

### **Throne of Bayonets, Part Three**

*Brilliant blue grass, white*

*Sandals and bibbled biscuits;*

*An empty plinth where Rhodes' statue*

*Stood. From the dreaded hours of darkness*

I arrive at the Book Centre

Hungry of knowledge

And spend precious life hours browsing

Through nihilistic theories.

*My lunch is abench in Cecil Square*

*A Gideon Bible and the newspaper.*

*Sleek cars and soft-drinks trucks*

*Blonds in high heels and blokes in dread*

**Are these the vision, the ornament of the  
Moment? Will I ever know how much**

**I cannot ever know** – place and pace

Of coherent poetry in the gibberish rhythm

Of available "reality?"

*Denim-clad ambition drinks Castles*

*In the Long Bar; tonic water in the less than*

*Glittering talk: Hagar the Horrible*

*In the washtub of Viking socialism;*

*The strong tea and margarine of jaded Apostles*

**Stoned on Revelations**

And – as always – the question of my

Sanity and insanity. No time but such talk

With semantic digression disputing the way

I should walk.

Plead private cares the arthritis

In my plans

Stuttering, trembling, ejaculating

At the edge of the ruthless dream.

**Not**

**What**

**You**

**Want**

**But what you need.**

Phrases of dirty socks  
Phrases of soiled underwear  
Praises of fly-spotted T-shirts  
The maze in which I am time-warped.  
Ring-studded black fingers  
Around the pink gin of change

**I did not know so many o many!**

*Ebony masks grown bored with gold dust*  
*Alfa romeos, mistresses, sugar daddies*  
*Sugar mummies –*  
*Prune communic action to the pith*  
*Of necessity,*  
*Echo is dazzling horizon, the music of militant*  
*March in abandoned honeycombs;*

**Fearing no evil but the hardening way**

**In my ear.**

*Minds run out of petrol are abandoned*  
*At the university garage*  
*Black lassitude in fits and starts*  
*Lashes out its beautiful fist:*  
*Workers of the world Ingite!*  
*Under the gumtree and jacaranda*  
*Beggars and tourists, the povo and the shefs.*  
*The paved walk between her bench*  
*And my bench*  
*And clanour of bees in the anglican cathedral*  
*The mini-skirts and the flared trousers*  
*The flashing teeth and generous handshakes*  
*And hordes of Polaroid freelancers –*  
*Are these lights, the vanishing sights*  
*And quiet sunlit memories?*

*"The people*

*The people*

*Always come first..."*

The Citymam cometh to no pain  
When rural grounds receive no rain.  
The older I grow the harder it is  
To let go the pleasures of youth.  
Time wrestles me down,  
Fear of death tramples over me;  
But ever with each day I stagger to my feet  
To face another cruel defeat.

*"You are wrong:  
God first made Rockefeller  
In His image."*

I have drunk litres of Chibuku  
In friendly shebeens;  
Walked hundred of kilometers  
In search of somewhere to sleep;  
I have cried and laughed at the horrorshow  
In the kaleidoscope of commensense:

**Think in ink and explain the text afterwards –**

"Do I have

The right to rest

And leisure?"

*Closed eyes in clover*

*Smiling at the memory of a smile –*

*Walking sticks in wheat*

*Where Olive left her blouse.*

*Honeybeans the new moon*

*In the beloved looks;*

*The Ecclesiastics of mulberries*

*Her lips wetpurple with pleasure.*

*Fountain voices and cobbed glances*

*This brilliant blue Harare Day;*

*Hoarse enthusiasm the Christmas lights*

*Chaste and cheerful, glowin with glee.*

*How to face this alone*

*This Christian festive dawn?*

**Nowhere to go; everywhere the slow**

**But inevitable approach,**

I live like a folded newspaper

*Abandoned on the front lawn of deserted dream.*

“the people as a whole

Must come before individuals.”

*Stale existentialist news*

*Retreats behind the homebrew;*

*Mind in colonial tension and stress*

Decide to do nothing but play chess.

**The argument of the Art of Leisure**

**Rests between ornament and statement.**

“what dialectical process

Of the negation of the negation?”

*A toast, sir, to the taskmaster*

*Of Oblomovitis*

The God of repressed boredom

Answers all questions with

“I do

Not

Know”

He is the waste paper and the want

Of permanence,

The muddy shirt and ideals

Of the Knight of the Sad Countenance.

Yet again:

“I do

Not

Know.”

**School and university yawn with his secret,**

*Drawing room and ghetto verandah fret*

*With the fuss of it all.*

Is verse the message?

*Sweeny says:*

“Sex, food

And sleep

*Breaking black  
Africa's rules."*

We will return to the hotels and beerhalls  
And drink the drink that dissolves all woes.  
There is no time in time which wine  
Cannot redeem. We will sing recite and devine  
The meaning from the matter. *Sweeny will define*

**Sex**

**Food**

**And sleep.**

*I will think on Hurt  
How its tattered skirt endures;  
I will think on Intent  
The bullet-holes in his Bohemian hat.  
Blooddrink passion  
Flowers at sonnet edge;  
Drives heartmotor pulse  
Sunlight of sea and sand.  
Thinking on Pity  
Her one yellow tooth;  
Drinking down corroded Honour  
With this wooden leg and conscience stump.  
Violets incandescent dappled  
With silver hints of vision;  
In blue slippers and patched jeans  
Generosity selling peaches in Cecil Square.  
Fluorescent fountains glittering gems  
Weave in the brilliant Air;  
O mirror quality the precious stones  
Of well-hewn memory sculptured regret.  
What ashen face would hine the moon  
With threats and grumblings?  
"Have a nice Christmas," she said  
Month of many season of the few.  
Thinking on Sorrow*

*His bible and hobnailed boot;*  
**Tenacity drives his tumoured head**  
**Through pyrrhic tantrums,**  
**“I now wish to declare**  
**This poem wide open.”**

*Manacled hands the word-hoard*  
*Nut and bolt perspectives*  
*Soul’s engeneering. Parched throat*  
*Sandpaper tongue searing verbs.*  
*A desert garden’s Hope, descending*  
*Vultures only sign of journey’s*  
*End; language like dunes, the meanings*  
*Grains of sand migrating South.*  
*With sacred stuff, and in timewhite*  
*Robe, Belief hums the Te Deum;*  
*Ah Orpheus! Musicspinner of motorbikes*  
*Howling:*  
*“I have seen the best minds*  
*Of my generation....”*

**“... Remove,**  
**Destroy,**  
**Or modify the negative.”**  
*Pineposems, willow verses*  
*The year of the Tree;*  
*Everywhere rainroots blind and nourish*  
*Onve handed groundsouls.*

**“Does knowledge of the Root**  
**Expand insight into the future?”**

*Everywhere Afro-consciousness*  
*Defing itself with pick and shovel.*  
*Dare the black poet say*  
**“I am what I am?”**

*Ruby-red lips in cocktail glass*  
*Of seven day’s bitter wrath –*  
*Let me to the ivory chisel Mercy*

*And on pedestal invite all to see:  
The brightgreen ferryman, his  
Rasping laugh afloat on Karriba; condolences  
This darkening complexion of the horizon.  
"I think therefore I am," concussed and  
Confused.*

*The foundry's fierce hammering  
Echoes money forged in bloodied mud –*

**Will the poem sing flatteries  
Or smell out the rot in public places?**

*Dare exating sensibility harshly  
Rhyme the strident spleen of the marsh?  
Everywhere gears changing, drains gurgling,  
The continuous glitterspray of Cecil Square.*

*"Achieve  
Defined  
Objectives."*

*Wandering thro' the charted streets of Harare  
Deaf to the prostitute's pitiful shrieks  
Blind to malnutrition's glazed look;*

**Finding in the blackrain no shelter  
But plain dull resignation:**

*"A process  
Of possitive  
Affirmation."*

**The verse is ripe  
Drops to reveal Gravity;  
Tighten your belts  
The End is always beyond  
The reach of the means.**

*Meanwhile wash and brush  
The mask's grotesqueries:  
Deal out tales of polygamy  
City and country – Schools need books  
Not critical looks.*

*Grapefruit and bother cannon fodder  
To gunmetal geometry; history  
Inside our mind is headache  
For ink and pen; let intellect doff  
His Gogol overcoat  
His Oblamov rotundity:*

**"Attacking the Evil  
of mass poverty."**

*Tough and gritty, the substance  
Which clays hour's silhouette;  
Brute and rough the circumstance  
Homeless poverty illiterate despair.*

**"Let's not talk politics  
Let us instead talk of wine women  
and song."**

*Sweeney in the breastplate of his table napkin  
Belches, reaches out for his armoured toothpick,  
Nods,  
The moment is come  
To recount Bacchic deeds done.  
Dreaddrunk like a skunk  
At the Fed...  
It is the Cigarette-blue Room  
It is the gleam of winking wine goblets  
It is the haven of stone-taught Ancient Mariners  
Who have come out of nowhere to Meikles Hotel  
Burdened by the black albatross  
On foot and horse their story  
Runs  
Their theme rides - breathless gall -  
Oping -  
Bayonet and sword hacking  
gutting, piercing the pagan  
With Christ's mewling cry.*

**"The people, regaining their History**



**As active participants,  
Will go forward in prosperity and  
Happiness”**

*Sweeney speaks:*

*“Someone’s eaten my porridge.”*

*The explorer’s distant drum*

*Turned into heavy artillery;*

*The settler’s placid houseboy*

*Turned into deadly guerilla.*

*“Not in lifetime,” growled  
a certain blacksmith.*

*Let time his deed trace on the teeming sands*

*And with fierce voice and bouldered Word*

*Proclaim to all, at Heroes Acre, the valiant Victory.*

**It is Sweeney packing his bags**

It is Sweeney sneaking Down South

Brow creased in thunder, thinking “Someone’s eaten my  
Porridge.”