

Fred Small

"Diamonds Of Anger"

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The boy rolls the hoop past the barricade
Pushing it fast with a stick that he made from a
coathanger
The hoop is a wheel of rusted steel from a junkyard
bicycle
The girl on the corner plays the guitar
It's a petrol can with strings of wire
She sings a song from the tribal days
But the words are new -- she sings "amandla."
Blond surfers on white sandy beaches
Wait for the perfect wave
The sky has no clouds at sunset they go home
The signs say no dogs or natives allowed
Nervous white boys in combat gear
Speed through the township in armored trucks
People scatter but the soldiers run them down
Kick them until blood runs from their mouths
Crossroads
We are diamonds of anger we are brilliant gold
Every blow makes us stronger the chain cannot hold
We are rocks against tear gas we are songs against
guns
We are life against terror we have already won.
The old woman waits for the broken down bus
To take her from this shantytown of tin and paper
No toilet no running water
The street is already hot
She rides to the white homes of Johannesburg
To mop the kitchen tile polish the silver
Wipe the babies' bottoms she must leave by nightfall.
Sixteen on trial for plotting revolution
Charged with singing songs of freedom
Or being present when these songs were sung
Or writing pamphlets or speaking at meetings
Botha tells the whites what they want to hear
The only votes he needs are theirs
Crazed with their backs to the sea
Drunk with the fear of retribution.
Crossroads
We are diamonds of anger we are brilliant gold
Every blow makes us stronger the chain cannot hold
We are rocks against tear gas we are songs against

guns
We are life against terror we have already won.
Black babies white babies still reach for each other
Fingers stretching from a passing pram
Eyes amazed and smiling through doors and broken
windows
Straining to touch
Behind the silence of Pollsmoor Prison
Nelson Mandela reads the international press
Receives foreign visitors
The chief in exile, the lion at bay
Give up violence say the key-jangling jackals
He answers let those who shoot my people
Beat with whips torture with electrodes
Let these renounce violence and I will walk free.
Teenagers born since he was imprisoned
Hear his voice though they have never seen him
Feel the tremor of righteous fury
A vision burning a tidal wave coming
New leaders born in the schoolyards and churches
Forged in the mines singing at funerals
Turning to block the blow as it's falling
Seizing the whiphand standing rejoicing
Crossroads
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