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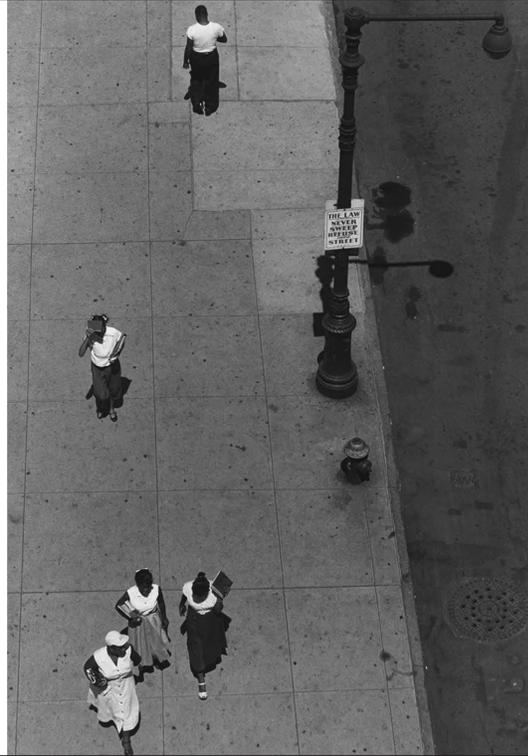
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Every so often, ever so once in a while, someday a woman gets a chance to set in her window for a minute and look out.

New York is not like back down South with not much happening outside. In Harlem something is happening all the time, people are going every which-a-way.

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CENTENNIAL EDITION

Roy DeCarava and Langston Hughes: The Sweet Flypaper of Life

Afterword by Sherry Turner DeCarava.

The Sweet Flypaper of Life is a "poem" about ordinary people, about teenagers around a jukebox, about children at an open fire hydrant, about riding the subway alone at night, about picket lines and artist work spaces. This renowned, life-affirming collaboration between artist Roy DeCarava and writer Langston Hughes honors in words and pictures what the authors saw, knew and felt deeply about life in their city.

Hughes' heart-warming description of Harlem in the late 1940s and early 1950s is seen through the eyes of one grandmother, Sister Mary Bradley. We experience the sights and sounds of Harlem through her learned and worldly eyes, expressed here through Hughes' poetic prose. As she states, "I done got my feet caught in the sweet flypaper of life and I'll be dogged if I want to get loose." DeCarava's photographs lay open a world of sense and feeling that begins with his perception and vision. The ruminations go beyond the limit of simple observation and contend with deeper meanings to reveal these individuals as subjects worthy of art. While Hughes states, "We've had so many books about how bad life is, maybe it's time to have one showing how good it is," the photographs bring us back to this lively dialogue and a complex reality, to a resolution that stands with the optimism of the photographic medium and the certainty of DeCarava's artistic moment. First published in 1955, the book, widely considered a classic of photographic visual literature, was reprinted by public demand several times. This fourth printing, the Centennial Edition, is the first authorized English-language edition since 1983 and includes an afterword by Sherry Turner DeCarava tracing the history and ongoing importance of this book.

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"The people in these photographs had no walls up. They just accepted me and permitted me to take their photographs without any self-consciousness."
—Roy DeCarava

