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Uncle Monroe

by

Peggy Trotter Dammond Preacely



Yes, Uncle Monroe!
It was *you* who called to *me* throughout my early childhood in Harlem
Raised on tales and stories of your dream to uplift the race by every means necessary.
Nightly dining room table conversations on how the *Guardian* struggled valiantly to make its statement – uphold its conviction that colored peoples of Boston, in fact of the world, should stand tall – be proud – shout *for* and insist *on* Dignity at any cost!
I sensed even then the pathos of your passion – an all-consuming dedication which you pursued even at the sacrifice of your personal life and privacy.
But you were, we understand now, a visionary.
One of those chosen to see beyond your time.
Chosen to continue the drumbeat of freedom begun by our African ancestors
The moment we were dumped on these shores so far from our native land.

And so in my childhood I too caught your rhythm, kept up the beat, felt the pulse, found myself taking the steps
To protesting, picketing, marching, freedom riding, sitting-in, and yes, even going to jail to demand our equal rights – just as you did here in Boston to protest *Birth of a Nation* one wintry day.
What now you might ask – from your generation to mine – survives some 53 years after your death?
Perhaps the *pride*? Yes, of course.
Undoubtedly your mission . . .
As we struggle to carry on in different arenas . . . but with the same agendas.
And certainly your conviction.
But most of all your passion survives.
It lives in us and always will – a legacy of spirit that never dies.

Peggy Trotter Dammond Preacely is the grandniece of William Monroe Trotter and currently lives in San Pedro, California.