

## House of Nightmares

At dawn I stumble  
on the crossroad of my country's innocence.

But when the dusk blankets the daylight,  
I dance the dance out of the dancer  
until people of the river say  
I shall reincarnate the rhythm  
to replace the heartbeat of the poet  
as he sketches images of vanity.

They say I lunge towards darkness  
until it clothes my skeleton.  
But I dissolve like a lump in the throat to rain  
little streams that leave traces of pain.  
Plodding down the rhymescape,  
while wind blows, rain erases footpaths,  
I walk faster next to my Self.

I exile in the foreign lands  
where I pray for the tongue that evokes the spirit  
of wounded warriors, as history leaks  
in our unconscious like communal taps.

Allow me to stand on the margins of the page  
and right what I like. Remember, I left what I dislike.

Now I stomach the fire of Sandile Dikenis,  
of Dambudzo Marechera  
*busy shaking the peaches*  
*down from the summer poem.*

I run. And I run breathlessly  
below the heavy hand of the poet  
burdened with forsaken dreams.

I lie flat on the hill of Marikana to spectate political witchcraft.  
I see *knobkerries* and spears dancing  
in the air until they fall on top of dead bodies,  
before the incident translates into television images  
with the green blanket missing.

I play dead today, but tomorrow  
I wake up in the arms of this nightmarish poem.  
And walk away, slamming the door behind me.

- Sinethemba Bizela