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Four Poems

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Four Poems by Mazisi Kunene

To My Guardian Spirit, the Goddess Nut of Annu

Since you are my beginning
I shelter in your folded hands like a child
From here my mind must fulfil its awakening,
And I? I am moving slowly into your eyes
We, the restless race of the earth, are blind
But you, you are the thousand blades of lightning
You are the thousand suns rushing into space
By your power I have seen all the magic suns
I have seen all the walking and wakening, I have seen eternity!
She was floating in space like a cloud of stars
I was filled with terror but you calmed me by your warm hand
And I saw the cosmic bird carrying the sacred egg
Where all life begins, where all life is fulfilled.
I saw the speeding antelope carrying the symbols of time
And all the ruins of our world rose to life like mushrooms
And your high priestess put your mark on my forehead
And I was her son again, and I was in your dream.

Generations

These planets are peeling from the light of the sun
To make creation always young and beautiful
And your name must be seen clearly on the green grass
And all living creatures must attain the freedom of movement
When these powers enter into their beginning I have become a tortoise
Whose movements are slow, whose ability to see is guaranteed
It must observe our earth turning and turning and turning
Until it is as though it is trapped in its eternal movement
Two loops of time coincide;
Because we are all caught in a life of movements
Whose powers are not in the future nor in the past
But only exist in one moment of time and eternity
We must celebrate neither past nor present but the always
That is the ALWAYS
The Sacrifice

I must, at last, make the sacrifice
And when I begin to sing your praises
Let me gaze into the inner soul of your sun
Where I shall feed my mind with your spirit
And be nourished by your sacred seasons
Then I can see into the myriad creations of a budding seed
Beside the travelling stream the mist of forgetfulness must intervene
And when I go insane and see beautiful things
A name that is mine and mine only opens my visions
Then you must reward me with your poems
Whose violence shall shutter the final veil of sleep
And let me see the big, round calabash
Where all your devoted followers have come to rest.

Cosmos Without Us

The essence of our unfulfilled lives that we have been waiting for
Harbors in the final light of the evening
This we shall not devour by our efforts
But by the memories which continue to flourish
And are always ahead of us in a crimson cocoon
They are soft and carry us swaddled on their backs
To leave us in the cradle of the noontime dream
Where time will not surrender even to NOTHINGNESS.
Because we know only that which is our truth,
We know only the surface of our existence.
Into it all Being churns endless movements without us
Where even our sun is spinning backwards into its tomorrow
But is not our tomorrow, ours is fulfilled bit by bit
Only our visions make us leap over our death into the sun
Because at the grounds of eternity there is no eternity
There is only the happening of things there is only movement
Whose pace is of life and of death and of death and of life
Like the spider-trails of the giant snail in a vast forest
Whose truths do not reveal a million years but are images
Strewn on our paths to celebrate our birth and rebirth
And the forever and ever.