Rukweza farmer | Forest songs

Tawona ganyamatopè sitholè

| Namibia |

translated by Jackson Schmiedek

Rukweza farmer

vakuru vakati
pasi kare makunguo aidyei
here
bestowed the honour of wasting time
precisely 1hr15 minutes
i turn to the timely tone of timelessness
return to the wilderness of imagination
the *rukweza* farmer sits
guarding the precious *rukweza* crop
guarding against *makunguo*
the winged intruders who disrupt
to steal the precious *rukweza* crop
and yet shumo the proverb asks
pasi kare makunguo aidyei
in the absence of the farmer's field
what do *makunguo* eat
vakuru vakati
kurodza demo hakutambisi nguva
the *rukweza* farmer sits still
the *rukweza* farmer sits in silence
and yet shumo the proverb suggests
kurodza demo hakutambisi nguva

silence is not wasting time
it is preparation for speaking
stillness is not wasting time
it is preparation for action
the *rukweza* sways in the wind
but is still confined to boundaries
of the farmer's field
the *rukweza* is kissed by the sun
but it was not the caress of the wind
that brought it here
here
the *rukweza* does not grow wild
here
language does not grow wild
it is restrained by tenses
it is confined to boundaries
of the farmer's field
the manicured field of grammar
and yet shumo the proverb remains
pasichigare
ancestors are not in the past present or future
ancestors are boundless
in the wilderness of imagination
in storytelling
in *mbira* melodies
rukweza is not tamed into a crop
rukweza grows wild here
here in
pasichigare

Forest songs

as travellers strive
from origin to destiny
there's a little bird
who wings the forest

in familiar landscape
or don't know the way
there's a little bird
who pings the forest

tired and hungry
worried and thirsty
there's a little bird
who brings the forest

as different truths
fight over her name
there's a little bird
who kings the forest

a medium connecting
worlds to other worlds
there's a little bird
who swings the forest

from ancient times
travellers have known
there's a little bird
who sings the forest

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