

Iguanas

by Cyril Dabydeen

1

Legs stiffening on trees in
Florida where I will never go
again in cold weather

what the imagination allows
in a tropical place as my
blood grows warmer

I must keep contending with on
this coastal ground,
climate-change, d'you know

cochineal and flamboyante,
soursop and sapodilla I will
try to learn more about

what proliferates on treetops like the
oak and maple I imagine best,
but the banyan once again, and

the bougainvillea in the East in
Thailand, India, or somewhere
else it will be, indeed

as the iguana scurries up, then down,
in changing weather I now want
to talk about, believe me

when a Capuchin leaps high
from tree to tree, if it's only
the Congo I must know about.

II

Being again in the Amazon
where iguanas are called lizards
more strident, and it's being
emerald-green I dwell upon

hoping to see another
chameleon, and birds like
the toucan and hornbill

flying high over tall tree-tops
I aim to measure up to with
cold feet and will keep
walking on soft ground

as a sloth appears looking
up and around as time keeps
going by I let you know.

Mr Rochester

by Cyril Dabydeen

Jane (*eyre*) bewitches the horse
making it rear its head, eyes
bewildered-looking.

A strange kind of fear on
the way to Thornfield Hall
I aim to let you know.

The drama of what's to come
with instinct or style no
one must dwell upon.

A tempest or storm, you see,
from the beginning, being

closer to the manor house

fully drawn to it from long
ago, and wanting
to marry Jane and take her

to India as no other exotic
place will do not only to
a Jamaica sugar-plantation

Bertha (*antoinette*) doesn't know;
but the horse knows with upraised
head and fire: oh fire, cane-fields

burning, or it's a cotton plantation,
you see coming to me with
distemper the manor now

unbounded I let you know.