
B:M
2020



WORKSHOP COLLEGE

Africa

2020 anthology

A collection of poems and pieces from the
Worksop College and Ranby House community.

Staff, pupils, parents.

My hands are sore, raw and skeletal
Working hard for what? Nothing
No pay, little shelter, no food.

It's hot, but it keeps me wondering
Why do we work while the others don't?
Separation.

My hands are sore, raw and painful
Working hard for what? Nothing
No pay, little shelter, no food.

The long hours keep me wondering
Taken away from our homes for what?
Money.

My hands are sore, raw and painful
Asking for what? Nothing
No pay, little shelter, no food.

The night falls it keeps me thinking.
Who are we owned by?
Nobody.

Gracie Donaghy

Sunset to Sunrise

We had no choice in the beginning
We were forced through brutality
We had no freedom and nothing in the palm of our hands
Facing through the death sentence of discrimination
Africans protested and worked hard
The leader committed to change the world
We were free and
We were all equal
We settled in this new way but
Somewhere in our heart we would never forget AFRICA!

Roy Pearson

Talking about Africa when we were children

Africa is beautiful
Africa is wonderful
It is sunny and bright
The moon shines
While the birds whistle in the sky
The hyenas howl at the moonlight
Elephants are warriors
Elephants are united
Elephants will stand together and live forever
We spread ourselves to form a circle
As we sing, dance and play
We feel sad, gloomy and scared but
As we gather around and perform with emotion
Our fears will disappear
What a joy!
What a spirit!
What a culture!
To sing altogether
Africans are like cheetahs and they're as quick as lightning
We are all eco warriors, we have titanium legs
We walk miles from dusk till dawn
And we never give up.
There is one word that will help us in life soon,
! HAKUNA MATATA!

Roy Pearson

Harriet Tubman

People in Africa just living their life,
Back when we couldn't even drive.
We got shipped overseas to work on a farm,
And everybody part would blister even your palm.

We would work all day and sleep at night,
But no one would in their life dare to fight.
We would lay in a straw and sleep in a line,
We looked like salmon, I guess it was fine.

I went and got water in a bucket so everyone could drink,
And that made me think.
Why can't I just leave and be free,
Like the birds in the sky, in the tree.

But as I grew older, I started hoeing the fields,
With everybody else until I started to feel.
I want to be free,
I want to live a normal life,
I want to escape.

So, at night I set off,
I tried really hard not to cough.
For weeks and weeks, I walked and walked,
Trying not to get caught.

There were so many slave catchers,
And they really were snatchers.
Finally, after years and years of working I was free,
I felt just like me.

But a year later I realized,
I need to go back,
I need to save my family,
And so, I did and so many other people as well.

Olivia Smith

Beasts of the water Lean against the hope
of the village for food, resources.
Red heat absorbs the blue and controls the land. Love
also surrounds filled with laughter
and smiles.
Years of family
and growth dig deep into the roots of the earth.
The grass grows.
Darkness flows in the air and follows the noise. it eats
the light whilst the people escape.
It takes
them away and uses them.
No one sees
no one hears them scream.
Take control. Use the voice.
Take the candle of light
and burn the darkness.

Jessi Aldred

Kisumu

Kisumu, village of joy
Village of smiles and laughter
Young children's laughter echoed
Like a group of singing birds in a forest
As they skipped in the lush grass
Towards the grazing cattle
Young men paddling in the lake
Like families of feathered ducks
Enjoying the touch of the water
The sun sets on this peaceful
day
The sun does not shine
Again

Strange white warriors bent on abuse
Charge into the village
Like scruffy jackals
Young children's wails echoed
Like a group of dying cats
As they were beaten senseless
Young men toiling in the field
Like trained dogs
Winching at the touch of pain
Kisumu the village of slavery
Village of tears and sweat

Thomas Gullick

BLACK MEN

Fire in the darkness,
Black men feeling less,
Watching the sunrise,
Black men told lies,
Hurt on the inside,
Black men losing pride,
Children taken away,
Black men feeling like prey,
Kenyans made slaves,
Black men wanting to be saved,
Trying to sleep,
Black men feeling Like a scrapheap.

Ronnie Chafer and Kristian Bak

In a tree's day

The savanna trees grow,
And the flower blooms blossom,
The Lions roar, zebras lay,
All the cubs come out to play,
Distant on the horizon,
Hunters laying stalk their prey,
Bows and spears freshly crafted,
Village people earn their pay,
The orange sand lays await,
For marching travellers atop,
Giraffes eating from treetops,
the trees swaying gently,
as the warm sun is setting,

Reuben Futter and Jake Booth

The Mighty Crow

I am a mighty crow as black as night,
You trap me in metal cage,
Until you say I'm free, when you see me in the streets,
You stop me by not because I have committed a crime,
But because of the color of my feathers,
And you think this right,
When one of your own does a major wrong,
You give them a petty sentence,
When my kin dose a slight wrong,
You shut them up in metal boxes for life,
Or worse, we end up six feet underground,
You say we were born equal, but you act differently,
The day I was born is the day I lost my freedom

Tamia Chirinda

Africa

Her hair is brown as wheat,
skin black like coal,
Eyes glittering emeralds,
stained with tears.
She wore her crown
loud and proud,
Yet her robes covered the cracks
hidden beneath.
Her image flickered from
Rich to poor,
Like a mirage.
“Africa,” she whispered.

Tamia Chirinda

Faster

Circles cut out the path
The road to violence
With looted gold and silver
Scattered on the ground
Guns blew off smoke
Like the dusty plains
Crooked trees danced
Till they had had enough

The sky burned red
As the monster raged
When a gate had enough
The bushes fell asleep
No more for a meal
Everyone ran inside
Running from the destruction
Running away from life
Running away
Running
Run...

Clarissa Wheeler

Alone

Mother Leaves me alone again
As the trees outside give shade to the den
Father died a few weeks ago
Now I am left all on my own
Trees and bushes have branches and leaves
The sky and water are full of animals
But where are my family
Where are my friends
They all left me to be alone

The village is full of people
The sun is covered in fire like heat
Rainforests are filled by swinging monkeys and tropical birds
My hut is empty so is the farm
So where are they? Did they bring that disease then leave?

Cam Dujon

White Butterflies

A fleet of dawn butterflies flock around me
as I rouse from my banana leaf bed.
I know not to touch them but to sit quite still

so they creep over my skin, up to
my face, eyes the size of small seeds
shaped like sisal bulbs. I was a pedlar

amongst our market life, when others bargained
I wove bowls; my neighbour
stretched skins on drums; my cousin

played her flute; the cattle up for auction.
My friends fled to the church to enter mass
graves of anonymous bones. Piles of bones.

Now our dogs are no longer lean, fish flash
through the lake, kite-hawks soar each morning
even the crows are the size of small dogs.

Here in the mountain I take a frock from
one warm body; I'm able to run and the
the skirt's the colour of butterfly wings.

In the evening I bring myself to cook
and share the silver carp from the lake;
there's a tang of rusted tin between our teeth.

Rose Dutton

My history.

The slave trade,
A moment where the world changed,
A moment where people were sold for the economy,
A moment where human beings were treated like animals,
A moment where our so-called legends were involved and took pride in this,
A moment where anything was legal,
A moment where the hopes of human beings were destroyed,
A moment where families were spilt,
A moment where nations divided,
A moment where people dangled from ships like anchors,
A moment where people saw their relatives die and could not help them,
A moment where people saw death as an option,
A moment where women were afraid to bring newborns to the world,
A moment where our forefathers fought for our freedom,
A moment where heads were on stakes,
A moment where we buried our mates,
A moment where people passed the borders of their homes never to see their
father land again.

Kosi Chris-Azubogu

I still think of my home
Whilst yet so far away
I miss my ability to roam
And the suns and the rays.

I still miss my home
As I've fallen a prey,
I still think of the days
Where I could run about and play

I yearn for my home,
Since I've been taken away,
I hope for a day where
I can return and stay.

Isabella Dujon

Sold a Slave

Been sold to the white man, against my will,
So cold and afraid, I feel so ill,
Captured in metal shackles, making me ache,
The excruciating pain, I can't take.
Sailing in atrocious conditions to the West,
Ignited with rage, putting my mind to the test.
Yearning for freedom, back with my wife,
What has happened to my once happy life?
Longing to be back with my children at home
I cannot take this pain all alone.
Who even knows, if I will I survive?
Do I want to, I cannot decide...

Sam Knights

An escape

Follow the river Jordan they said,
Follow the drinking gourd.
The moss on the trees will guide you
Now I'm laying here,
My hand on the rustic shack door.

Where am I,
Where are the marks,
The symbols,
The sheets like they said
The places I shouldn't go
Or I would be left for dead.

Wade in the water,
Wade in the water,
But what did they mean?
Where was the Underground Railroad?
I can't see any tunnels or entrances.
Only two rivers that I was trapped between.

The leaves crinkled behind me,
A tall man stood,
Was this Moses which I had been taught about?
All over the slave neighbourhood,
Will the man guide me home?
Maybe I am now free.

Max Longmuir

I lie down scared and worried, I hear a moan every day,
I know this moan means that their life has slipped away.
The white men start shouting, louder than before;
We are pulled onto deck, only to see the shore.
“Yes! Thank God” we shout out to the skies;
The whites, they whip us, they mute us of our cries.
We’re led out of the ships, still shackled together,
“Out of the ship!”, I am scared more than ever.
We are led through this castle, they had been waiting for us,
We are stacked into these cells; it wasn’t up to discuss.

A crowd begins to gather, in front of all our cages,
The shrieks of children dying, and those of older ages.
A man in a large hat, addresses the crowd,
He’s speaking very quickly, as well as very loud.
A group of men come over; they unlock one of the cages
They pull one of us out, this really does enrage us.
Our man is lifted onto a stage and lots of men inspect him,
“Turn around... open your mouth.... You’re a bit too thin”.
This crowd start putting their hands up, one after another,
The severity of the situation, I would be sure enough to discover.
Finally, our man is pulled of the stage and taken away;
This is a sick, money making game.

They unlock one of the cages, it’s me that they pull out,
On to the stage for inspection I do not have a doubt.
They touch my face, my back and inspect all of my teeth,
The man in the hat starts shouting, it’s not a great relief.
The hands of the crowd start raising, what going on?
My pride and dignity, are now well and truly gone.
It finally ends, and a man takes me away,
Where to next, it’s hard to say.

Max Poynor

STOLEN!

Stolen from their country,
Confined in overcrowded ships,
Packed together like cattle at a market,
The prolonged journey through the middle passage was torturous.

On arrival there was no relief,
Sold at auction to the highest bidder,
Demeaned and degraded,
Forced to work for no pay for long and lengthy days.

Their days filled with abuse,
Physical, emotional, sexual and mental,
Isolated from all they know and love,
All they had to live for was dreams of freedom and rights.

Hoping to cross the Underground Railroad,
Rebellions afoot,
Plantations become derelict,
At last freedoms upon us, ABOLISH THE SLAVE TRADE!

Rose Williamson

Taken away

Let me paint your picture, you twelve, older brother thirteen
Your parents, you see them being taken away
Then you dad gets loose and gets killed but no one intervenes
Some time goes by you think it's been weeks it's only been a day
The people who killed you dad show up again
It put angry thoughts into you mind and you want it to stop but you can't
When you stop being angry all you can feel is pain
They take you away and you are so tired that all you can do is pant

Next thing you know you're on a ship with hundreds of people like you
You are all together in one small place where you can hear the screams of people around
Just as bad as the smell was it was worse for you because you're covered in poo
You are asleep one night but you are awoken by a horrible sound
That sound was the sound of a woman getting whipped on the top deck
A couple days later you are on deck getting a gun pointed at your feet
A child is brought up onto deck she is close to death and they cut off her head from the neck
She is chucked off board and you can't stop thinking about how that girl got beat

Finally you arrive at a place that you have never seen before
You're are taken up onto a stage where men look at things like your teeth
A man buys you, you are taken away and get a sign burnt on you that says Mildore
You meet a man whose name was Abdul but his name now is Keith
You work your whole life in the fields and never get you're freedom
When you die you ascend to heaven where you are greeted by your dad
You may be thinking why have you told me to paint you this picture that sounds dumb
I did this picture because 300 years ago people didn't have the chance to paint this painting

Reeve Wilson

Black History Month Poem

The Portuguese first engaged, and the trading patterns were made.
The African people could not believe their eyes.
Their own people would turn them in to survive.
The trader's ships would depart for the middle passage.
During this voyage who knew if they would survive?
The slaves were sold, the ships would return home safe and sound
But who knew what would happen to the slaves?
They might be sound but they weren't safe.

Lara White

Black History Month

Black is wonderful, Black is bold
Everyone of different colours, their stories must be told,
Life should be enjoyed by everyone,
Not just only white,
Everything that adds up to this is always shown as bright
So let's celebrate everyone for all their differences today
Let everyone be equal, let them have their say.

Chloe Steele

The Journey

Based on true events

You laugh, you taunt.
I sit back eyes closed,
Heart pounding, while the train propels
Through the murky tunnel, waiting for it to be over.
When will it be over?
Black lives will always matter.

Emma Booth

Africa poem

Oh Africa oh Africa oh beautiful Africa with you
resources bright I will tell you a story tonight about a
person bright, he's a civil rights leader and did lots
for us his name is Nelson Mandela.

Although he spent a lot of his life fighting for equality
and rights Nelson is famous and known to us all if
you hadn't heard of him now you will.

I'll tell you another if you want there's plenty more
from where that came from but if you don't goodbye
for now I'll see you next time without a doubt.

Josh Haase-Dobson

Birds

The savanna
A dry place
Animals live and die
There are timid mice
big, strong birds
it is a place of competition

a bird is free
a mouse is being patrolled
he is working hard in the hot boiling
the bird rests in the shade

the mouse is dozing
the bird sees
the bird haunts him
with one snap of a jaw
he works no more

Harry Faulkner

This is Africa

They build
huts They take
objects and build
All they do is build
and work day
and even night

Africa is warm
There are animals
Crocodiles and more
They work all day
and yawn
But People are
Unfortunately
very poor.

Music
Africans try to trade
They search for water
Money
is what they need
even if it's a quarter

There wealth
is not the best
Some are rich
but not the rest

They walk bare foot
They drink water
and eat nut

This is Africa

Leland Procter

Lions

There once was a time
When our cubs could play,
Rolling and tumbling in the
Long grass all day.

There once was a time
When the light would not fade,
And we'd hunt in the sun
And take rest in the shade.

We were the feared,
The strong and the mighty.
Lions of a pride that had
No need for fighting.

The crown on our heads,
And unity in our hearts.
No animal on Earth
Dared question our smarts...

But then came a time
Of fire and smoke
That blinded our eyes
And caused us to choke.

Our crown had been stolen
By men that were white.
They shot our friends dead,
A pitiful sight.

But they weren't the monsters,
No, their wrongs made right.
We were the wild cats that
Stalked streets at night.

They told tales around fires
And painted the picture
Of fanged sandy beasts
Straight out of the scriptures.

Then their lies became truth
To the people they deceived,
It seemed that no one would
Save our strong souls, so grieved.

But we were lions,
Proud and strong. One day
Our pride would unite
And would right every wrong.

We would free our people,
And stand up for what's right.
Who cared about the ones that
Thought we stalked streets at night?

Izzy Haigh

Africa

Where my Ancestors
Lie in Fear
Of having no Rights
Stripped of Individuality
Prisoned without doing Crime
We fight for our Ancestors.

Ishi Stewart

Aromatic smoke travels through the sand-stricken streets,
Pots full of brewing delights,
Bubbling in the burning heat.
The flames of the fire cooking the flavourful meat,
Black coal lining the oven.
Fizzing water boiling in a pan,
Spices steaming into the air.
Flavourful food lining the table,
Dinner is served.

Oliver Bettington

Africa Poem – Black History Month

A – Africans stolen across oceans.

F – Freedom, is not known.

R – Rich Americans treated them like cattle.

I – In the fields they toil and pray.

C – Countless struggled to escape.

A – African Americans; Slaves.

Kingston W.G. Beard

What is Africa?

The word Africa, has vast connotations,
Is it a continent, a country, or is it a nation?
I'm not really sure, but I'll tell you what I've heard;
I'll give you my murky insight, word for word.

It's a dangerous place full of crime and disease,
The air is stuffy, and there's no sea breeze.
Most people have AIDS, or something like that;
Pay no attention, just sit back.

The water is dirty, the children are sick;
The women are tired, and the men unfit.
The adverts on TV, they tell no lies,
'Donate 2 Pou...' switch to channel 5.

I sit here thinking, could this all be true?
Is Africa as terrible as I'm telling you?
I was told this from a young age, that Africa is bad;
I was told it was desolate and a place so sad.

This needs to stop, stop right now,
My insight is no longer murky, I'll show you how.
The word Africa, has vast connotations;
A continent on Earth with pride as a nation.

The tribes sing loudly, their songs to the skies,
The culture is bustling, the mountains stand high.
2000 languages and 54 countries,
These stereotypes, they need to stop abruptly.

2.6 billion people all in one place,
The ability to accept others of a different race.
The world changing leaders and businessmen,
Politicians, activists, the women and the men.

We need to change the way we look at Africa,
Stop looking at the the death per capita.
The statistics don't matter, or the unfortunate information.
We need to instead see the beauty of this nation.

The word Africa, has vast connotations;
The perception of Africa is a large complication.
I've told you what I know, not what I've heard.
What's your insight, word for word?

Max Poynor

You don't judge a book by its cover,
So why judge a person by their skin,
Why is it that you have to make me feel,
That being black is a sin.

A question I'm left to wonder,
Never answered never solved,
I question that I long to know,
But know I can never be told.

Years of pain and slavery,
That can never be repaid,
Working for the white man day and night,
Only to stay enslaved.

Running from the past,
That I fear will never change,
Forever trapped within our skin,
As if it were a cage.

Tell me why my skin,
makes me less than you or others,
is it not your beliefs and morals that count?
rather than your skin colour.

For you would not judge your sister or your mother
Or your father or your brother
So why judge me as you do
If you know you couldn't handle it if it were you.

Why can't you just leave me be,
Or fight with me for equality,

Emily Bailey

Kilimanjaro

Going up the mountain and overcoming racism
I begin my trek up the long treacherous mountain of Kilimanjaro,
My legs
running away,
From the god damn awful slavery everywhere I look.
I see the black men doing work,
ladies making food,
Oh how does the colour of your skin make you different to me?

It's as if the mountain begins to grow, Extending further and further away.
And my legs start to fumble from the excruciating pain.
Will I ever actually reach the top and leave this dreadful place?

Weather begins to change now,
Rain pitter
patter
down.
As i get higher and higher up
The long, continuous mountain,
Will I ever get up?

I hear yelling and many words
Being thrown to and back,
I try and yell to ask for
help,

But It's like the rain will never stop
And their words will never get spoken out.

Soon the mountain
relaxes,
And stops it steep full ways.
Giving me peace,
tranquility,
From those awful past days.
How could people be so mean,
And live in
hate.
Discriminating against others for something they cannot change?

The African music is wonderful,
They sing and laugh
And always say:
"We Play our djembes,
mbiras,
koras,
For the end of slavery.
It gives us hope,
give us joy,
That there will always be a better day".

I hope for a better future,
Not as cruel,
hopeless as the last.
Will we ever make it away from the past?

My legs finally breathe, And take a long needed break,

Since I'm finally done with my treacherous walk of seeing Africa's past.

Esme Brealey

You say you've been to Africa,
Yet you haven't travelled half as far.
You say you've been to Africa,
But you still think of a visual scar.

You think of a stereotype,
you saw an advert on tv.
You are yet to visit each country,
and travel over the red sea.

You say you've experienced the culture,
But haven't tasted all the food.
Have you seen the different outfits,
Or experienced the dancing mood?

Essie Tremeer

The start of change

The pain of the suffering you cause
The pain you create
Pain that leaves them wondering?
pain that makes them great

Why would you put them through this?
Why'd you watch them fall?
Why would you hurt that poor miss?
Why'd you stop a smile?

The words that help empower
The words that break them
The words that build a tall tower
Words that cant be spoken

Why don't you stop hurting more?
Don't you like the colour?
Don't you like how they were born?
Respect every skin colour.

Megan Young

In Africa

In the land full of fortune and abundance

People arrive

In the land full of disease and horror

People leave

In the land full of ancient customs

People study

People arrive, leave and study

In Africa

In the land full of deserts and rainforest

People thrive

In the land full of corruption and fraud

People live

In the land full of mud huts and straw roofs

People stay

People thrive, live and work

In Africa

In the land full of wonderful animals

People are born

In the land full of harmful plants

People die

In the land full of the blazing sun

People work

People are born, die and work

Benji Emerton

I may try my best
But that is not good enough for
Some people.
I may speak my truth
But that is not good enough for
Some people.
I may be myself
And even that is not good enough for some
People.

Why is the way I walk and talk
Wrong?
I never misplace my feet
Or
Step on anybody's toes.
And for the way I speak,
Does my accent upset you
Like raindrops on a grave?
Does it offend
You,
Like a sting from a wasp?

What now,
Cat got your tongue?
Gone all quiet?
Now you know how I feel
Silenced
Maybe now you'll think before you speak.

Luke Naylor

Black Gold

Mama Africa
o how I miss
the blazing sun
The dry ground
the laughter
at the store
The cries of the young ones
calling out to their mothers

Mama Africa full of wealth riches and black gold stretching
across the Savanna One day all this laughter turns into cries
“why are you crying my children”

Mama Africa feels the pain the suffering of her children
as colonisers come from across the world to take over
what belongs to her child

She watches on as her children are made to doubt
who they are made to feel like they don't belong

Made to question if their skin colour is wrong

Tears fall from mama as her trees chopped down
Earth is tilted to take away the riches of her children.

Tall buildings are erected.
What is that smoke that's choking the air?
They call it modernisation,
but mama sees it as destruction of the beauty of the land.

My children are sent to the arid lands while the colonisers feast
on my children's abandons. My children this is your land
my children you are precious my children you are loved

Rise up my children rise up
Africa is yours
no one can take it away from you
The riches belong to you
You are black gold forever.

Tanaka Chitengu

I am Africa,

Stereotype smasher,
Wild animals do not roam my streets,
We do not all dance like a Maasai
Or can run a marathon,
Our skin in different shades, a rainbow nation,
Our cities do not have thatched roofs but skylines of beautifully
architecturally designed skyscrapers,
We tweet, we insta, we drink clean water,
I am Africa,
Stronghold for diversity.

Amelia Wright

Africa...

Africa...
Serengeti landscape stretching
Afar. Blood
Red skies meeting blood
Red soil,
Barren
Savannah
Grasslands
Where safari wildlife runs free.

Africa...
Delicate,
poverty-prone
Desperate but smiling
infants scattered along red
roads,
Making something
out of nothing
from young bones.

Africa...
The tear-drop shaped land
Where rainforest
meets the sand,
Is there opportunity
for this land

Archie Sims

African Poem

It may surprise some people that Africa is more than meets the eye
When people see Africa, they think of a poor and desolate place
But if you look closer you can see that:
Africa is teeming with life and beauty
Africa is humble and loving
Africa is full of colour and culture
The animals and plants thrive on so little, yet others complain at everything
But now her people and pride have been robbed by greed
She cries at night for her stolen children who do not know their history
Her hardship and beauty cannot be compared
Africa is unique and strong

Beth Keeley

What Is Africa

What do you think,
When someone says Africa.
Do you think positive,
Do you think negative.
Do you feel joy,
Do you feel sorrow.

African is not a disadvantage,
It is not poverty,
African is not malnourishment,
It is not illiteracy,
African is not disgusting
It is not useless,
African is not a charity,
It is not pity.

Do you think this way?
Or do you think progressively.

African is bright,
It is brilliant,
African is strong,
It is bold,
African is potential.

what do you think,
When someone says Africa.

Callam Sipson

African poem

All I dream about is freedom
Living a life away from pain
No longer suffering from individuals in power
And away from those who reign
I feel as though I'm treated like a slave
Mostly by people my age
Why can we not all be the same?
And earn the same wage
It doesn't matter the colour of our skin
Or the background from which we came
It's what we're like within
Oh how I long for freedom
Freedom
Freedom

Thomas Reast

African poem

This is Africa,
Home to all,
Not all slums,
Or Shanty towns,
But buildings,
Tall as the empire state,
Animals,
Capable of living both on water and land,
Adapting to the ever-rising sun,
This is Africa.

Nia Thorman

Monoculture - Madagascar

Ah yes, humans
filled with knowledge
skilled
and
hard-working.

But what one didn't know is the vast landscape of the wilderness is shrinking.
The vast sea of green taking over isn't what you hope.
It's the dominating sight of near-sterile monoculture.
Flooding the parched landscape and inevitably destroying
the wilderness around
the desperate hope of new life
no more as the human
species slowly, slowly
wreak havoc
on the innocent.

Sam Sanders

The River

Flowing, rushing, crashing.
The land and nature seeping past
Watching, waiting.
The horrors and the wonders blow past
through open arms and smiles and tears mean nothing now.
All that once meant so much was nothing.
A clear head, a new mindset, observing,
Past memories that broke and put back
together, a smile that meant the world. The tears
cried for days on end, the hurting, the suffering, the pain.
Falling.
Silence.
Tranquillity.
Loud
overpowering
thoughts,
gone.
Calm.

Everything is okay in the end.
Even the rushing river ends with a waterfall.

Tilly Marsden

Endangered animals

Day to night we are slowly going as
One of us falls many follow after us, we loose
Our habitats leaving us to die, it's too late to change it
the time has gone by extinct we have become, fewer
and fewer rhinos to relax in the savannah sun, I
wonder what the future has to come

Lucy Cockell

AFRICA

Passage of life long
Marked by prints in sun baked earth
Torn tusks point at death

Anon

The On-looker

I spoke to him one night; the man in the moon
Of life on the patchwork that spun at his feet.
He listened intently; and shook his gently
At the circles and cycles of life, on repeat.

A wiry white finger, then hovered and lingered
On the fifth of the earth made of sand and of green.
'Tell me,' he asked, 'of this land that's so vast –
Of its deserts and jungles, and all in between.'

Once happy he knew of what prowled and what growled
Of the waters, and creatures, the trees and the rain,
He turned to me slowly, and leaned in more closely
His eyes fixed and ready to quiz me again.

'And what about man, and his great, perfect plan?
Has he learned from the seasons, from life's ebb and flow?
In a land with such colour, where life gives to each other
Does man see through the eyes of a friend or a foe?'

My silence was thunder, my sorrow, torrential
And a cloud, like a shroud, hid the man from my view
When he bathed me once more, and the dark side had turned
I felt sure I'd confirmed what he already knew.

'In a land of diversity, why not love, why adversity,
In a country of rainbows, why's it all black and white?
Such joy in full colour, yet you judge one another
On the skin, not within, or the source of your light!

How can lands of such majesty, be home to brutality
How can one man lord over another with threat?
All those years all those tears, and the cries and the lies...
Still you re-live the horror and you chose to forget.

Where the sun shines more brightly, so the skin is more nightly
The spectrum is radiant, east through to west
Yet you see definition in a colour addition
Making foolish assumptions, ignoring the rest!

cont..

All life is a blessing, all men stand as equal
For all love their families, their homes and their friends
Yet still you insist, with the traits that persist.
If your sight was diminished would hatred all end?"

'We're not all bad,' I whispered, 'or narrow of mind
There's a new wind that's blowing, from north through to south
An age of acceptance; a united resistance
Options self-formed, not from cruel word of mouth.

We're kneeling, and standing and changing together
A pallet of humans who judge on the heart.
A joining of nations, of all generations
We're coming together, not pulling apart.

Keep watching, my moon-friend, this new generation
We'll counter the madness and level the field
There's no discrimination by God, in creation
And we won't stop uniting 'til division is healed.'

The man looked me sideways, and squinted a little
He tip-tapped his foot, whilst a hand stroked his chin.
Though his anger had faded; and seemed almost persuaded
Still a sadness exuded from the cold warmth within.

'Can I ask you a question?' he finally whispered.
'You're all human, so can you then tell me please, why?
A difference in colour so you're cruel to your brother?

...Try as I might, I couldn't reply.

Leanne Macpherson

Stolen Memories

My heart knew as soon as I saw his face – your father's,
Hunched and ashen; tears clawing troughs through his skin.
He held out your lost shoe in his trembling hand, as if by way of explanation.
His only offer of apology for letting you out.
For letting you go.

They'd come as they always did.
Predators, praying on the weak and the young, taking their fill.
And those young lives, full of such innocence and promise
Herded and chained like animals
And treated worse.

I wonder to what distant shores those phantom whites took you
Upon the waves and storms of sickness and death
I thought I saw you once in the market-place, and ran to nothing
But eyes dry with grief
See ghosts everywhere

Every passing day of every year since, I look to the sky
Seeking comfort in the hope that you, too, still live to see
And I sleep with your shoe wrapped in my redundant arms
And pray that your house
Is more home than this

Leanne Macpherson

Apartheid

Lines drawn
You're Bantu, you don't belong
Resist, ANC! The fertile fields you sowed, now gone

Let the pass books burn tonight
"South Africa belongs to all who live in it, Black or White."

Sharpsville mourns its unarmed dead
Their blood equal to that of their murderers, a crimson red

The world bears witness, executions cease
Freedom begins its hero's journey, a prize of peace

Now, the Soweto children are grown
A Spear of the Nation icon's spirit flown

Yet, "Unite! Mobilise! Fight on!"
We still matter. We all are one.

Lisa Lawrence Beard

Memories of Ghana

Red hot, the sun, burning down on the ground,
With creatures and insects all buzzing around,
The toil of the workers so hard yet so cheerful,
And sounds of the children, laughing and playful.

Out in the country all verdant and green,
Are yams, tall palms and yes, the great bean,
Cocoa so beautiful, rich and dark brown,
Harvested daily from dawn to sundown.

The darkness, the music, the sense of exotica,
With dancing and laughter, the scent of forsythia,
Bright colours of dresses twirling and swaying,
No limits, no barriers, the band go on playing.

The cocoa in sacks stacked up on the dock,
Awaiting the ship to load round the clock,
Destined for lands far off and so distant,
For them to make chocolate, smooth and luxuriant.

I look back on those times with fond thoughts and sweet memories,
A perfect experience in my mid-twenties,
Travelling the world as part of my work,
With Cadbury's chocolate – the ultimate perk.

Kirsten Donaghy

AFRICA

Africa, continent of fable and mystery,
Africa, cradle of all human history.
Let's take a look at the story, you'll see,
Come take a ride and explore it with me.

From North to South, five thousand miles long,
And East to West, almost the same.
Fifty four countries call it their home,
With millions of people, so hardly alone.

The North had ancient empires, all caught up in the past.
Carthaginian, Egyptian but they just didn't last.
Hannibal and the Pharaohs, all have had their day,
Lost in time, a story, of when they both held sway.

Desert to the South and big, Sahara is its name,
Largest in all Africa, spectacular, varied terrain,
Crossing twelve dry countries, each one has a part,
Of the sand and stones, volcanoes and tribal, strange rock art.

As desert turns to jungle, there's nothing to be seen,
It's dark and dank and humid and very, very green.
Full of animals and insects and birds all on the wing,
This place is always full of noise, hear every creature sing.

Nigeria, Liberia, Senegal, Sierra Leone,
Just a few great countries the jungle calls its home.
Ghana, Cameroon Togo and Benin,
There are many, many more, find your Atlas, look therein.

cont.

But before we leave these countries, there's something you should know,
They were the sites of tragedy, of crimes long, long ago,
When many of their people were forced out from their homes,
Transported 'cross the stormy sea to work with aching bones.

And toiling 'til they dropped and died, in awful agony,
Creating for the very few, great wealth, prosperity.
But after many, many years, it was plain as day to see,
That the cruel and heartless slave trade for once and all, should cease.

And that it did but sadly, our memories are not long,
For even now the history lives and prejudice goes on.
Across the brave "New World", their work forgotten, in the main,
Is left aside, unspoken, and ignored, just to be plain.

Remember them, we surely will, with shame and floods of tears,
Their many souls loved and adored each one a life most dear.
We promise that to, never more, forget the crimes we started,
And try and live in harmony, the past behind, departed.

Turning now to East and South, here, what do we find?
The scenery and the history, they're different all the time.
Old colonial countries, now states in their own right,
Proud nations free and standing firm but not without a fight.

Savannah, farmland, desert, plains, deep lakes and mountains high.
These places are so beautiful, all blue from sea to sky.
Wild flowers abound and all around its nature reigns supreme,
The things you see and feel and touch are almost like a dream.

So there it is, my Africa, amazing place throughout,
From East to West and North to South, intriguing, there's no doubt.
So much to see and learn, this continent, a hive,
But probably most importantly, it gave us all our lives.

From Pangea to "Lucy" the Rift Valley, hear the call,
Of the many, many people who made us what we are.
Africa, our cradle, I know you're here to stay,
Whilst we move on, you will remain, to fight another day.

Dave Smith

The conversation about Africa

What can I tell you about Africa?

Black people
live there. They live in poverty,
in mud and huts
and huts made of mud. Flies
crawl over their eyes
as babies scream
because they have no food
and their mothers look sad.

I don't know where the father is.

Yes, they – that's black people,
(can I call them 'black people'?)
Africans – do have some cities.
But these are dirty
and full of criminals.
Not like our cities,
here.

They – Africans, that is – speak in funny
languages that don't make sense,
don't they? All
clicks
and whistles
and coughs
and spits.

Mind you, they do have some amazing wildlife.

Then there's the Sahara desert.
And I suppose the pyramids
count as Africa
too, don't they?

Oh yeah, and there was slavery and all that.

cont.

When they had spears and clubs, we gave them guns.
When they were burning dung, we gave them fossil fuels.
When they were riding around on camels and donkeys, we gave them cars and Boeing 747s.
When they were killing each other, we civilised them.

I know it's true
because another white man
told me. And he heard it from another white man,
who heard it from a white man
before him. Also,
I saw it on the TV.
I think it was on the news.

No, I've never
spoken to a black person about Africa.
I've never
listened to what they have to say.
I've never
heard their point of view.
I've never
felt the need.
Of course I've never
read a book by an African!

Do they have books in Africa?

- Anonymous