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SPELLS FOR ZERO CAPTURES

Glenis Redmond

glenisredmond63@gmail.com

These poems of Harriet Tubman speaks to her ability to shape shift. She stands mythical because of her escape of slavery and rescue of so many others.

Glenis Redmond is nationally renowned award-winning poet and teaching artist traveling the world sharing and teaching poetry. She writes about the strength of her Afro-Carolinian roots, while exploring their weighted and palpable histories. Glenis is a literary community leader. Her work has been showcased on NPR and PBS and has been most recently published in Orion Magazine, the North Carolina Literary Review, Obsidian Literature and Arts in the African Diaspora, StorySouth, About Place and Carolina Muse. Her latest book, *The Listening Skin* will be published by Four Way Books in 2022.

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Spells for Zero Captures

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For Harriet Tubman

Conduct like I ain't tryin to die. Leave when de moon new. Sky dark. Listen to what's on my inside, 'cause it don't lie. When my chest flutters, I knows danger lurks. Change course. "Know I can't die but once." But, ain't tryin to do dat just yet. Don't speak on nothin. Proud talk get you dead. No need for I did dis. I did dat. No peacocking. Blend into tree trunk. Travel during winter. Buy time. Saturday night rewards for runaways not in papers till Monday morning. Got a whole day before dey 'spect we gone. Read people and de land like white people read books. When I have a spell, shout not. Don't fight deep sleep. Go into the body quake. Vision and dreams be how God directs my path. Follow de map dat my inside knows. Let God talk. No open field in daylight. Know de codes like I know de woods. Light in window. No trails. Cover footsteps. Don't give into thoughts of coon dogs and guns. Quiet steps. Silence. Give babies de root. Paregoric. My Grandma Modesty came over on de boat from Africa. She knew the earth holds medicine. Don't tarry. Make friends of weary and tired. Dey don't leave nohow. "You'll be free or die." Listen to de old ways. Don't turn back. Trust de Quakers, but carry gun loaded. Curse slavers. "Never wound a snake; kill it." "God's time [Emancipation] is always near." He set de North Star in de heavens.; He gave me de strength in my limbs to follow where his light leads.

