

A POEM BY LANGSTON JAMES HUGHES (Missouri, 1902-1967)

Langston James Hughes was an Afro-American writer who wrote poems, short stories, plays and songs, expressing the suffering and the struggle of his people for equal rights.

I, too, sing America

I, too, sing America.
I am the darker brother.
They send me to eat in the kitchen
When company comes,
But I laugh,
And eat well,
And grow strong.

Tomorrow,
I'll be at the table
When company comes.
Nobody'll dare
Say to me,
«Eat in the kitchen»,
Then.

Besides,
They'll see how beautiful I am
And be ashamed:

I, too, am America.

1. Read the poem and answer the following questions

- Who does the pronoun “they” refer to?
- What do they do to their “darker” brother”?
- How does he react to that?
- Will tomorrow be the same as today?

2. Let's find the message of the poem

- The poet is proud to be black: in which lines does he express this feeling?
- Is the poet pessimistic or optimistic about the future?
- Contrast the poet's present situation with the changes that will take place tomorrow:

TODAY

He must eat in the when there are guests for dinner

This means he is considered inferior, he is denied of his rights

TOMORROW

He will sit with all the other guests

This means he will be given equal opportunities and equal rights