

A PROUD OLD MAN by Citambi Zulu

They say they are healthier ¹
than me,
Though they can't walk to the
end of a mile
At their age I walked forty at night ⁵
to wage battle at dawn
They think they are healthier than me
If their socks get wet they
catch cold,
When my sockless feet got wet, ¹⁰
I never sneezed,
But they still think they are
healthier than me
On a soft mattress over a spring
bed ¹⁵
They still have to take a sleeping
pill
But I, with reeds cutting into my
ribs
My head resting on a piece of ²⁰
wood,
I sleep like a baby and snore

They blow their noses and they
pocket the stuff.
"That is hygenic" so they will ²⁵
say.
I blow into the fire, they say
"it's barbaric"
If a dear one dies, I weep without
shame ³⁰
And if someone jokes I laugh with
all my heart.

They stifle a tear as if crying is
something wrong.
No wonder they need psychiatrists! 35

They think they have more power of will
than me
Our women were scarcely covered in the
days of yore,
But adultery was a thing 40
unknown.
Today they go wild on seeing a slip
On a hanger!
When I have more than one legitimate
wife 45
They tell me hell is my
destination.
But when they have one and countless
mistresses
They pride themselves in cheating 50
the world.
Nay, let them learn to be honest first
themselves
Before they persuade me to change my ways