

## Dear Mama by Wanda Coleman

when did we become friends?  
it happened so gradual i didn't notice  
maybe i had to get my run out first  
take a big bite of the honky world and choke on it  
maybe that's what has to happen with some uppity youngsters  
if it happens at all

and now  
the thought stark and irrevocable  
of being here without you  
shakes me

beyond love, fear, regret or anger  
into that realm children go  
who want to care for/protect their parents  
as if they could  
and sometimes the lucky ones do

into the realm of making every moment  
important  
laughing as though laughter wards off death  
each word given  
received like spanish eight

treasure to bury within  
against that shadow day  
when it will be the only coin i possess  
with which to buy peace of mind

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