

# The Song of the Smoke

By W. E. B. Du Bois

I am the Smoke King  
I am black!  
I am swinging in the sky,  
I am wringing worlds awry;  
I am the thought of the throbbing mills,  
I am the soul of the soul-toil kills,  
Wraith of the ripple of trading rills;  
Up I'm curling from the sod,  
I am whirling home to God;  
I am the Smoke King  
I am black.

I am the Smoke King,  
I am black!  
I am wreathing broken hearts,  
I am sheathing love's light darts;  
Inspiration of iron times  
Wedding the toil of toiling climes,  
Shedding the blood of bloodless crimes—  
Lurid lowering 'mid the blue,  
Torrid towering toward the true,  
I am the Smoke King,  
I am black.

I am the Smoke King,  
I am black!  
I am darkening with song,  
I am hearkening to wrong!  
I will be black as blackness can—  
The blacker the mantle, the mightier the man!  
For blackness was ancient ere whiteness began.  
I am daubing God in night,  
I am swabbing Hell in white:  
I am the Smoke King  
I am black.

I am the Smoke King  
I am black!  
I am cursing ruddy morn,  
I am hearsing hearts unborn:  
Souls unto me are as stars in a night,  
I whiten my black men—I blacken my white!  
What's the hue of a hide to a man in his might?  
Hail! great, gritty, grimy hands—  
Sweet Christ, pity toiling lands!  
I am the Smoke King  
I am black.

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