Mills Blue Rhythm Band

The entire Mills Blue Rhythm Band, including Edgar Hayes who never made a name but graduated with a music degree from Wilberforce before heading the Eight Black Pirates,

including Shelton Hemphill, a fine section trumpeter who rarely had opportunities to solo,

including trumpeter Wardell “Preacher” Jones who stepped forward, soloed, tipped his hat, bowed quietly out,

including Lucius Venable “Lucky” Millinder, the band’s leader, who could not read music, did not play an instrument, and rarely sang,

including the eighty-five corpses that “surfaced” yesterday in Baghdad and that bore obvious marks of torture,

and including today Anna’s spider, pinched in a Kleenex and flushed down the toilet.
And yes it's raining now 
as if to commemorate 
the going down into watery darkness, 
rewinding Genesis 1:2, 
God sucking his breath back in, 
leaving chaos unhedged.

And, true, neither spider nor corpses 
(unless you count the miniature 
muted trumpets of the flies) 
are wailing out a tune.

But listen to this: in a twinkling 
the entire Mills Blue Rhythm Band 
in natty suits and silver ties 
leaps out of its grave 
and with two snaps of Lucky’s fingers 
swings into a version of 
*Ridin’ in Rhythm* that knocks 
the pennies right off your eyes.