

I Queue

"I think therefore I am,' is French,
So proud to be pedantic,
But, here you'd have to say,
"I queue therefore I'm Zimbabwean",
My country has collapsed,
No food, no fuel, no bread, no milk.

They stand in line
For hours
And for days.
They queue for fuel,
When it comes.
Which is rare.
In their cars
'round the block.
A kilometer
Down the road.

And in the strangest queue of all
They queue for cash.
The rich, of course,
Can buy their cash,
At a 25% premium.
Imagine that,
Buying cash,
Almost unbelievable
Isn't it?
But, it's true.
The poor wait 6 hours
In a hot sun,
Outside their banks.
To get 5.000 Zim dollars
Worth less than 1 US.

Then the soldiers come
And jump the queue,
And no one says a thing;
The police come
And jump the queue
And no one says a thing
I queue therefore I'm Zimbabwean,

I let them jump the queue
Ahead of me,
While the world looks on
Uncomprehendingly.

Sunshine and Shadows

Oh, how the sunshine sparkles in Harare
Where the bougainvillea
Blooms over the walls
But, even in a high sun,
Noon at mid-day
The shadows are always there:

You can braai* by your pool in the garden
You can play, splash and roughhouse with kids

You can golf and tennis the year going 'round
You can dance with the arts at the HIFA
In a cheerful multi-racial crowd
But, the shadows are always there.

Perhaps, not for you,
Today,
But, for sure
For some one you know
The shadows of
Beating and torture
And the pain
That spreads
Under the skin
Like an ever deepening
Bruise within

Darkening the bright country
That should have been.

*braai —barbecue