

Poetry Series

**Simphiwe Mnculwane**  
**- poems -**

**Publication Date:**  
2019

**Publisher:**  
Poemhunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive

# Simphiwe Mnculwane()

Born and raised by a strong woman!

# Abi

Abi

Why Abi?

What has love become to you  
Calling my name when you should not  
You are a trench that I have fallen into  
Filled with dry bones  
Yet I do not want to leave  
You are as fair as you are shrewd  
Sinking yachts, ships and men  
You are that giraffe that strides  
And causes men to wonder and wander  
You are not poison  
But your sting is deadly  
You have killed me a thousand ways  
I long to see you again  
Doing what you do best  
Slowly to the left and then to the right  
Towards me and steadily away  
Killing me inch by inch  
Calculating each and every breath  
Killing all of me

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# Africa, My Queen

My blood is green and brown  
From the hills and rivers  
That flow through my heart  
The African garden we call home  
I cry about the day I first gazed  
Upon the African sun  
Yellow and warm to my bones

For them it's a tent  
A temporary dwelling  
While they suck the land dry  
And leave it barren  
For us it is home  
The Eden we inherited from HIM

Africa is our mother  
Tearing to be loved by her children  
Those who have raped and plundered her  
Must bleed to the soil in recompense  
If you have dropped a tear for these valleys  
Then this is yours too

If you do not care about the kids who die daily  
Or the leaders who kill them  
Then you are a stranger in a foreign land  
The horns have been blown  
The revolution must begin  
In our minds and in our hearts  
This is Africa

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# Alex My Heart Is Yours

Alex my heart is yours  
You know that  
I do not have to remind you  
About those nights alone  
You and me surrounded by death  
And how you carried me to safety  
You've fashioned my bones  
How can I resist you

I can hear whispers  
Silently proclaiming that I have abandoned you  
You echo in my veins  
So without you I am a shell  
Your kids are my friends  
Your heroes are my fathers  
Your pain is mine  
Far have I strayed even from you

Yet you still call out over Jukskei River  
Through the dust you seek me  
The streets of my childhood  
My joy in the morning  
I feel your defeat and hear your cries  
I see what has become of you my love  
From far I see those who hurt you  
It's the pain that binds us  
The memories that unite us  
If I do not return  
Know that I have never left  
Because my heart is yours

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# Democratic Slaves

What do I say to a mother  
Whose child was shot in the head  
By a drunk man who lost his job  
To a young lady who is sleeping with the boss  
Who is married to a sincere woman  
Who loves her kids  
Who hate their teachers  
Who fight the system  
Which fails the state  
And kills its people  
Who love their freedom  
Which binds them to death?

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# Heilbron

Heilbron I've heard so much about you  
I wonder what manner of men you keep  
They say your rivers are sweet  
And trees green in winter and autumn  
Your fruits are ripe everyday of the year  
Because they were planted at the dawn of time  
You skies are not blue but bright  
They make your children glow in the dark  
Your air tastes fresh like early snow  
Because you are born in the free state  
Your mountains stopped at the edge of life  
They are canvasses of hope in the distant horizon  
Your people are flawless  
Because they've embraced your refining springs  
Heilbron, I want to meet you  
On a Wednesday morning  
And tell you what I've heard about you

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# Honeybun

Honeybun, Mellissa

You are sweet as the smell of fresh red roses

Your scent is permanent

Intoxicating, it's true, confusing maybe

I smell heaven with every step you take

Left right forward sideways, bliss

The winds of the east blow you my way

You are pretty as the sun on a cold winter's day

Yes I see you trying to keep me warm

Comforting, wrapped around me, true

I'm safe with you and your heated hands

Touch, hold, embrace, my sunshine

The moon sleeps and you rise in my heart

You are the prettiest of all the stones

Yes, bright, brilliant and everlasting

Dazzling at every glimpse I take

I am captivated by this sparkle of glory

Radiate your smile and fill my cup

The world cannot comprehend such beauty

Honeybun, Mellissa

You are the sweetest pulp of flour and water

The rarest mix of fire and ice

You burn and steam away my troubles

Let's share a strawberry

Let me be bitter and you can be sweet

My honeybun

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# My Heart Beats For You

My heart beats for you  
In the morning, boom!  
I hear the thump  
There it is, you the drum I play  
If the beat stops then surely you have left me  
Mine is yours and needs your juice  
Drink until you are satisfied  
Drown the beat and take me away

My heart beats for you  
You and you alone and that's it  
Shout for the lions and let them roar  
Tell them to run to the hills of love  
And break all those crystal rocks  
Yours is mine to feather and keep  
Reach out for me and play my heart  
Say the words and play our song

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# My Heart Has Been Breached

My heart has been breached  
By a thief of the night  
Lo a thief of the day  
She had the keys  
And knew the locks  
I thought I saw her  
And locked my heart away  
She found the door  
And opened it wide, wide, wide  
She came in and said hello  
My heart was gone then and there  
The thief took and ran away  
Now I'm here looking for her  
To breach her heart  
And take from her  
Take from her what she took from me  
She sees me yes, afar she knows  
I'll risk it all and hope she waits  
And lets me take her heart away

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# My Love

Many are the daughters of Zulu nobles  
As the stars in the sky  
Beauty is their crown and they are groomed  
Groomed to melt the hearts of men  
Their skin is bathed in sweet goats' milk  
And nourished with honey  
From the hub of Africa's bees

Their eyes glow in the dark  
Because they are clothed in wisdom  
They seem through gloom  
And through the hearts of men  
Their hair grows neatly  
A bed for crowns  
For spirited warriors  
Their lips blossom  
From their purity of blood

Their necks are pillars that hold up grace  
Their bodies are inviting  
Always upright and pure  
Their feet are strong  
Carriers of truth  
But gentle to the ground they tread

Plenty are the daughters of the Zulu kingdom  
Abundant in beauty and other forms  
Many are the daughters of Zulu nobles  
But for me there is only you  
My love

Simphiwe Mnculwane

# Nine Out Of Ten

Yours is precious  
Like humming birds over scented flowers  
Nine is special  
Almost perfect  
And almost are the letters that make up yours  
So maybe you are almost  
Perfect  
Like the letter that make up your name  
My nine out of ten

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# Nkosazana

I long for thee on a hot summer day in the desert  
Because you are that tree  
Shade me with your beauty oh Zulu princess  
If I meet you at the river  
I will love you dearly  
Because you command the waters that roar inside me  
So tell my heart what to believe  
And what to think and I will follow you

I will look for you with my regiments, Amabutho  
They are the warriors who long to see you too  
Before we head to battle and death  
Because that is our destiny  
I will see you and your bright teeth  
Perfectly chiseled by magic hands  
And those Zulu cheeks  
Crafted in Ethiopia Before our fathers descended

And that big forehead that beams peace to all men of war  
Even men such as I  
And your eyes that I fear to look at  
Lest I'm conquered by you  
Nkosazana meet me at the river  
And I will bring you great treasures  
Carry me across the Drakensberg  
And I will give you my heart

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# Nolwazi

Nolwazi, ngane yami  
Ngifuna uku'tshela ukuthi ngikuthanda kangakanani  
You oh little child are my hope  
You are the answer to all my tears  
You wash them away daily  
Without you there is no life for me  
For me there is only you and no one else  
You are the crown I wear with pride  
The gown I flaunt for everyone  
Your beauty is unrivalled  
By women, by lilies and even roses  
Innocence embraces you day and night  
And kindness is your cloak  
I look to you for peace and joy  
You are the mother of knowledge  
And you know the troubles of my heart  
You speak to me with your eyes  
And with your smile you comfort me  
You laugh at me to ease my mind  
And in your heart I hope to rest  
You waved at us from your mother's belly  
I knew that you were our bundle of joy  
You are funny and cute and full of grace  
You came into this world all squashed up  
But in those lines I saw you laugh  
That is how you live your life  
You smile through everything  
So laugh, smile and keep waving at us  
That's our child, silly and quirky pickle  
Nolwazi my child  
I wish to tell you that you are my all

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# Remember Me Lord

Remember me Lord  
When the world tries to end me  
Keep me in Your hands  
Where safety is guaranteed

Remember me Lord  
When men revile and break me  
Give me your strength  
Which never fails

Remember me Lord  
When I'm down and forsaken  
Give me hope  
And pick me up

Remember me Lord  
When I cry to you  
Wipe my tears  
And cheer me up

Remember me Lord  
When the storm is raging  
Open your house  
The tower of protection

Remember me Lord  
When my heart is failing  
Hold the pain  
And ease my sorrows

Remember me Lord

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# Sunny Sunshine

Girl I miss you  
You you you and you  
Bright as blue  
Day as light  
Bring me home  
And take my hat  
Ai ai ai  
You're hot and cold  
On a bright spring day

Your lemons are sweet  
And apples warm  
The birds are filled  
And trees belong  
Nice to touch  
And great to hold  
Take me with you  
Everywhere, anywhere, here and there  
No no no no more no  
Sunny sunshine, shine for me

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# The End

The end of the road is where I reside lately  
Hoping to catch you and you  
I used to drive pass here and not look back  
Now I am here and they are driving by  
We are all mourning here  
So flee before we infect you too and you join us  
This is where it ends  
Where all roads meet  
That is why we mourn here  
Because we know your fate too  
So enjoy your days in youth and years in joy  
Because when you join us  
It is the end  
And you will join us!

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## The Second One

You are that one I chose to write about  
You are not like the rest in beauty  
But I have never been like them either  
I chose you in white as you strolled through them  
Heading towards your cave  
Your gentle heart thumps inside me  
And your words  
from the mountains of the Tswana people  
I long to hear  
You send calculated beats down my spine  
So sleep tonight in thoughts  
My second one

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# Umuhle

Umuhle

In Zulu it means you are beautiful

And that you are

I don't know how to love you

Only how I wish I could love you

There are no mistakes with you

And I'm a man of many flaws

I want to kill all the lions that roar inside me

So I can stand next to you

Ngizohamba nawe ntsuku zonke

Ebumnyameni nasekukhanyeni

Ngizofeza zonke izithembiso zami

Ngikujabulise emini nasekuseni

Ke rata wena fela

Lehayela hao le mo pelong yaka

Umuhle ngayo yonke indlela

O lerato la pelo yaka

Umuhle sthandwa sami

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# Waiting For The King

Through pain and tears and strain  
We wait  
The Lord is coming soon  
To take us home  
He will arrive in glorious splendor  
In power and might  
To break the chains

Power and might to set us free  
Free from the life we cling to  
In dying days  
Our feet we set in righteous ways  
For us there is a hope  
A king who is on His way to take us home

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# What Is Happening To Us

What is happening to us, you asked  
You knew but you asked regardless  
I knew what you wanted me to say  
So I chose not to say it  
Instead I held you close  
Grabbed you by your Sotho waist  
And dragged you closer to my heart  
I didn't tell you what I knew  
Because you know what was going on

In nine minutes you looked at me  
Held my hand and gazed into my eyes  
And you kissed me  
You shut your eyes and let it all go  
And you kissed me  
I held you tight daughter of Maseru  
And suckled the waters of the water kingdom  
We were there in Botswana  
Where we planted our seed together

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# What Then Of Cruelty

Of men whose god is gold  
Gold that takes lives in the mines  
And sparkling rocks that plot genocide

Or maybe a rattling belly  
And flies on bones  
On bones of infants soon to die  
Who have never tasted the bread of life

Or maybe a youth asleep  
Whose flesh is sucked by disease  
Who coughs bits of lung  
And liver too

Or maybe a mother  
Whose child is a burden  
In socially social circles  
And end in the drain of freedom's song

Or maybe the rich rulers  
Whose pockets and crafty speech commend corruption  
Who strip the poor of hope  
And lock away the keys  
What then of cruelty?

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# When I Think Of You

When I think of you Maarman  
I see you in all your splendor and grandeur  
Your smile that steals the room  
And eyes that guide the hearts of men  
I see your skin so sweet and simple  
And hair so neat and strong  
I want to cry and drip my tears from your lips  
Your neck is curved correctly  
And joins your shoulders steadily  
The rest of you is emerald  
I can't say I've seen a better-joined creature  
Your feet are supple and bold  
They've walked the dunes of paradise  
When I think of you Maarman  
I think of my wife  
The future of my life

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# When We Touch

When we touch  
You roll your eyes up and down  
Listening out for the African call  
When we touch your face cringes with pleasure  
Your nose shrinks and lips pout  
You travel to Maseru, the land of your birth  
When I squeeze your hand you cry  
Your name means beauty  
The daughter of the stars  
You taste like pine grown in the dessert  
Sweet and tender, warm and kind  
I want your babies  
And all of you  
I want your body  
And all your lines  
I burn with fear and love together  
When we make love you consume me wholly  
I loose my breath and you catch it swiftly  
You bite me  
And stamp me with your love

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