

DON MATTERA

THE FOLLOWING POEMS EVOKE THE SPIRIT OF THE BONES

The poet must die

For James Matthews and Gladys Thomas after their poems were executed

The poet must die
her murmuring threatens their survival
her breath could start the revolution;
she must be destroyed
Ban her
Send her to the Island
Call the firing-squad
But remember to wipe her blood
From the wall,
Then destroy the wall
Crush the house
Kill the neighbours
If their lies are to survive
The poet must die

The Steve Biko Foundation

Sea and Sand
Sea and sand
My love
My land
God bless Africa
Sea and Sand
My love
My land
God bless Africa
But more the South of Africa
Where we live
Bless the angry mountains
And the smiling hills
Where the cool water spills
To heal the earth's brow
Bless the children of South Africa
The white children
And the black children
But more the black children
Who lost the sea and sand
That they may not lose love
For white children
Whose fathers raped the land
Sea and sand
My love, my land
God bless Africa

Azanian Love Song

Like a tall oak
I lift my arms to catch the wind
with bruised fingers
and somewhere in the ghetto
a Child is born;
a mother's anxiety and pain
hide in a forest of hope.

Like a straight pine
I point my finger at God
counting a million scars
on my dreams
and somewhere in the ghetto
a Child is weeping;
a women writers her legacy
on leaves of despair.

Like a weeping willow
I drop my soul
into a pool of fire
somewhere in a dark sanctuary
I hear the sound of a Freedom Song:

The Child has risen
and walks defiantly
towards the lion's lair
undaunted,
unafraid