

December 2002

## Umoja: Each One of Us Counts

Rita Dove

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.law.seattleu.edu/sjsj>

---

### Recommended Citation

Dove, Rita (2002) "Umoja: Each One of Us Counts," *Seattle Journal for Social Justice*: Vol. 1: Iss. 3, Article 52.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.law.seattleu.edu/sjsj/vol1/iss3/52>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Publications and Programs at Seattle University School of Law Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Seattle Journal for Social Justice by an authorized editor of Seattle University School of Law Digital Commons.

## Umoja: Each One of Us Counts

---

Rita Dove

One went the way of water,  
one crumpled under stone;  
one climbed the air but plunged through fire,  
one fought the fear along.

*Remember us, though we are gone.*

A star flares on an epaulet,  
a ball rolls in harm's way;  
the glowing line onscreen goes flat,  
an anonymous bullet strays—

*Remember us! Do not forget!*

One lay slathered in garlands,  
one left only a smear;  
one cracked a joke, smiled, then shrugged  
to show he didn't care.

*Do not forget that we were here.*

Do those who failed still miss the wind,  
that sweet breath from the sky?  
Do they still covet rock and moss  
or the swift, hard blink of the lizard's eye?

*We walk on water, we are written on air.*

Let us honor the lost, the snatched, the  
relinquished,  
those vanquished by glory, muted by shame.  
Stand up in the silence they've left and listen:  
those absent ones, unknown and unnamed—

*remember!*

*their* whispers fill the arena.

© 1996, 2003 by Rita Dove. Reprinted with permission; contribution to Poets Against the War.

MILITARIZATION