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Harmony Holiday

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Poetry. Literary Nonfiction. African American Studies. Harmony Holiday's tête-bêche book-length lyric essay collection *GO FIND YOUR FATHER/A FAMOUS BLUES* immerses itself and its readers in a deeply personal interrogation of perhaps the most difficult subjects of all: love and family legacy. Holiday addresses these topics in verse, prose, and, most affectingly, in letters to her father—the late singer-songwriter Jimmy Holiday. Through these notes as well as her poems bearing long, ambitious, uncompromising lines, Holiday explores how we distill our own identities from memories and responsibilities bound up in tenderness and violence.

"Do any black children grow up casual? Naw, we grow up shipped, knowing that we are loved but knowing more than that, that terror, that knowing is scrawled money for our bank. We're sure-shot and avoided, singing blue devil blues like a black and blue disciple, out from Sallis, Attala off delta, change-played, flowed to that subcommon up-river fate, our Waterloo and phonic quarry, step-sharp, sharp-squared, strait-shawled, boot-sharp visitor, made for walking, talking remnant of an extra- impossible accord, then Los Angeles. Resonances and renaissance of everywhere we come from, Harmony, deepest Holiday since Jason, since Jimmy, having gone to find him, makes these missive runs, assured of her allure but running from and in that into open, unsure dream. She sees it's getting late. Her archive has a microtonal blush. Sightsound, as Russell Atkins says. Can you say what it is to sing a song of love I can show you, right here, ask me now."—Fred Moten

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Richard Holeman:

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