

UPON BEING BANNED

by

DON MATTERA

There are words
 within the recesses of my troubled being
 but they are not poems
 not all the flowers, grass
 nor singing trees can move my pen

Not even the hues of the setting sun
 now move the soul in me
 there is no poetry inside
 but a dry froth of bile
 on the lips of a volcano

How can I sing
 when the white vultures
 rip my tongue
 Except by walking in the woods
 How can one tell it is Spring

There is no poetry
 in being cheated out of one's land
 no ryme in shackles
 no merriment in misery
 How can a Black man sing of Bondage...

*DON MATTERA is a Black South African poet and
journalist banned (as of November 1973) for five
years.*