James David Rubadiri is a Malawian diplomat, academic and poet.

At independence in 1964, Rubadiri was appointed Malawi's first ambassador to the United States and the United Nations. On Tuesday August 18th, 1964, he presented his credentials to President Johnson at the White House and expressed the hope that his newly independent country would get more aid from the United States. Ambassador Rubadiri said that Malawi needed help to build its democratic institutions and noted that Malawi was already receiving US economic and technical help. David Rubadiri left the government in 1965 when he broke with President Hastings Banda.

<b>Education</b>

Rubadiri attended King's College, Budo in Uganda from 1941-1950 then Makerere University from 1952-1956, where he graduated from with a bachelor's degree in English literature and History. He went on to the University of Bristol from 1956-1960, where he received a master of arts degree in English literature.

<b>Publications</b>

His only novel, No Bride Price was published. The novel criticized the Banda regime and was, along with Legson Kayira's The Looming Shadow, some of the first published work by Malawians.
An Africa Thunderstorm

From the west
Clouds come hurrying with the wind
Turning sharply
Here and there
Like a plague of locusts
Whirling,
Tossing up things on its tail
Like a madman chasing nothing.

Pregnant clouds
Ride stately on its back,
Gathering to perch on hills
Like sinister dark wings;
The wind whistles by
And trees bend to let it pass.

In the village
Screams of delighted children,
Toss and turn
In the din of the whirling wind,
Women,
Babies clinging on their backs
Dart about
In and out
Madly;
The wind whistles by
Whilst trees bend to let it pass.

Clothes wave like tattered flags
Flying off
To expose dangling breasts
As jagged blinding flashes
Rumble, tremble and crack
Amidst the smell of fired smoke
And the pelting march of the storm.

David Rubadiri
Begging Aid

Whilst our children
Become smaller than guns,
Elders become big
Circus Lions
Away from home.

Whilst the manes age
In the Zoos
That now our homelands
Have become,
Markets of leftovers,
Guns are taller
Than our children.

In the beggarhood
Of a Circus
That now is home,
The whip of the Ringmaster
Cracks with a snap
That eats through
The backs of our being.

Hands stretching
In a prayer
Of submission
In a beggarhood
Of Elders delicately
Performing the tightrope
To amuse the Gate
For Tips
That will bring home
Toys of death.

David Rubadiri
Death At Mulago

Towers of strength
Granite
Enduring
Like life itself.

Up they rise
Tall and slender
And around them
White coats flit.
Like the magic they spell.
New Mulago Hospital
-the name shakes -
she stood firmly
on that cool afternoon
giving names, tribes and sex,
a woman clad in busuti.

As the fullstop was entered
On a white sheet of paper
A whitecoat gave a nod.

Her hands cross her chest
And the message unsaid
Crushing granite and concrete
In gushing tears of pain
And a lonely sorrow.

David Rubadiri
Kampala Beggar

Dark twisted form
Of shreds and cunning
Crawling with an inward twinkle
At the agonies of Africa.

Praying and pricing
Passers by
As in black and white
Jingle pennies past;

A hawk’s eye
Penetrates to the core
On a hot afternoon
To pick the victims
That with a mission
Dare not look at
This conflict.

A dollar drops,
An Indian sulk
Passively avoids-
I am stabbed to the core;
Pride rationally injured.

In the orbits of our experience
Our beggarness meets
With the clang of symbols,
Beggarly we understand
As naturally we both know
The Kampala beggar
Is wise-

David Rubadiri
Stanley Meets Mutesa

Such a time of it they had;
The heat of the day
The chill of the night
And the mosquitoes that followed.
Such was the time and
They bound for a kingdom.

The thin weary line of carries
With tattered dirty rags to cover their backs;
The battered bulky chests
That kept on falling off their shaven heads.
Their tempers high and hot
The sun fierce and scorching
With it rose their spirits
With its fall their hopes
As each day sweated their bodies dry and
Flies clung in clumps on their sweat scented backs.
Such was the march
And the hot season just breaking.

Each day a weary pony dropped
Left for the vultures on the plains;
Each afternoon a human skeleton collapsed,
But the march trudged on
Its Khaki leader in front
He the spirit that inspired
He the light of hope.

Then came the afternoon of a hungry march,
A hot and hungry march it was;
The Nile and the Nyanza
Lay like two twins
Azure across the green country side.
The march leapt on chanting
Like young gazelles to a water hole.
Heart beat faster
Loads felt lighter
As the cool water lapt their sore feet.
No more the dread of hungry hyenas
But only tales of valour when
At Mutesa’s court fires are lit.
No more the burning heat of the day
But song, laughter and dance.

The village looks on behind banana groves,
Children peer behind reed fences.
Such was the welcome
No singing women to chant a welcome
Or drums to greet the white ambassador;
Only a few silent nods from aged faces
And one rumbling drum roll
To summon Mutesa’s court to parley
For the country was not sure.

The gate of needs is flung open,
There is silence
But only a moment’s silence—
A silence of assessment.
The tall black king steps forward,
He towers over the thin bearded white man,
Then grabbing his lean white hand
Manages to whisper
“Mtu Mweupe Karibu”
white man you are welcome.
The gate of polished reed closes behind them
And the West is let in.

David Rubadiri