***They Were My People***

**by Grace Nichols**

**They were those who cut cane  
to the rhythm of the sunbeat   
  
They were those who carried cane  
to the rhythm of the sunbeat   
  
They were those who crushed cane  
to the rhythm of the sunbeat   
  
They were women weeding, carrying babies  
to the rhythm of the sunbeat   
  
They were my people, working so hard  
to the rhythm of the sunbeat - - long ago  
to the rhythm of the sunbeat.**