

Poetry Series

Romeo D. Matshaba
- poems -

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Romeo D. Matshaba()

Romeo D. Matshaba is an inspiring figure in South African romantic literature. He is the author of several books including *my memories in time* and *the romantic dreamer*.

A Painting Grows On Your Wall

Salvaged my soul from rattles, and burning candle in the sky,
How we then grew tall in now fallen land,
Remember, when we'd sit and recite never-ending dreams,
Never-ending things?

Chase bows and bees, crows and trees
But now a painting grows on your wall,
With eyes of leaves and skin o' tender smooth,
Directly she stares at you... but without direct,
She gaze at me.

The center room, your hearted room...
Is where you'll stumble upon her roots
A thousand pieces of splendor entwined in one,
In this painting that grows on your wall.
Remember the war in Kraw where man sank as ship?
How back to back we stood, and tall we stood,
How we then read in book, the lives we took.

Now a painting grows on you wall
A bloom grows in your painting...
But why does painting grow on your wall?
Is my wall not fair, or is it like me too bare?
Yes, her apples glare faithfully green at thee,
But few small steps away from bloom; apples glare at me,
Lustily red at me.

Still her beauty grows on your wall, how
When owl awake or sun asleep;
Beauty utters my name and forgets your days
But when moon asleep and light awake,
Beauty knows your name and disdains my night,
What other can I do? But spill your red to
Dull brown earth, to paint a beauty on my wall

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A Poem For Lu

Stars on a bloom – two stars on a rose. With,
a deepened heart beneath rose wreathed hair,
scribbling lines to make `em rhyme,
give me time to make you mine.
I joined pieces of her in the night, to expose
the idea of bliss, or the taste of kiss.
Silence of the moon, or beauty in eye?
bring rain to swathe her tears, rain to make her sigh.
And Lord, tender beauty may fade even angels may wade,
but when this poem meets her gaze,
all pieces of dire gloom will die to fade.

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Broken Brothers

There should be more, older brother said, as
He left one day, and I stayed that day.
But brother, we remember differently
As you called me single minded, as you called me feeble minded
North you went, where scornfully you greeted the winter cold
And the Neanderthals who were beast and bold
But brother, we remember differently
As I could not leave my laughter, my culture and follow a dream behind
My people, my Ubuntu... would all be gone, so how could I, allow such in kind?
The desert was not kind as it made us gasp and blind
The sun burnt our crops and made my young to weep.
But brother, we remember differently
You discovered fire; you did not fall... even when they were beast and brute
Understood the cold and tamed the mighty mammoths
You flourished and made a home so far away from home.
But brother, we remember differently
The blazing sun soon called me friend
The daunting desert soon embraced my kind
I prospered here and there, I was happy... here and there
But brother, we remember differently
You conquered the seas and took to the air
You made machines and nice cuisines
Discovered mathematics and named the stars.
But brother we still remember differently
I did little in your eyes, and little still in these eyes you gave me now
I was happy and I needed less perhaps this, is why I tell.
My hopes and dreams are engraved in my skin,
I went too close to the sun up high, and came back a lil too dark.
It is the fairytale in me, the novel... the romantic
But we remember differently
Older brother came back in the fall, with a mighty ship and deadly machines
This made my blood to rush, and my opinions to hush.
You had changed and so had I, You spoke white and I spoke me
So I could not tell you, Mother is dead
Nor remind you my blood is yours
You found a new God, so you looked down on mine
You told me my God is erroneous, my belief was worse
Courtesy of Darwin you found varied eyes, hair and even skin to match...
That hampered us not to see that you are my own, and you once left me as

sketch.

But brother, why do we remember so differently?

I welcomed you with open hands,

Welcomed you like a brother of mine and shared with you all that was fine.

But brother, you have the weakness same as me... you forget same as me, so

You called me primitive as you took my land

You called me stupid as you shook my hand

You instilled your beliefs, and abolished my beliefs

You took me west and made me slave,

You told them I was not saved, and that I lived in a cave

You changed my system, you made you king and saw me ant

But brother, why do we remember so differently?

I know your story differs from mine

I know all will be well in time.

Brother of mine, know I forgive you, for all you had done, and

I do not blame you for all you had done.

But now that I have reminded you, that brother, my blood is yours

What will you do... what will you do?

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Darling You

Darling you, if in dream and open eye; I dream of you,
If in seas apart and lips apart; I darling you.
If I leak my red and let you be,
My darling you...
would you be dreaming me?

Darling you, if I ringed the brightest star,
Jail the lightest ray, or live in century bay
My darling you...
would you be thinking me?

Darling you, if on sky I wrote; I darling you
If without rage I followed your thread of age.
My darling you...
would you be loving me?

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Death Within A Dream

Because wind timorous of silence, and
Light snivels for the dark,
We bear time impedes.
Half peeked colors painting the blue,
Or half full moon missing mere hue.
When detest and care entwine to haze, or
Sky arrests the soul and beauty dies in flash.
When shadows hide in the dark and tears dry in eye,
Blue in eye I will see. But before you,
fair summer timid to show her brow,
And meager bloom veils in tired earth. Or
Perhaps all is but a dream in a dream within a dream.

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Dry Your Tears

Remember days gone by when furry dogs would freeze?
I tall tale when I said, 'I felt heat, I just ate or I just smiled'
Now with a ragged bag and a sack, I am leaving home to chase a dream.
Abandoning you, or saving you? Only you will know.
Dry your tears my dear; no more wail. No more songs of grief,
No more tired bones and tired soul. Just dry your tears.
Hold on! When greedy hyena circles, knaves are preying and God is loping deaf.
How mama died awhile ago and father stayed, and made us howl
Like a ghastly wolf, a creature of the night.
The food we scrounged on the floor,
When your tummy cried... my eyes cried.
But dry your tears little one... just dry your tears,
I have words in a bag, and two dreams in a sack.
I have stories and novels, poems and cries
Lock your eyes; do not stare at my spine,
The deep scars on my rear, these are disfigurements I wear.
There are stars and there are blooms that even we shall see.
Just dry your tears my little one... just dry your tears.

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Let

Let my eyes see your glory and have mercy upon my soul,
Let wise men enlighten me, angels lift me up, devils fear me and blessings
shower me.
Let lawmen not put me to darkness or jailers drag me to their dungeons of
doom;
Let thieves not tear my clothes or hurt my eyes or those nasty bandits slit my
throat;
Let the sea not drown me or its secrets swallow me or the desert dry my
marrow;
Let winds not engulf me or those with sharp teeth devour me.
Do not let my fears stop me, my opinions hush me or my doubts ruin me;
O' Lord, as I beset on this journey of life, let my heart of stone believe you,
Do not let them change me or trap me or snap my faith.
Do not let her with sweet voice lure me or him with silver tongue persuade me;
Do not let my eyes be filled like the sea or my poor children starve;
Do not let the shadow follow me or make me renounce my faith;
Let not Judas kiss me, the lash feel my back or wolves eat me alive;
Let me not get lost or illnesses find me, Lord Jesus, keep death far from me;
But if this be your will, then in hell, I shall live for the sake of your glory.

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My Lady's Sonnet

The golden twilight ball of crystal light,
Sinking amid his or her giant rocks; is worth a million silent words.
Yet, it is nothing compared to my ladies quite eyes,
Her wavering hair, her endless laugh.
But, if all my love in life is for my lord,
how can I compare the strokes of your twilight painting
To her walk, her posture, her pose?
Or even her scent that perfumes the air to follow her hair?
If all the love my heart shall bear is eternal,
why in the four seasons, the minute hours, the forever years...
even when my death is here; I love all hairs on her skin,
even the grey to restore the dark.
But dear Lord, if this be true, and I ever compare you to two;
then I be the greatest fool.

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Sad Beauty

I grasp a handful of nothing and a few scraps of death.
I reminisce her sky color in eye, when two tears fell amid the rain
Lips shivered as leaf, heart wept as weak.
Ay, I was in luck to meet your gaze
And dumb when instead I pursued a maze.
I remember the swish in laugh and gloss in hand.
Whilst we met with joy and the breeze and the seas
Remember the sin we discovered under the tree we carved?
Conveyed sad beauty in between the morning light and the gloomy night.
But still furnished color when I touched your sight, Dear,
Do not smell his perfumed breath or his striking hair
Do not hear his honeyed words on velvet ear...
Sad beauty he still smells your fear.
But remember these eyes, remember this heart and
The evermore promise we made,
Before you shut your lids, let go my hand and waste my heart.

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Sleeping Rose

Asleeping rose, say we live for here and now,
and say our words to breathe the last.
O Hush my lips, halt to breathe.
romantic chronicles salute thy love.
we despise the stream of time,
sight connect our eyes, invisible connect our hearts.
we scavengers scrounging time,
our hearts bound adjourned by dawn.
the rising sun never yields light sigh.
those vivid pigments you ingrained in my skin, or
thy glowing beauty you left in my eye,
passion through fusing palms, as the night steal thou heart.
still in eye of thee I shall see and in lips of thee I shall laugh.

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The Black Curse

Old women are lining in the streets, none of them are glad,
None of them are tired, but one is bleeding from her eyes,
Their necks are turned, backs facing south tears facing down.
One woman points, her skin is sad; with many drawings on her face.
'They are here' she said 'they are here'
Men of lighted skin advance without a word,
None of them carries a bow or a spear or a knife.
One of them is Jack the other is Sam; none of them is Peace.
'A thousand years elapsed, is this all the apes can show? '
Three small boys in arms are weeping; none of their eyes are dazzling
Blue or dazzling green, none of their hair is golden or blows in the wind.
Do not outstretch your hand my hand to touch; our palms will fuse.
If beautiful eye would cry... all color would die. See,
They did this in the west, revolvers in the west
They did this in the east, canons in the east.
They have come to steal my culture... my diamond and my gold.
Our god looks away, or too blind to see the tears they will spill
The misery they will bring or the blood we will cry.
Dear, my afro queen... I have seen in a vivid dream
They will shackle our hands and feet, enslave our flesh in time
But do not tear, heavy chains shackle their minds.
For in my dream, we all were slaves.

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The End

I fear him through my arteries and my blood,
deeper than marrow in my bones,
wider than sea in sky.
yet I love him with all the incalculable hairs on my head,
with all the beats my heart will ever know,
even the unspoken words in my mouth.

My Lord is everywhere, He is here and there,
even where we think He is not.
my Lord is everything, He is this and that
even that we think He is not.

If in doubt; I am assured,
If in loss; I am rebuilt,
If in pain; I am comforted,
I am uplifted
I am calmed
I am alleviated
I am soothed
I am free
I am blessed.

Day in and day, he reveals himself to me
When I am lost, his spirit finds me
And dandles me
To dandle me
Fills me.
His angel's walk with me
And blanket me
And birds sing for me.
All because of his Grace.

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The Fears I Have

I fear, I will not be enough for that world outside,
I will not measure up to that who they expect me to be, want me to be.
I fear the one I breathe... the one I see, will only see another.
I fear for these faults I have, these weaknesses... those flaws.
Who will cherish, who will want... those flaws I have?
I fear, for my weigh on a machine...
It says repellent, it says obese
I fear, for my length on scale...
It says unattractive, it says midget
I fear the night, how I prefer the light instead, the bright instead
Those owls and rats and bats; those foul creatures of the night.
I fear the world, will misunderstand these thoughts I have
Misinterpret these ideas I have.
I fear the world will not appreciate;
Those hours on the mirror, those rivers I sweat.
I fear I shall not attain those goals I have, those dreams I dream
My enemies will prosper, while misery and despair are paired with me
I fear they will change my parts... make me into a thing with no heart
A thing with no face... and look down on my race!
I fear the questions I have, the doubts I have
But more than ore, I fear I shall die before I live,
I fear I shall not live till I die!

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The Immortal

When he overwhelmed time and slept among two distances.
With still and golden eyes he stared at heaven: temporarily she lost her guise,
But he now rests amid the painted wall and the fluidly space.
I remember him because he was my father.
When they disembarked to sneer at the simplicity of our bread,
The bareness of our living and the midget length of our walls.
Father taught me to laugh at their jokes and firmly shake their hands.
While they oozed in their sleep, he stared through bullion eyes at the
quiet grass he could have grown, and the white house he could never own,
Back when he lied awake to parade the lazy night
I remember him cause he was my father.
He taught me about the howling rain, the unfolding sky, the wet in dry.
He loved my mother: her glow, her hair... her darling eyes.
They do not remember him because he was not few,
I remember him because he was my father.
When mammoths are scrawny and tiger has misplaced her stripes.
He will live in me, gaze through my eyes and utilize my chest to beat.
And I will remember him cause he was my father,
You will forget him cause he was my father.

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The Scenes Of A Ruined Heart

Dear, may I tell you how my heart behaves?

At times, I'm a sagging bird dragging a tired wing,
a sad and ruined statue befallen by rain. Most valued,
lips overlook to mention, that lacking you –

I am lured by her cold winter's shade,
deceived by her wispy summer's heat.

My fine darling, this here is how my heart behaves:

it shy's as girl in your light and cries as rain in your shadow
elates when you're here, dies, when you're occasionally there.

Lovely, how this very night I will weep the saddest tears
as if my heart were exposed to ruthless ice, lice then mice
and dear beauty, how amid wolves, dogs and owls

I will howl at the moon the saddest songs.

still my howl is mute in your ear,
my heart is a nothing to your eye.

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Time Here, Time There

Envision a ring in time, an endless ring of mine,
A ring 'through you distorts all shapes.
I imagine we meet, at circle dawn.
But time here, time there; we fall.

In 'face, I recall times of yore, ancient times of yore.
Again, we meet, at circle dawn; while hair may vary, and lips may eerie.
Passion suffusing time, echo as sound in cave.
But time here, time there; we fall.

Darling, stars may fade, even shoreline may change,
I' loved the million pieces of your heart.
But time here, time there; we fall to earth
But rise in time.

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When Grass Will Grow

If your love has not yet forsaken me, and your goodness still lingers in all my soul;

Deliver me from these earthly woes, this undying grief...

Dear Lord, these barefooted men with rags on their rocky backs

These barefooted men with cracks in their hands.

Instead, take me to where the sea is calm,
where grass will grow...

Water moves slow

and grass will grow

Where no lies are woven into the twilight wind, water moves slow and the bees are nice,

Lemony sweet moves across our feet.

Our dear Lord, if by chance (your divine grace) ,

Our tarnished souls are still written in your book of love and life and love;

Let these enemies not laugh at me with stained goblins teeth,

Let these walls not crowd me, never let these walls crowd me,

Or let trees befriend me, rocks gather a bed for me, a deep voice to sing to me n
devils lie to me.

Instead, take me to where the wind is right

The sea is calm

And grass will grow

My weary soul will ease

Water moves slow,

and that grass will grow.

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