

to Thami Mnyele

aah...!
yet another drop of blood
on the scaffold
from the womb of slavery
to the humiliating symphony of mine dumps
and you stretched your palm
across this time and space
to plant meaning with a dare
of your heart heartening

aah...!
yet another drop of blood
on the scaffold

i am looking for space
to plant the heroic spear of your elbows
in the path of triumph beyond the grave
gravely
here where the streets have taken a stand
against the burning noon of this tide
here on the palms of warriors
across Blood River in the eclipse
in the eyes of the gods

beyond this sacred drop of blood
this ancestry of wills
this face of the landscape of man
on this mound
i see the misdeeds of the elements
the mischief of the gods
in the image of man that they are
manning the rickety tide of the gold bullion
down Pretoria Square the insolent step

and you went away thus
yet another drop of blood
charioted by violence
on the main of the struggle for humanity
you were in love
married to the fingers of man
the will of the wheel of posterity
and you grew up thus
among the reeds that swayed
to and fro without rhythm or rhyme
bending all the time to oblivion
insulting the heroes of yore
and you were bitter
for your love was bigger than the pyramids
of time that lost time
in the breath of the fanatics of cowardice

and you went away thus
and i say
the fog has failed to lay down
its thorns
and the hounds have barked once more
upon the breasts of patriots
pawing and pawing
and questions and bound to be questions
this side of being
when patience has formed haloes
around the heart of humility
and blood is spilt like that
across the krantz to become gods
and we shall make them
so as to sing and dance
in the mould of our will
willing...
to direct the conscience of man
to seek vengeance without inhumanity
this is
the ontology of brave justice
that staggers the nerve
the meaning of this path
that you inhabited in the fullness of the moon
bright and ever bright
until...
yet another drop of blood
and i ask you Thami
of a thousand unbroken spaces of vision
you who have traversed the poles
of van Goch and Solomon Mahlangu
and listened to Che the Guevara of our times
and spoke in committed brushes and spears
of colours to the colouring Mother of Gorky
in Maseru and Matola...

you lived beyond definitions of art
in art
and no heavens fell
except intrigues of dictionaries and puffed lungs
that must now redress their story
to match the being of this drop of blood

aah...!
how big must the grave of the braves measure
aah...!
how big

no...
i will not wait for any answers from you
you'll tell me of things and things
of broken arguments by dehydrated drunkards
with wishing spears

of love of self muffling the anthem
of empty fields spanning away from deserted mountains
across rivers with jawless crocodiles
you'll tell me of men and women
who must become this path
to draw a line between life and death
and i in turn will argue coherently
about flowers that must inhabit
this drop of blood
flowering in the sting of warriors
no...

i will not wait for any answers from you
i will sink the rod of meaning
to stir impatience
and forward a blank cheque
to the marauding lion of my being
i will sing of flowers dying away
like this
burnt down by the insipid breath
of the stinging bees around

i will cry like i am crying now
and don't you tell me
you abhor the sound
i detest the wound that carried you
beyond the sunset
my voice is a voice
married to the thunder and lightning
in the knot of this drop of blood
yes...

i hear your voice now
is it you who is dragging me
to this dry street of dustbins
full of emptiness
staggering into kitchens of hungry cockroaches
why tell me of breaking muscles
covered with gold poverty
down there into the pit of pits
pitting love against consuming hatred
of words on words
on the palm of man
unpoetic in the extreme .
leading to this death

Thami...

you deserve a poem of the will of man
the nation of anthems of steel
of pictures of the war of victories
i owe you the immortality
the breath of heroes
let Gaborone be the badge
the mint of posterity...

— Zinjiva Nkondo —