

## CONGO

by

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Mobutu's day is dying  
 his jetliner skimming across  
 the wounded sun  
 in the evening clouds  
 rust and copper and blood  
 bearing him northward  
 out of the fury of the mines  
 Black, metallic profit  
 aching under the belly of flight

Once, Belgium  
 stamped its seismic foot  
 Congo earth cracked and  
 yielded molten blood  
 Plantation workers lined up  
 measured hand by hand  
 Obscene orders given in French  
 Their hands fell  
 like butchered oval leaves  
 in the shadows of the rubber trees  
 A fallen tribe of protest

The rubber trees extend up  
 toward Brussels, Paris, NATO  
 and cringe under a confusion of weapons

The rubber-eaters sip mineral water,  
 slice bits of copper and  
 poise them on New York's teeth  
 Bits of Lumumba's tomb  
 stirred in the sauce

The Bakongo River  
 is a muscular thread  
 seen from Mobutu's mercenary envoy  
 Dinner is served  
 on his transcontinental flight

The rebels plan history