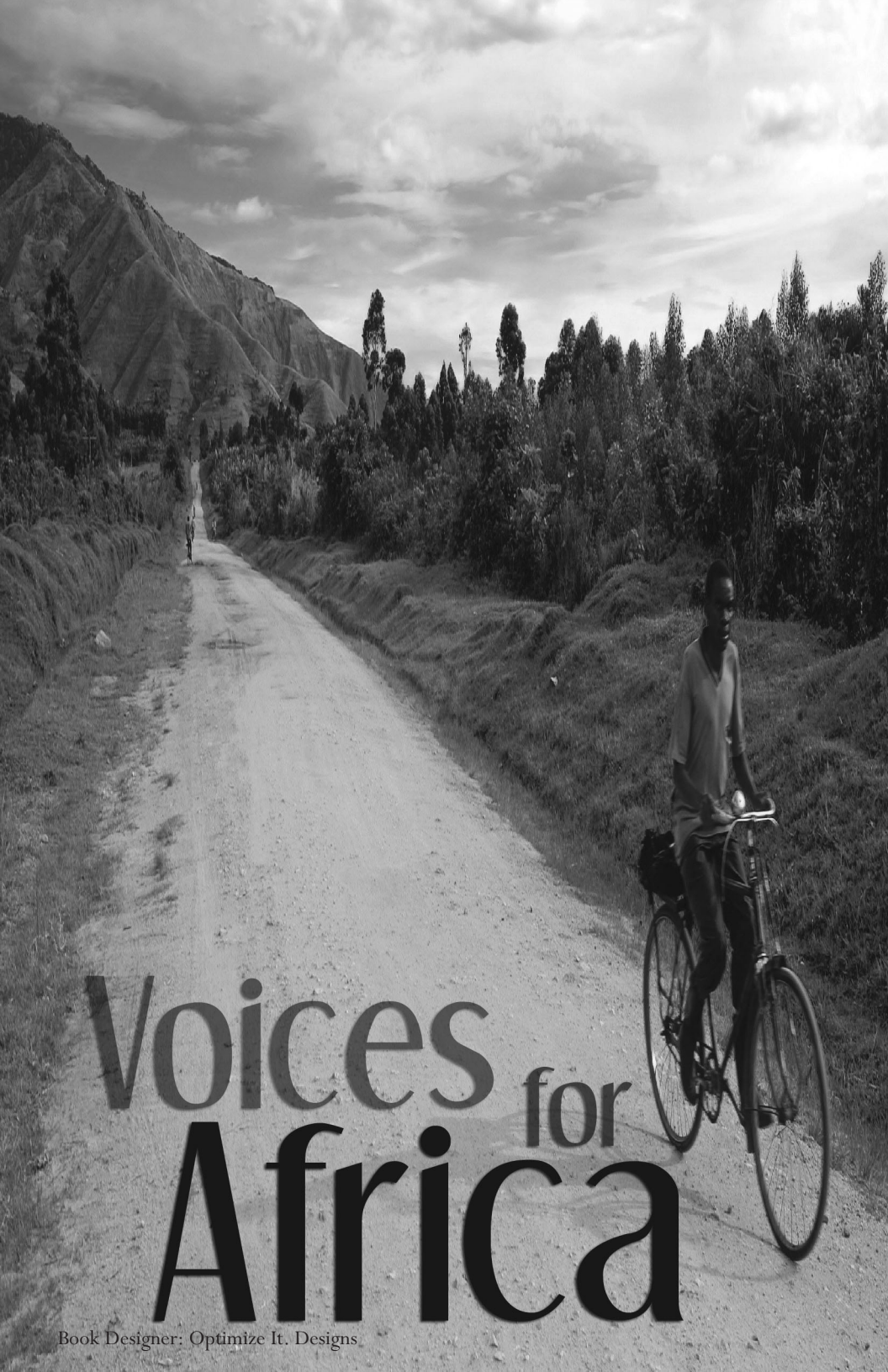




Voices for Africa

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Dear Reader,

The poems in *Voices for Africa* are dedicated by the eight authors who penned them to the hundreds of thousands of Africans: women, men, children and babies whose pleas for help have gone unheard by many in our world.

The purpose of *Voices for Africa* is to remind us all that even though the problems in this land seem overwhelming, each reader can do something positive to help change the lives of the suffering people living in Africa. One by one, our efforts may seem woefully inadequate, but together we can make a real difference.

People from all walks of life, races, religions, and cultures who have sponsored *Voices for Africa* encourage you to choose your favorite charitable organization or one of the organizations listed below and make a gift to the people of Africa. We are not selling the book, it is our gift to Africa and to you. We hope you will give your own gift.

Thank you.

Linda D. Delgado
Editor and Contributor *Voices for Africa*

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www.feedthechildren.org

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Darfur Action Campaign

To learn about the many International charitable organizations and volunteer opportunities go to:
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'O Africa

Her trees in the Rain forests weep, 'O Africa
Her grasses of the Savannah bend and sway in protest
Her animals hide in fear of thundering feet
Blades hacking all in their path
Shrill firing of guns announces coming death.

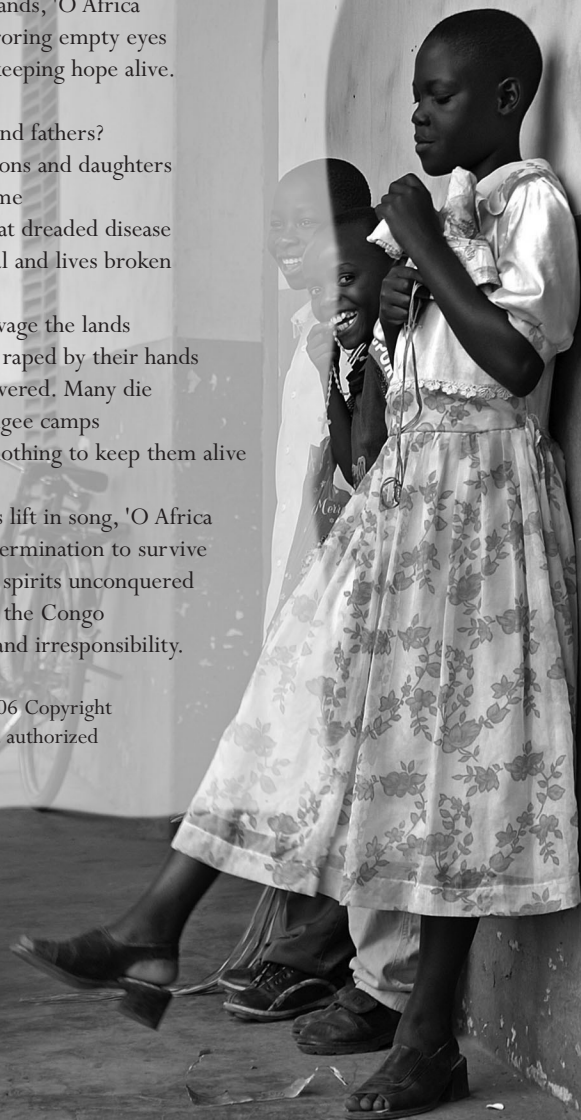
Old grandma stirring the thin gruel in the pot
Adding water to stretch its meager contents
Innocent faces and tiny hands, 'O Africa
Their empty bowels mirroring empty eyes
Grandma's gentle smile keeping hope alive.

Where are the mothers and fathers?
'O Africa, your beloved sons and daughters
Struck down in their prime
Death took them with that dreaded disease
Its name unspoken; denial and lives broken

Wild hordes of militia ravage the lands
'O Africa your daughters raped by their hands
Bodies savaged. Limbs severed. Many die
Forced to flee to the refugee camps
Barren wastelands with nothing to keep them alive

Still their beautiful voices lift in song, 'O Africa
Heads held high with determination to survive
Daughters of Africa your spirits unconquered
Darfur, Sudan, Rwanda, the Congo
Humanity's stark reality and irresponsibility.

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www.widad-lld.com







Africa!

You hold for us
We who do not know you
Intimately
Like a lover
Or a child
But only through the lens
Of explorers
And news reels
And two week safaris
You hold for us
The promise of mystery
Of adventure
And natural beauty
Of easy laughter
The hope the life is not everywhere
Mundane
Filled with the dull, gritty details
Of feeding families
Cleaning toilets and floors
Washing dishes and clothes
Backs bent beneath the burdens
Of daily routine and grinding labor

Behind this mythical, mystical curtain
Of transplanted dreams
Lies your own reality
Your own backbreaking truth
Relentless poverty
Drought dead farms

Your reality
Is far grimmer
Than ours
And yet do you not also hold
To the dreams of Africa
Of beauty and ease
Fed by hope
And pure determination
And exquisite glimpses
Of glorious self-determined potential
Truth and reconciliation
Fertile ground
Reclaimed from the desert
Of drought and war
In your own backyard
Our dreams of blessed Africa
Feed minds and hearts
Bodies and souls



Complex Continent

Ancient land of kings,
proud and powerful,
humbled now--
your resources seized
from your heirs

Modern land, diverse
in land and culture,
struggling now
as brothers fight
for dominion

Complex home to many,
battered often, yet
surviving still--
small victories claimed
without surrender

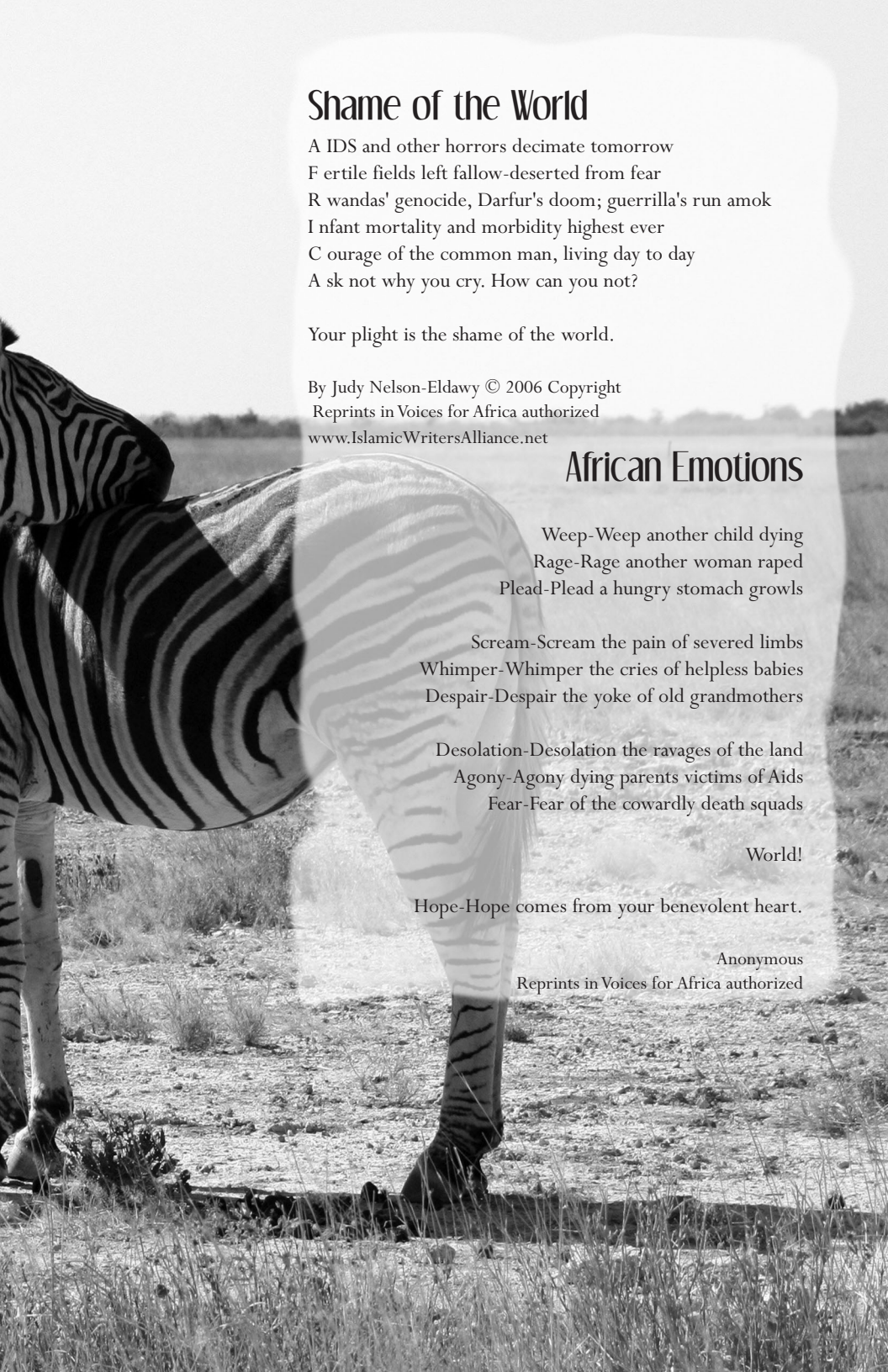
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<http://jamilahkolocotronis.writerswebpages.com>

Africa's Anger

Cradle of civilization
Redolent with grief
Untapped fecund oilfields
Abundant fertile lands
Bounteous water supply
Copious mineral mines
Ruthlessly pilfered in
The infamous Scramble

Bearing an austere history
Peppered with the isms:
Imperialism, Colonialism
Overt Racism, Capitalism
Freedom has come for few
Yet history slowly replicates
Unless our people unite and
Prevail in the battle against greed

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Shame of the World

AIDS and other horrors decimate tomorrow
Fertile fields left fallow-deserted from fear
Rwandans' genocide, Darfur's doom; guerrilla's run amok
Infant mortality and morbidity highest ever
Courage of the common man, living day to day
Ask not why you cry. How can you not?

Your plight is the shame of the world.

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African Emotions

Weep-Weep another child dying
Rage-Rage another woman raped
Plead-Plead a hungry stomach growls

Scream-Scream the pain of severed limbs
Whimper-Whimper the cries of helpless babies
Despair-Despair the yoke of old grandmothers

Desolation-Desolation the ravages of the land
Agony-Agony dying parents victims of Aids
Fear-Fear of the cowardly death squads

World!

Hope-Hope comes from your benevolent heart.

Anonymous
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African City

A melee of humanity
Pulsating, vibrant
A mighty river
Broad and strong
Cutting through the
African city
Of ramshackle buildings
Slowly decaying
Straddling glassy towers
That pierce the heavens
The flaking paint graffitied
Murals bright an African
Sunset, a woman, baby to
Her breast
Inhale the scent of the
African soil
Rich and warm
Fertile
Birthing time and again

Birthing?

Yes,
Poverty, desperation, disease,
Hope, courage, strength
And ultimately
Victory

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<http://afrocentric-muslimah.blogspot.com/>

African Day

Dusty roads
Rickety huts
Scorching sun
Barefoot children

Frail mothers
Washing clothes
Tireless grandmothers
Sifting grain

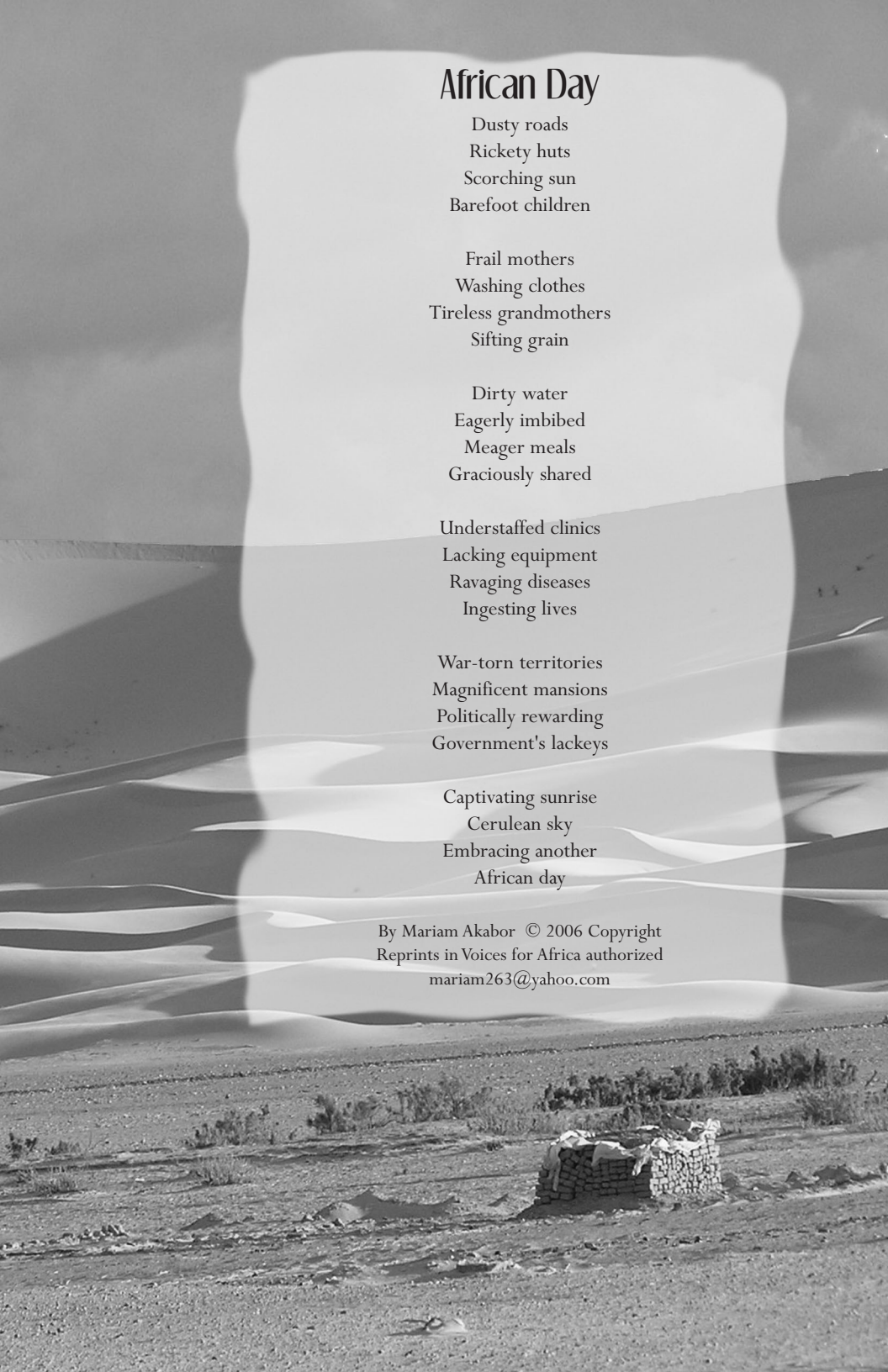
Dirty water
Eagerly imbibed
Meager meals
Graciously shared

Understaffed clinics
Lacking equipment
Ravaging diseases
Ingesting lives

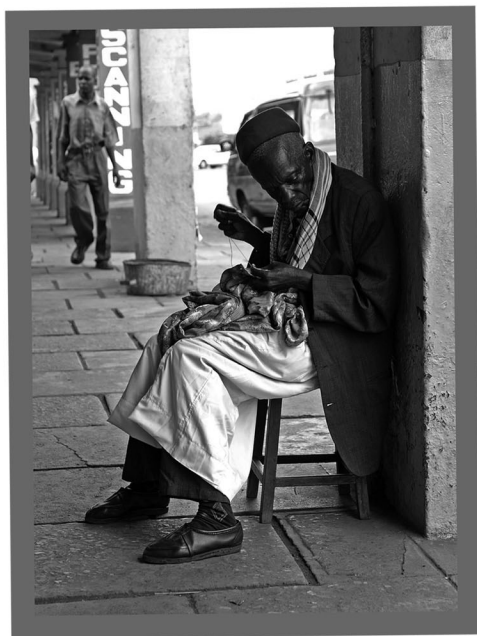
War-torn territories
Magnificent mansions
Politically rewarding
Government's lackeys

Captivating sunrise
Cerulean sky
Embracing another
African day

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Give Me My Pen



"Give me my pen," I said, with twinkling eyes.
But the Mzungus corrected my English.

"Give me your pen," they laughed in reply.

How could they know? How could they see?
With just a pen I can go to school.
A pen is life, a future for me.

"Give me my tin can," I said, hoping to play.
But they only shot me a grin.
"Give me your tin can," they reminded again.

How could they know? How could they see?
With a tin can I could create
A precious toy car out of something for free.

"Give me my name," my baby sister cried.
But now they only looked confused.
"Give her her name?" they chuckled inside.

How could they know? How could they see?
A name means she has survived.
Her name is a medal for Sistah almost three.

How could they know? How could they see?
Daddy died last year of AIDS.

"He's in heaven," the angels promised me.

"Give us a chance," my Auntie pleaded now.
They stopped in their tracks.

"Give them a chance?" they said with furrowed brow.

How could they know? How could they see?
Jobs, clean water, an end to the killing,
A chance to succeed, a chance to be free.

"Give us our country back," we pleaded as one.
They looked away in disgust.

"Give them their country?" they whispered so stunned.

How could they know? How could they see?
They strip our land and plant dictators instead.
Yes, what will it take to finally be free?

Give me my pen.

Note: Mzungus are white foreigners



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You have not lived a perfect day, even though you have earned your money, unless you have done something for someone who will never be able to repay you. - Ruth Smeltzer

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