

Nat Turner the Messiah

i

No wonder he ran away and came back again to Southampton,
Virginia.

*“Eyes is here sub,” said He
knowing He was the chosen one
The one to lead His people to freedom.*

*Divine inspiration of belief
on the “occasion of the solar
eclipse in February of 1831”
was the day to let His people go.
The day for revolt and resurrection.*

*He had originally planned July 4th
the same year in the spirit of Crispus Attucks,
but someone found out, and He waited
patiently for the sign.*

*Later, people would exclaim
“must have been in the mud
cause slaves wasn’t ‘lowed to
drink no dirty water!”*

*Others knew “it was the spirit
of Gabriel Prossier and Jack Bowler!”*

*Clubs and swords, they planned outside of Richmond. They say over 1,000
property bodies joined them.*

*Denmark Vesey, a carpenter, would bear fightin’
and purchase his freedom.
His greatest achievement
was making, “250 bayonets and 300 daggers.”*

ii

George Boxley was a white slave
owner in 1815. Thinkin' his slaves
should be free, Boxley made plans
freeing his slaves. His slave cook found out
and she told.

Told,
told,
told,
told, she must have whispered it very
early in the morning over a dingy pillow
case filled rotten with straw.

Boxley escaped. His slaves
were destroyed, the remaining
confiscated and resold.

iii

“Do yah know what cha is?”
is what He asked by the dim firelight reflected over
damp cave walls.

“Eyes is waitin' fors a sign,”
came out knowingly.

A collective knowledge of lashes
gone far beneath the skin, past His time beneath
existence. He could still hear the drum beating for Him.

“Dis here is our time to run, our time to be free.”

He had come back to his Master Travis like Jesus to
John the Baptist as the heat of
water can run from the sun softly
over sinful heads desiring to be free.

“Eyes be the chosen one. Eyes be here to help
yah...fors us all.”

He let those words lie 3 miles outside of
Southampton Virginia.

iv

Silently like water
moccasins in a southern-fried
still standing pond
He crept slowly
His silver razor sharp blade
pairing up creaky white

stairs
entering rooms
one by one
revisiting

Sally Sue Travis
wanted only the newest niggers
sleeping at the foot
of her bed in case
she woke up thirsty

Travis Jr. never
wanted no niggers
at the foot of his bed
he just wanted them
only to drink
the contents of his
chamber pot
when he made sure
it was full

Misses Travis liked
her cornbread neither
hot or cold. She went
through two housemaids

a month so they say
the old ones never
leaving by foot
Master Travis wanted
 his niggers to mind
grateful for all their
blessings

17 to 19 hours work
a day no pay
a peck of meal
3 4 pounds of meat yearly
all the rejectable
hog parts
you could ask

pickled pig balls
pig intestines
pig feet
pig hearts
pig brains
pig snouts
pig skins
pig dicks
pick heads
pig tails
pig eyes

v

“You could have
gotten worse,” is what
master Travis preached
Sundays

vi

Tobacco cotton rice
and sugar cane,
house servants
field hands drivers
wet nurses sex games

Rags glistening over ebony bodies
mocked numbed fingers
cotton pricked red
like dull swollen
tomato pin cushions

vii

August 21st
to August 22nd

they caught Him
having freed countless
Negroes and killed 67
whites.

Like Boxley's kitchen
girl, they found Him

six weeks later
in a mountain cave
only this time He
wasn't preaching.
He was waiting
ascension.

In Jerusalem, Virginia
is where they listed
His catch.

Trial and Jury
leading lashes,
a tight noose
around His
nighttime neck.

Seventeen apostles
hung with Him,
desiring justice
to be free.