

Achilles Heel
(The Blinding aria)

Harry: When I was very young
 I could tell light from dark...
 Mama used to take me on long walks in the park.

 I would smell the flowers,
 Hear the birds sing..
 Though I could never see them,
 I could hear them flap their wings and
 Fly away...Fly away..

 I had a bicycle that I learned to ride
 Along a white sand road
 with bushes on each side.
 The road was like a beam of light
 with bushes dark as night.
 I would ride my bike all day...
 Just Ride away...
 Ride away...
 But as time passed,
 my eyes grew dimmer...
 The road of light kept getting thinner,
 Until I woke one day to night...
 And never again did I see light...
 I finally lost my sight that day...
 It went away... It went away...
Achilles: (Spoken) That's awful, Man...
 Couldn't the doctors do something?

Harry: There was nothing more they could do...
 So I can never look at you...
 or see a bird...or ride a bike...
 or see the difference 'tween dark and light.

Achilles Rap (sample 2)

Achilles: Who took Edison's light bulb, and put a
 Filament in it.
 If Black man Lewis Latimer didn't...
 the light bulb never would have been invented...
 And who was it took a tire...

Harry: (getting caught up in the rhythm begins to snap his fingers, too)

I don't know...

Achilles: and another one connected with a wire?

Harry: Say who!

Achilles: It was the bicycle frame as built by I.R. Johnson, and I ain't no liar.
Now who was it took a pencil?

Harry: Don' know...

Achilles: with a point that wouldn't trace a stencil?

Harry: Who

Achilles: It was J. L. Love,
praise heaven above,
made a sharpener for that pencil.

Harry: (really getting into it now)

Tell me more,
let's even the score.

Achilles: Now the bus that you sit inside
has an automatic air brake that makes your ride
safer thanks to Granville T. Woods, who died.
But before he died, I want you to listen,
he invented the electric railway system.

Harry: Say on...

Achilles: Now who invented automatic transmission?

Harry: Who?

Achilles: Early cars had none and the people were wishin',

But it all came out of Richard B. Spikes,
Who invented the turn signal everyone likes.
Now who invented the refrigerator car?
So that meat and vegetables could travel afar?

Harry: Don' know!

Achilles: It was good old Frederick McKinley Jones,
who'd roll over in his grave and shake his bones
if he knew what he'd done had been forgot...
like Ben Banneker, who made the first U.S. clock.

Harry: That so?

Achilles: Now these are the names that you don't know-
that you won't hear read or on a TV show.
These are the heroes science forgot,
But I'll recall them, like it or not.
They're good examples for any black kid
so we can dare to dream the dreams they did.