



Video Story Transcript

Miss No Name Struggles for Justice

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Link to YouTube Video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sxaRATaxJEA>

Note : The following is a transcription of a spoken story performance and may not reflect textbook perfect English. It will guide you as you listen (or read) along.

Hi, I'm Jay O'Callahan. Ruth Hill has given me permission to tell this story written by her husband Brother Blue, who is also Dr. Hugh Morgan Hill. I'm going to read this story called "Miss No Name," and this is about the time World War II, Brother Blue is an Army officer about to go overseas. And I'm going to read it to try to capture some of the, some of the cadence and the beauty of his words.

Miss No-Name, blue-eyed soul sister wrapped in snow. What's your name? I'm Brother Blue, that's my name. I'm a street cat. I like it like that. What's your name? What's your name inside? Your name? I got a story for you, a poem, a song, a dance, I do all over the world. I'm telling stories in the street to heal the broken world. To heal broken hearts, broken hands, broken bodies, all over the world. What's your name, Miss No Name? I want to know your name inside. Your name."

Once upon a time ago, long ago, a song ago, when I was a young man in the United States Army, I fell in love with you, Miss No Name. What's your name? Long ago, a song ago, a blues ago, we got the news that we were going overseas. So, I went home, said hello to my folks, and I went back to my unit down South.

This was a sad time, bad time, this was time of segregation in the southern states of America the Beautiful. One morning, I woke up and thought, "What if I have to die, now? This is a beautiful day to die for America the Beautiful." America the Beautiful did not think black soldiers could be brave warriors. I am, I always will be a black soldier. Early in the morning in the Southland, just before we're to go overseas, I saw a wild bird. And I

thought, "This is a day to die, to die for America the Beautiful. So, I bathed. I prayed. I put on my officer's uniform and walked under the bus station, where it was against the law in the Southland for white people and black people to sit together on the bus. In those sad days, those bad days, black people had to sit in the back of the bus, white people in the front of the bus.

So, I walked to the bus station. The bus is waiting for me. I looked up at the sky; this is a lovely day to die for America the Beautiful. Bus is waiting for me. I looked up at the blue sky. I heard that voice, "This is a day to die." So, I've got on the bus. Black people in the back only two seats empty, right behind the driver. "Whoo, haaa. They're waiting for me. This is a lovely day to die, die."

So, I sat down right behind the bus driver. The bus driver, he looked in the mirror. I saw his eyes were blue and they were burning in the mine, they were daggers. But he could see my eyes in the mirror and he saw something, the eyes of a crazy man, ready to die. Don't want nobody to grab a crazy man who's died to fear. So, I'm waiting for the military police, civilian police. And then, oooh, haaa, here comes a lady on the bus. A lady on the bus. She's like music in the early morning. She got skin like snow, blue sky in her eye, golden fire in her hair and she sits down beside me. I don't know why. Why does the sun, why does the sun shine in the morning? I don't know why. Young man got up. He was sittin' behind. A gallant son of the South, most courteous. He said to this lady sitting beside me, "You don't have to sit beside this..." (I'm not going to say that word. I can't say that word.)

And the sweet lady beside me, she said most sweetly, softly, softly, "No. This is perfectly all right."

Well, my heart began to dance and shout but I couldn't let it out. Something inside me was falling in love with this lady, this sweet lady. The bus is now making a sound. It's moving, its coughin', it's lurching and crying and moaning and groaning. And we're going through the South. And I'm waiting. I'm waiting. Military police. Civilian police. Ever stop, waiting, waiting.

Finally, the sweet lady, I don't know her name, she got up and she got off the bus. She smiled at me without looking at me, for something inside both of us was past skin, past color. Past all. All names. I wanted to say, "Sweet lady, what's your name?" I wanted to say, "Thank you, sweet lady. Thank you for seeing me, beyond color, beyond visible. You taught me something, sweet lady. You taught me, you can't judge a person by the way they look. Up till the bright moment, I didn't believe a person, white like snow, could make a move for a man of my color. I didn't believe it could happen. But then you came along like a song. You opened my eyes so I could see past the skin we're wrapped in."

Oh, Miss No Name, I'm a wandering storyteller. I went to war overseas. I didn't die. Many of my brothers did. Now I'm a wanderer, like a leaf in the wind, a fool for love. Traveling around this round, where you awaken me. You opened my eyes. I could see past the color we're born in, past the accident of the birth, past the body we wear...past the given name.

Miss No Name, I know your name. Inside your name, it's something like Love, something like Truth, something like Beauty, something like God. I can't speak it, I'm trying to live it. I pray someday, before I fly

from this world, as I travel through the streets, the subways, the prisons, the broken fields, broken city, I can make a move for somebody that don't look like me. Like you did for Brother Blue, long, long ago.