

# “I feel a scream coming on...”

by Victor Diggs

We need 180 days of Black History!  
I need to see the image of me  
On a textbook page-  
Beyond that of a slave.

It's outrageous  
How we've been denied  
Our right to co-exist  
In the black & white.

How can you study history  
Without the mention of me?  
My contributions  
To this American institution  
Have been grossly overlooked  
In your textbook.

Let's play a little game  
I'll say a phrase  
And you'll call out a name.

Did you learn of the clock that I made,  
Sprung forth from a mind  
That was self-taught?  
What about my almanac  
Or the plans that I laid for DC?  
Holla' if you heard of me.

What about my hospital that I made  
In Chicago  
Back in the day?

What about my work on the farm?  
Folks thought I was nuts,  
But I proved to be an agricultural genius.

Hollywood wouldn't be  
Without the 2000 homes  
Designed by me,  
Not to mention LAX

I've done it all  
I mean  
How many lives did I save-  
With my plasma work and blood banks, gas  
Masks, and traffic lights  
And that little wire inside those lights.

1<sup>st</sup> successful open-heart surgery-  
That was me.

I've done it all-  
Synthesized cortisone  
For arthritic bones,  
Discovered treatments for cataracts,  
Enabled moving trains to communicate so they  
stay on track.

I mean refrigeration on trucks and stuff,  
I've done it all.  
I created the heating system  
For Radio City Music Hall.  
You've heard of dry cleaning  
Yeah... that was me.

Even the refining of sugar  
For your tea or coffee  
Remember that when using your Mac or PC-  
The chip that makes it work faster  
You should thank me.

I've left my fingerprints on various industries,  
Advancements to society.  
America would not exist  
Without me..

I'm tired of all this talk of Black History  
Taking me back to some cotton field  
Or slave shack

I've overcome centuries  
Of adversities.  
What do you really  
Know about me.