

& Dew City is gettin pressed

¹⁰⁵ if it's really my stuff

ya gotta give it to me

if ya really want it

i'm the only one

can HANDLE it