



OBSIDIAN

Literature & Arts
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Call & Response: Experiments in Joy
Furious Flower:
Seeding the Future of African American Poetry
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THEIR NAME IS BENBANNIK

Douglas Kearney

NANZEE

I know
their **BENBANNIK's office**
a verdant austerity.

Manager of doors and

**NANZEE crawls upright on
the webs, mocking sneaking.**

**loud enough
for BENBANNIK
to hear.**

rooms
one-ment,
e's "Benbannik
of salad and fr
The great nut gobbler

**certainly, a
pair of steely,
ergonomic
office chairs
lashed
together,
feature.**

**(a few other
pieces of furniture
and supplies.**

I know a one-them-

BENBANNIK

—And we know you.

“Landlord of little rooms?”

“Great nut gobbler?”

That’s not what we’re known for.

NANZEE

Folks in the bush, bird’s in the tree,
what they know about v

**NANZEE doesn't
descend.**

BENBANNIK

These proverbs are fine

NANZEE

As the sun in the sky.

- BENBANNIK Nanzee duh haosOonah cumpass?
DunOonah laykut waydat?
- NANZEE Boocoo byumby, Aycheni.
Dohm wontuffnalenxDay dohmblok,
glimmMee, beezMee-ish.
- BENBANNIK Fo' wee na wee-ish uhdayBenbannik soli.
- NANZEE Oona-ish uhday'kayMee, Dem-nahcroe.
UhUm-kay.
Shee—ponDey fless/boocoo ele...wídat?
Fraym-rach't.
UhdayDay Masisbay rep cyoo:
go aycheni rep buhnneesuhp na jiggasuhp
nah goobaGrees.
- BENBANNIK UhdayWee Benbannik—
haos dohm'emera eleboocoo
pon dohm-em-yo'k eleboocoo

Jiggasuhp loofooke/wee uhpsayDay.

Jahnen'kay ko'pa, nanzish wudat?
- NANZEE Mee-ish, nig/doors.
- BENBANNIK Haos mimajont/wee wudat
usbay'kay anznayOona.
- NANZEE Oona-kay yo'say-mee.
Haos UhdayMee booc wanbeez duh dahmee.
- BENBANNIK Jiggasuhp loofooke/wee uhpsayDay.

Jahnen'kay ko'pa, nanzish wudat?

Jahnen-kayOona stak oona
hoodat nanzsum beezbí!

- NANZEE Buss akstayOona oona, doos, tray—
ay, feenMee oomfoo fix dun misho’bahlm-Mee.
- BENBANNIK Yang. MaykplaynOona oona
nah fix esblayWee oona fless/oona.
MaykplaynOona wee tray na mímasumWee!
AnchstayWee whadatuhday sayWee.
- UhdayWee Benbannik—
 haos dohm’emera eleboocoo
 pon dohm-em-yo’k eleboocoo
- Jiggasuhp loofooke/wee uhpsayDay.
- Jahnen’kay ko’pa, nanzish wudat?
- MaykplaynOona wee tray na mímasumWee!
 AnchstayWee whadatuhday sayWee.
- NANZEE Tray beez!
Haos dem-nahcroe duh-jecks!
NanzsumDoos pon nanzish—
nah oona hoodat doos dokkingsum tray beez!
- BENBANNIK Shee! Ayshoo-oona!
Doos hoodat beezWee oona bu—
Day beez-kay na naw, doos naw!
- NANZEE Yehnawsum, mahwoo-leesuh/cyoo.
JungahsipDoos pon oona bu—
Yehnaw-mee fix beezFless-mee fayó’sum,
nah husnawsho’lo’.
- BENBANNIK AnchstayWee whadatuhday sayWee,
fix esblayWee oona fless/oona.
Shet naw akpayMee deesnuhp.
Rep ish go’curbMee innanuhp,
Haos dun’kayMee. Feen go’
atro’pay waypass.

NANZEE Well I've counted one, two, three—
see, I need near half my arms to do it.

BENBANNIK Bullshit. You show us one
the longer NANZEE you your meat.
talks with BENBANNIK, and we'll cook it, too!
the more it seems he say

We are B *the entwined
twins*
may slowly

Everyone here eats the fruit of our work.

What *loosen.* that satisfy?

Show me three and we'll cook it, too!
We do what we say.

NANZEE Then three it is!
The One-two in this room!
Y'all hunger against hunger—
and one who is two equals three!

BENBANNIK *BENBANNIK
pulls themselves
together tightly.* fucker!
re One—
two!

NANZEE Fine, Queen-King Barbecue.
But you've agreed to one—

I guess
but I'll *NANZEE walks in
tight circles around
BENBANNIK.*

BENBANNIK We do
we'll g
Though, we've no blade anymore.
Got rid of it long ago,
haven't needed to hunt
in so long.

BEN. (CONT). O'ttrayOona demdang wee na
sayseem-wee credik beez—
Haos fless fix pass uhdaiDis
dahmee/asto'rpeerish!

UhdaiWee Benbannik—
haos dohm'emera eleboocoo
pon dohm-em-yo'k eleboocoo.

O'ttrayOona demdang wee
fless fix pass uhdaiDis

AnchstayWee whadatuhday sayWee.

NANZEE AysayDoos nanzee patro'ishNanzee?
Waydat digMee shet beez.
AjbayDoos-doos mímuishish-doos, Benbannik!

BEN. (CONT). Bring us a weapon
 and our word is bond—
 There'll be meat
 in this breathtaking house!

 We are Benbannik—
 our body is a house of all
 in a house of all.

 Bring us a weapon,
 there'll be meat

 We do what we say.

NANZEE

*Suddenly, NANZEE vaults up
into the web system and exits.*

 Get your pots and pans, Benbannik!