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**Author**

Anderson, Susan

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## SOLITARY CONFINEMENT

FOR THE POLITICAL PRISONERS IN SOUTH AFRICA

by

Susan Anderson

The impetuous sun guillotines  
 through the hours in your cell  
 a slit of a window  
 projects a bright rectangle of time  
 on your wall  
 Your soul confined, harnessed  
 deprived of color and air  
 Your imagination measured out  
 in proportions of four by four  
 by four by four and  
 morning meals, calisthenics,  
 afternoon meals, walking  
 walking miles away from memory  
 evening meals, calisthenics and  
 sleep, inspired sleep

A squatter's village in a valley of wind  
 a heap of refuse avalanches into the road  
 zinc roofs pierce the tarnished sky  
 The townships, fire and drums,  
 the villages, homelands, the uprising,  
 skirmishes in your soul

The night bled dry  
 the unwielding air  
 the broken road alert with death  
 You dream of the yellow windows  
 water spigots dripping like cheap candles  
 dogs rambling through rubbish  
 A dirge of smoke from the last cooking fires  
 The roofs of the huts cold, tight,  
 contorted

Wake up!  
 Sleeping miners open their beacon eyes  
 in a tower of rags  
     Banners of fists wave  
 above the precise, visionary face  
 of youth, expert in hope  
 reckoning with freedom

Wake up!  
The guerrillas inhale  
the blue wilderness  
Wake up!  
to the morning meal  
the calisthenics  
the death of separation