

IN UHURU LAND

By

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*And you, traitors to your people,  
Where will you run to  
When the brave of the lands gather?  
For Kenya is black people's country.*

Ngugu Wa Thiong'o

*A black man is not safe at home; a black man is  
not safe abroad.*

Ngugu Wa Thiong'o

1

I hid  
in "stable" Kenya  
in uhuru land  
I hid  
in front of a wicket  
behind a white woman  
I hid  
behind my wife  
I hid  
from a black man  
I hid

2

He looked at her passport  
smiled  
no visas necessary  
open sesame  
because  
she from Canada.

3

As if  
a mamba snake  
were about to strike him  
he recoiled  
because

underneath her passport  
hid  
like me  
my Somali passport.

4

"He is my husband"  
Without hiding  
his contempt  
he opened it.  
Before you could say  
J. Robinson!  
He closed it  
clasped it to his heart

5

beamed  
pocketed the single fifty (U.S.) dollar note  
beamed again  
bowed:  
"Bon voyage!"