

"The child is not dead"

By Ingrid Jonker

The child is not dead
The child lifts his fists against his mother
Who shouts Afrika ! shouts the breath
Of freedom and the veld
In the locations of the cordoned heart

The child lifts his fists against his father
in the march of the generations
who shouts Afrika ! shout the breath
of righteousness and blood
in the streets of his embattled pride

The child is not dead not at Langa nor at Nyanga
not at Orlando nor at Sharpeville
nor at the police station at Philippi
where he lies with a bullet through his brain

The child is the dark shadow of the soldiers
on guard with rifles Saracens and batons
the child is present at all assemblies and law-givings
the child peers through the windows of houses and into the hearts of
mothers
this child who just wanted to play in the sun at Nyanga is everywhere
the child grown to a man treks through all Africa

the child grown into a giant journeys through the whole world
Without a pass