

Poetry Series

William Mpina
- poems -

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William Mpina(13 February,1977)

I am a final year student at Chancellor College, the University Of Malawi. My works appear in atleast five anthologies published in Malawi and on line magazines such as expound magazine and author_

Gone

So, are you gone?
Have often thought about you
Spent sleepless nights in my rags
Walk long distances
Peep in crevices
See you not

Everybody thinks about seasoning their future
Spent long hours between the four walls
Of poorly fed libraries
Peep in magazines
Listen to radios
Watch televisions

And you paused
Looked at me and asked:
How many acknowledge that
They are in the future they wished?
So, were you in yours?
Friend, sleep well.

William Mpina

Grandpa Is Gone

Sisi

Grandpa is gone

It's not about how we

Turn and stare at his coffin

Nor how we

Fill buckets with bloody tears

Nor how we

Fling our noses in the air

He is gone for good

What about his dog, his sheep and his gwati?

Will peace descend upon us?

Note: gwati is a Chichewa word which refers to a small man made bag for storing raw tobacco and sisi refers to sister.

William Mpina

Life Inside Africa

Hiking one lazy afternoon in August
An old owl greets me
"Good, my boy, good."
Exasperated, I pivot my neck to look at him
But falling feathers block my way
As he is already miles away
Old owl! My mind boggles
And thought about my pooch at home
Last week, she said she met an owl
And died hours later
Oh, suppose it follows that way
Or it coincidentally happens
As I endure eating my distance
I think about my parents and my palace
Many, many kilometres across the sea

William Mpina

The Unholy Visit

I came to see you
I came to see my in-law, my cousins, and my nieces
I came to see my cousins, my sisters, and my brothers
Even crickets that chirp in the forests
Even those bees that aimlessly buzz
Perch where their sisters obtain their bread and butter
Even dogs that lazily squeal in the country side
Run in search of their brothers
Even cattle that munch grass by the riverside
Know exactly where their comfort is
Wild and mad, pocket less and meaningless
Footing, walking, running, jumping
Eating the distance back before the dawn of dusk
Shameful, shy and reasonless
Burning in a pot of fury on ashes of your reason
Raging with fire, boiling and burning
Hopelessness raining hot that afternoon...
Even tall trees bow down to taller ones
Even mountains kneel before their elders
Even doors know which one leads to the other
I came to see you
I came to see not insult you
Give me chance, wouldn't you

William Mpina

What A Painful Parting

What a painful parting
After hours and hours of waiting
Followed by hours and hours of hearing
Unrefined songs from minibus touts
Catalyzed by ethanol satchets
Seasoned with 'chingambwe' smoke
Finally, the minibus kicks on
'Farewell boy, say hello to Roy.'
Says a smiling aunt to me
I fork out my arm
Down the road
People, houses, trees whiz past
Vruuuu! beeeep!
Darkness, darkness at noon
'Farewell soul. say hello to Jesus.'
Says my body
So painful and uncompromising
What a painful parting!

NOTE: chingambwe is a chichewa(local language) word for raw tobacco.

William Mpina