

*Steps of New York City*

*my very special view  
for Tonya Bolden*

black man is standing on the doorsteps  
on the doorsteps of the stores  
of the theatres  
and restaurants  
and bars  
and ...  
saying *come in*  
saying *nice to see you*  
saying *can I help you*  
the whole day long

black man is standing on the doorstep  
of my hotel  
opening the door to the city  
saying *you're welcome*  
saying *take care of yourself*  
and *have a nice day*  
looking at me  
widening his eyes  
and baring his teeth in a smile

black men are standing on the doorsteps  
of the museum halls  
wearing dark suits  
holding themselves upright  
guarding American goods  
looking around  
watching the visitors  
wearing emotionless faces  
saying no word

black man is standing on the curb  
wearing advertising signs  
offering forty dollars suits  
calling *Metro Metro*  
distributing pieces of paper  
to the hurrying crowd  
saying nothing and something  
to nobody and everybody  
doing his work  
no sign in his face

black man stands.