# Audio file

[05-Track-05.mp3](https://neagov-my.sharepoint.com/personal/travisd_arts_gov/Documents/Transcribed%20Files/05-Track-05.mp3)

Dana Gioia

Now, Rita Dove recites “We Wear the Mask” by Paul Laurence Dunbar.

Rita Dove

We wear the mask that grins and lies,

It hides our cheeks and shades our eyes,—

This debt we pay to human guile;

With torn and bleeding hearts we smile,

And mouth with myriad subtleties.

Why should the world be over-wise,

In counting all our tears and sighs?

Nay, let them only see us, while

 We wear the mask.

We smile, but, O great Christ, our cries

To thee from tortured souls arise.

We sing, but oh the clay is vile

Beneath our feet, and long the mile;

But let the world dream otherwise,

 We wear the mask!