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What Doesn't Kill You Makes You Stronger

AN INTERVIEW WITH LETTA NEELY
by Cathy Resmer

Letta S. Neely is an African-American lesbian, poet, playwright, writer, feminist, earth-keeper and teacher. A native of Indianapolis, she survived inner-city bussing and went on to attend Indiana University.

Among the prizes she's collected are the 1997 Pat Parker Award and a 1995 New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship. She has also won several poetry slam competitions, including the 1997 Amazon Slam, and the 1996 and 1998 Outwrite National Slams.

She is also the author of *Juba*, her first full-length collection of poems, published last year by Wildheart Press.

On one of the last days of 1998, I visited Letta Neely at the home she shares with partner Renita Martin in Dorchester, MA. We sat down on an overstuffed couch with Lucky the Chihuahua and Indigo the white cat, to talk about publishing, politics, poetry, and food.

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