Contents

Book One

To The City of Fire
(If I forget you let my sleep dwindle) 3
Admirals
(He stares south on his column over anchors) 4
The Ghost of Santo Domingo
(What I remember I will tell) 5
To Peace
(When will you come The days are long the nights) 6
Our American Way of Life
(Smoking a cigarette in a classroom) 7
At Work
(Day is gone light almost gone torch leaves) 8
At School
(Two boys are hurried into the office) 9
Refugees
(Every night she dreams of departure) 10
Citizens
(There is no need for concern the Ushan) 11
In That Time
(In that time there existed Sovereign States) 12
The Shattering
(I was determined never to marry) 13
Leviathan
(Leviathan many tentacles) 15
To the Tribunal
(There was a machine that opened the earth) 16
Blues
(Come here baby wrap your arms around) 17
Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl
(Although it stands between the kidnappers) 18
Where Blind Sorrow Is Taught To See
(Rain shines black where the red-and-white-light-laced) 20
Democracy
(Nothing hurts but the foot is insistent) 21
Soldiers
(Water they ask as she passes among them) 22
Memorials
(Walt Whitman I lay on the grass today) 23
Migrations
(The long migration is over We are) 24
Book Two

To The City of Fire

(All this time I have never told you) 27
A

 Admiral

(Your Majesty We found today) 29
A

The Ghost of Santo Domingo

(I’ve set six stones in a row near the eastern) 30
A

To Peace

(Peace I have feared you hated you scuffed dirt) 31
A

Our American Way of Life

(Chapter Eight Going Shopping What is this) 32
A

At Work

(As she nods down into and up from sleep) 33
A

At School

(It’s the first hot afternoon upstairs) 34
A

Refugees

(By the time the stars prick their faint patterns) 36
A

Citizens

(The Trees have no leaves A man on a stretcher) 37
A

In That Time

(In that time before the Abolition) 38
A

The Shattering

(Adam slept by the pasteboard wall) 39
A

Leviathan

(Leviathan know that cotton river) 41
A

To the Tribunal

(For seven days we were not allowed) 42
A

Blues

(Lived here all my life Seen what you can do) 43
A

Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl

(Dear Amy At last a moment I miss) 44
A

Where Blind Sorrow Is Taught To See

(Lips against lips The window is open) 46
A

Democracy

(Where there was furnishing and canopy) 47
A

Soldiers

(After the war I will go to the highlands) 48
A

Memorials

(At the Mohegan Diner off Route Six) 49
A

Migrations

(Far inland the earth under our feet) 52
A

Book Three

To The City of Fire

(Here is soot Today it is all I have) 55
A

Admirals

(October 1609 This land is) 56
The Ghost of Santo Domingo
(All day she rocks forward and back whispering) 57
To Peace
(All day I search for you without success) 58
Our American Way of Life
(Chapter Twelve In School What is this This) 59
At Work
(She ladles the grounds with a plastic measure) 60
At School
(Excuse me the teacher says Where are you going) 61
Refugees
(Before the dawn before the rain started) 62
Citizens
(There is chilly dancing in Harlem tonight) 63
In That Time
(In that time after the Great Silencing) 64
The Shattering
(Wednesday January 25) 65
Leviathan
(Leviathan ubiquitous) 68
To the Tribunal
(I come from a village by the north border) 69
Blues
(Leaves fallin down Here come the cold) 70
Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl
(Tonight I woke again afraid) 71
Where Blind Sorrow Is Taught To See
(It’s Independence Day or by now) 72
Democracy
(They took the beggar by the elbows) 73
Soldiers
(These five days and five nights there are no) 74
Memorials
(The tarnished band of old men slouches) 75
Migrations
(At the foot of the cobbled highway linking) 77

Book Four

To The City of Fire
(Where are you going Will you leave so quickly) 81
Admirals
(The people go naked men and women) 82
The Ghost of Santo Domingo
(That the earth may shelter and sustain us) 83
To Peace
(Why should you come to meet me your most) 84
Our American Way of Life
(Chapter Fifteen Our Flag What is this) 85
At Work
(You so sleepy baby Who you been) 86
At School
(Merchant and Merchant Junior march) 87
Refugees
(Until half past eight Pin’s daughter belongs) 88
Citizens
(To walk from the mica chambers) 89
In That Time
(In that time the people gathered at night) 90
The Shattering
(We were six We met in the evening) 91
Leviathan
(Leviathan scarify and scour) 92
To the Tribunal
(At Léopoldville I stood with others) 93
Blues
(You tell me no trouble’s on your tail) 95
Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl
(Dear Amy It has been a long time) 96
Where Blind Sorrow Is Taught To See
(Before you I walked with my hands in my pockets) 98
Democracy
(You bought new clothes You thought it was finished) 99
Soldiers
(Come my shirtless my hardly with us) 100
Memorials
(The cathedral floors and ceiling vaults) 101
Migrations
(I am wholly ruined Your Highness) 104

Book Five

To The City of Fire
(All along there have been places where I) 107
Admirals
(Your High Mightinesses I trust you received) 108
The Ghost of Santo Domingo
(They gave us broken crockery broken) 109
To Peace
(I have called you names I cannot repeat here) 110
Our American Way of Life
(Chapter Nineteen The People The People) 111
At Work
(For where there are no hiding places rows) 112
At School
(In bright frayed coats and leaping the children) 113
Refugees
(At midnight the old year blows its cold breath) 114
Citizens
(In the bars and private rooms of the city) 115

In That Time
(In that time the people presided over) 117

The Shattering
(The President and the Prime Minister) 118

Leviathan
(Leviathan the bullet bulwark) 120

To the Tribunal
(To protect ourselves we had knives and bamboo) 121

Blues
(By this fire I still feel the wind) 122

Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl
(June 1867 Dear Amy) 123

Where Blind Sorrow Is Taught To See
(Near where I lived there was a fenced schoolyard) 124

Democracy
(This is the sowing time The harvest) 125

Soldiers
(In the mica chambers the princes sit) 126

Memorials
(This afternoon cut bond shocks of cane) 127

Migrations
(It was the moon of big winds In the night) 130

Notes

Book One 133
Book Two 134
Book Three 135
Book Four 136
Book Five 137

Acknowledgements 141