

A Song in the Front Yard

By Gwendolyn Brooks

I've stayed in the front yard all my life.

I want a peek at the back

Where it's rough and untended and hungry weed grows.

A girl gets sick of a rose.

I want to go in the back yard now

And maybe down the alley,

To where the charity children play.

I want a good time today.

They do some wonderful things.

They have some wonderful fun.

My mother sneers, but I say it's fine

How they don't have to go in at quarter to nine.

My mother, she tells me that Johnnie Mae

Will grow up to be a bad woman.

That George'll be taken to Jail soon or late

(On account of last winter he sold our back gate).

But I say it's fine. Honest, I do.

And I'd like to be a bad woman, too,

And wear the brave stockings of night-black lace

And strut down the streets with paint on my face.