***Two Poems by Langston Hughes***

**A Dream Deferred**

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up  
like a raisin in the sun?  
Or fester like a sore–  
And then run?  
Does it stink like rotten meat?  
Or crust and sugar over–  
like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags  
like a heavy load.

Or does it explode?

**Mother to Son**

Well, son, I’ll tell you:  
Life for me ain’t been no crystal stair.  
It’s had tacks in it,  
And splinters,  
And boards torn up,  
And places with no carpet on the floor –  
Bare.  
But all the time  
I’se been a-climbin’ on,  
And reachin’ landin’s,  
And turnin’ corners,  
And sometimes goin’ in the dark  
Where there ain’t been no light.  
So boy, don’t you turn back.  
Don’t you set down on the steps  
‘Cause you finds it’s kinder hard.  
Don’t you fall now –  
For I’se still goin’, honey,  
I’se still climbin’,  
And life for me ain’t been no crystal stair.