

MUSINGS from MANGUZI

By Ian Couper



ODE TO MANGUZI

Your beauty
seduced me
from afar...
I came unknowing
what sort of lover you'd be
the days and nights
of agony,
ecstasy.
Such demands you made
yet so patient
forbearing rages
forgiving mistakes
forging something new
yet old
the less turbulent relationship
of long time lovers
knowing each other's weaknesses
comfortable
but not short
of surprises

In this relationship
I stand
more aware
of who I am...
my limits
my desires
my needs
taught
by your experience
I know more
of your richness
your depth
Yet
my expectations
are less ...
do I demean you
by looking aside
not up.

I am wary too
of treachery
too quickly
I can be jilted
as you follow others
whoring themselves
for new South African falsehoods.

I fear
your change of life
a transformation
to that which I don't know
yet pray for your growth
pray
you will outgrow me
until
dreaded day
I am needed
no longer
and am cast aside
like other of your lovers
I have known.

Ah, but they are not
the same
any more;
in fact
neither are you.

(May 1995)

Note: This poem was written by Dr Ian Couper who has been working at Manguzi Hospital/Maputaland since 1991.