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## POETRY

## 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.