

## **MOTHER AFRICA**

Ailing pains that never seem to go away  
Freedom like no other  
Respect for the motherland  
Innovative on another level  
Cast away as though an insignificant speck  
Amazing-never cease to survive despite the strife

Mother AFRICA  
Although they will burden your back  
With a load  
Too heavy that some would collapse  
Beneath it  
But it is you  
And so despite this  
You stand strong  
Proud, back straight  
Poised and graceful  
As though a gazelle

Your beauty lies in your strength  
In the wisdom shining from your aged eyes  
Despite the years  
You retain the twinkle  
Despite the deprivation  
You still have but more to provide  
You are the forgotten star  
By which our forefathers depended  
The same star  
By which we derive our knowledge  
Yet you go unacknowledged

Regardless,  
You are a rare beauty  
A gem among the sand  
Wealthy yet not affluent  
Paradoxes unparalleled  
All of which makes you you

Mother Africa  
Color of a rainbow,  
Variety of spectrums neglected,  
Your whole body disfigured, dismantled  
Despite this-  
Your heart & soul remain intact

Mother Africa-  
Robbed of galaxies  
In history and still today  
Made an unwanted guest in your own home  
Sent away to a land unknown  
Only to sell your very soul  
Yet you persevered  
And maintained your identity  
Rebellious without appearing to be so  
Scapegoated for many ills  
Ignored despite your cries  
Overwhelmed by external forces  
Undermined your skill, your wealth of knowledge  
Imposed western values  
Which force you  
To slowly lose a part of yourself  
So much has changed  
And its up to those who live under you  
To preserve your values

Mother Africa,  
Though we may be poor in monetary terms,  
As long as our hearts beat  
With the same steady rhythm of our forefathers,  
As long as our spirits remain strong,  
As long as our minds are free from the confines of this world,  
Then we are free,  
And we are whole,  
And we will be among the wealthiest,  
For this is not a wealth to be bought and sold,  
This is not a wealth that can be taken away,

To quote another,  
“Economic poverty is only one form of poverty,  
Ecological poverty, ethical poverty, social poverty, spiritual poverty are other forms of poverty  
that are more prevalent in the so-called rich North, than the so-called poor South-and these  
poverties cannot be overcome by dollars!”

Always remember  
They may take all from us,  
But until we allow it,  
They will never break our spirits,  
Colonize our minds,  
Or conquer our hearts  
So remain beautiful and strong

LIVE LONG MOTHER AFRICA!

**About the author:** Nebila Abdulmelik is a recent graduate of the MA in African Studies at UCLA. An Ethiopian citizen, Nebila will be returning to the beloved continent to pursue sustainable development projects.