

All Things are Possible Here.

Here,
 Where the soft coo-coo of the dove
 Gives way quickly to angry snarls of hyenas
 As dusk creeps,
 No, as day like in an eclipse
 Turns without warning into night,
 Into the rata-tatata of AK-47,
 All things are possible.

All things are possible here,
 In this place where
 Madness and Dictatorship
 Twined by international capital,
 Embrace and explode, volcano-like
 Into lava streams of blood;

Possibilities abound in these fertile fields
 Where Westerners mine gold;
 Empty gold mines and fill them with land mines,
 To fill the continent with amputees.

Here where the empty stomachs of children
 Rumble in rhythm with anthems of dependency—
 The Our Father of their fathers—
 Listen!
 The rhythm of their mothers' lullabies!
 It beats differently—It is the anthem
 Of a new world forming in their wombs;
 Believe me!
 Even a new future is possible here.

Peter Simatei

NO!

The doubt you chose to cast
 Lingers;
 Thunder splits ear drums
 But echoes less,
 Yours recurs; resounds like . . . what?
 The wails of a fleet of ambulances
 Doing mad revs to salvage quake victims
 Is still not the simile.
 Did you really believe
 That the first stone would come from me?

Peter Simatei

The Stars Have Dimmed Again

The stars have dimmed again
And I—
I for whom astrology is Greek
Lie back to make poetry
From unknown forecasts of my fate.

I contemplate the constellation
And peer at the milky way
To search for a solitary star
Which may in its dissolution
Pierce the quiet of this darkness.

But the chilling hoots of an owl
Detract my abstraction
A reminder perhaps, that
Poetry is not all fantasy.

Tonight,
No star shines for me,
Only blinding sparks of distant tanks
And nearby fire-spurts of a rebel's rata-ta-ta
And smoke from peasant granaries
Define my being;
And now the ground quakes
And in that last hoot
The owl blinds me with a thousand stars
And seals my fate with blood.

Peter Simatei