

# Untold Stories

Fezekile Futhwa



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## 1. Word Hustle

In these days of hustlers  
Where everyone is in a gang  
Different forms of gangs  
Gangsterism, the new order  
The new credo

From drug hustlers  
To music hustlers  
They who invent the art of extremes  
Extreme performance  
In pursuit of excellence

I also need to belong  
My need for conformity  
Has placed me in a rewarding position  
For my gangsterism  
Is unique, is an art  
An art of the words

I am he who invents words  
Moulds them into shapes and sizes  
Curves figures and figurines  
And out comes picassos  
Marvels of art ingrained in words

I am a word smith  
He who cuts words into meaning  
Forms stanzas and classics  
An expert in rhyme and form  
I am an artist  
He who hustles with words  
Curving beautiful poetry  
A poet, a performer

I see language as art  
Beautiful form that flows  
With the mind with an artist  
Forming words into sounds  
Sounds into rhyme  
Rhyme into meaning  
Meaning that touches peoples minds

I am the rarest form of hustler  
He who transcends all form of hustling  
From music to dance  
Beautiful paintings of life  
To simple language spoken  
My art forms the basis  
Upon which people converse  
Fezekile Futhwa

I am a word hustler  
I hustle with words  
I am an artist

## 2. For How Long?

For how long?  
Shall the black child sit and watch  
Allow this abomination continue  
Unabated, unhindered  
This genocide foster  
Take root and prosper  
In black society  
right in our back yards

Moya wa ka o amehile  
My soul greatly aggrieved  
At what my eyes see  
In this my lifetime  
By those I call brother and sister  
With whom we shared my mother's womb  
Drank in the same cup day and night  
Even shared the same bed

Mahlo a ka a seka meokgo  
And I feel helpless seeing tears just roll down my face  
Involuntary tears of regret  
I am shame faced  
I hope history shall judge me justly  
That I did not partake in this act  
Of cowardice and weakness  
When our own are trampled on  
Never given a chance to flourish  
Freely like they are supposed to

For how long?  
The black child shall shun and despise  
All that is black  
Eagerly running towards that which does not belong  
Ba re kenyetsa metsi ka moedi  
Like traitors, they that never be trusted  
By anyone in their fold  
For they bring folliness  
Everywhere they go  
Ba soto batho banna!!

How does it happen  
That a child is born  
Into the richness of heritage  
That which has seen her generations past  
Propelled them into the great nation they are  
Yet, today that child looks down upon her own  
Thinks low of her people  
They who made her who she is today  
Who gave her this life she lives  
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Bold enough to declare them backward

Leqeba la ka le ya bajwa  
It is pain more painful  
Than the body can bear  
For mine is felt by my soul  
At this greatest injustice I witness  
By my people, about my people  
Young children who do not know any better  
Yet proclaim the greatest fountain of knowledge  
Sadly, the knowldge about others  
But themselves

I have watched with sadness  
Horror painted on my face  
At the rate we are loosing our elders  
The very foundations of the life we live  
They who hold secrets to our valued past  
They who hold the key  
To mysteries making our lives  
Riddles upon riddles of wisdom  
Embedded in style in language  
Like it was so intended  
For, our forbearers said it  
When they said:  
Ho se tsebe ke lebote  
Shame on he who knows not

Black history  
Black heritage  
My past, your past  
Jointly, our past  
Has come to past  
Right in front of our eyes  
While my people are preoccupied  
With the lives of others  
Forgetting the saying that  
O kgahlilwe ke none e feta  
Mme a aha serobe Phiri e se e jele!

### 3. Free Rhythm

Walking across the plains of Mzansi  
Everywhere I go  
Sounds become me  
Sounds of familiarity  
Sounds of freedom  
Sounds of expression  
Rantsho has got talent

From Soweto to Manenberg  
Tshwane ya Mamelodi to Kgariep  
Qwaqwa to Lesotho  
Welkom to Zimbabwe  
I hear sounds of greatness  
Indeed Mzansi is great  
Mzansi has got talent

Back to Orlando  
Sounds from exile  
Confirming this our freedom  
That today darkie is free  
Free to dance  
Free to jive  
Yes, freedom of the sounds  
Mzansi e na le talente hleng!

Down in Manenberg  
sounds blurp  
Sounds of the great Abdullah Ibrahim  
Dollar Brand is the brand  
Jazzy sounds of freedom

Cape Town to Soweto  
Tshwane to Jozi  
Home to jazz greats  
Legends never seen in the past  
Legends in my life time

Bump Jive  
As we bump each other  
The sounds of The Movers  
From Sis Dolly to The Elite Swingsters  
African Jazz Pioneers to Thandi Klaasen  
Bra Hugh, Mama Makeba  
Jonas Gwangwa, Wadee  
Sipho Gumede, Zim Nqawana  
Sibongile Khumalo, Andile Yenana  
Basadi Women of Jazz  
Selaelo Selota, Kalimba  
Too many to mention  
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Our great artists  
Artists of sound

soul engineers  
Mahlathini and the Mohatela Queens  
Mpharanye, Stompie Mavi  
Sis Brenda, Letta Mbulu  
Caiphus Semanya, Sankomota  
Tu Nokwe, Nothembi Mkhwebane  
Linah Kgama, Paul Ndlovu  
Steve Kekana, Babsy Mlangeni  
From Lucky Dube to Oyaba  
These are our ancestors  
Living and dead  
Great sounds of Mzansi  
Ndithi Bayete!

Going back to my roots  
I hear drums drumming  
Sounds of uMfazi Omnyama  
Ladysmith Black Mambazo  
The Soul Brothers, Phuzekhemisi  
Mfiliseni Magubane, Ihashi Elimhlophe  
Bhekumuzi Luthuli, Mbongeni Ngema  
Paul Shange, Platform One  
Apollo Ntabanyane, Famole  
Puseletso Seema, Chakela  
Buruari e Motsho, Sefako sa Menoaneng

Let the rhythm rhyme  
Let the drums beat  
Let the sounds be heard  
Down Mzansi way  
Sounds of greatnest  
Rhydms and soul  
Sounds of rhydms

#### 4. Reborn

My mind, my imagination  
Is taken afar  
Where only the spirit knows  
A world where no humans go  
Only our souls lurking  
In this serene haven  
A place that knows not of war  
Misunderstandings and hurt  
A soul redeemer  
Washing away our sorrows  
Leaving us as pure as a child's innocence  
How I wish  
That I forever remain  
In this paradise  
Never to regain my consciousness  
Never to face reality again  
That the world is a cruel place  
Music my savior  
Taking me to this land  
Whenever I am troubled  
Reminding me of greatness  
Gods in the form of man  
And woman  
They who cook this marvel  
Music food for the soul  
Music my redeemer

## 5. To The One

The One

On whom my thoughts are wasted  
My imagination stretched  
My thinking taken to bounds  
Bounds of mental slavery  
For too much mental mechanics  
Equals slavery

Ho wena

Wena o le mong to!  
Wena wa ho ikgapela maikutlo a me  
Wa hlwibila menahano ya ka  
Wa nto qetela ka ho hapa ditoro tsa ka  
Wa ntlhola sa mabotho ntweng  
O mpa o farasa methapo kutlo ya me

Oh how sad

That words can fail me  
Disappoint me in times of need  
Just when I thought I was an artist  
He who could play with words  
Make words rhyme  
Yet I find myself blank minded  
My pen has not moved an inch  
While trying to express myself to you

I have bid my time

Practiced the proverbial wisdom  
It that says:  
Ho robala ke ho fetoha  
And I thought days would help  
That words would flow in time  
To fill this paper in my hands  
Fill it with beautiful words of wisdom  
Words of a poet  
The great wordsmith of all times

But my darling

Bomadimabe ha bo tlollwe mafura  
Because words have deserted me infinitely  
I am like a draught smith  
For it is the dryness of words I know  
And my heart cries  
For these words that fail me  
Because all I wanted to say really  
Was that I love you  
In the best way words can  
But words have failed me dismally

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So all I can do now  
Is tell you about my love  
In an ordinary way  
Like some commoner out of earth  
An ordinary specie  
It that lacks respect  
A man without a creative mind is a shame  
And I am not a shame  
I am a proud man

So moratuwa  
Hear me today  
When I say my love for you  
Is like the universe  
Because it is bewildering  
Deeper than the deepest rivers  
Clearer than the brightest day  
Stronger than the sweetest coffee  
More tantalising than any chocolates could ever be

Ke o rata rati rati  
Old fashioned love  
The one without conditions and borders  
Plain love, pure love  
Hobane ke o rata hobane ke o rata  
And nothing else  
I have no reason why I love you  
Except that I do love you  
And that my love

A husbands love to his wife  
His commitment to love  
And be loved in return  
Two souls hopelessly in love  
Loving like tomorrow will never come  
For only the here and now matter  
In matters of the heart  
And this moment, this minute  
I love you  
Only you moratuwa wa pelo ya ka  
Is my declaration of love

## 6. Dying

Lying on my deathbed  
I couldn't help but long  
My lips parted, albeit only slightly  
My moods suddenly lively  
My hopes high  
Even in death, I am a poet  
My mind oozes ideas  
My soul longs for spoken words  
Rhythm inspires  
Rhyme signals me to life  
There is life in death

## 7. For The Better

Last night I cried  
To ease the pain and hurt  
What I felt  
When I learnt you were a bitch  
Like many before you  
You came into my life  
Gave me the best of times  
Only to break my heart  
Just when it was warming up to you  
So I cried and cried  
Like tomorrow never comes  
Yet once again  
Love I have found  
My heart is healed  
Like only a heart can  
Changing moods in order to heal itself

## 8. Fucked

Just when  
You were most optimistic  
Hopes high, optimism abundant  
Life couldn't better, you thought  
This must be a good year, you said  
I am blessed  
Your world turn upside down  
In an instant, your world turn darkest  
Darker than darkest shadow  
Where a flicker of hope  
Knows no life  
How is it  
That things can be great  
One moment  
Then suddenly, bang!!!  
You are fucked  
Life mocks you  
You are fucked  
Your luck has turned  
Unesinyama  
Fucked you are  
Again, life has fucked you  
As you were forgetting the past  
Thinking life is all good  
Life sucks  
Fucked is life

## 9. Help Me

Help me  
To understand  
My life, my reality  
To make sense of it all  
Nothing I can understand  
Too much confusion  
Too much pain  
Too many expectations  
Help me please

## 10. Mara Why

Why do you invade my space  
Invade my privacy  
Like you are some dictator  
Hellbent on torturing me  
Whatever my sins to you are  
Mara why hey!  
You are like a parasite  
It that is present everywhere  
At the most inconvenient of times  
Why mara hey!  
O ntshotlelang?  
I am tired of thinking about you  
Dreaming ka wena  
Like you are a par...t of me  
That I have no control over  
But you torture my imagination non-stop  
My emotions clouded  
All because of you  
For you refuse to set me free  
Please let me go  
Let my emotions free  
My thoughts prosper again  
And be freed from this prison  
The longing  
The passion  
The thoughts  
Why mara he

## 11. My Like For You

I thought I loved you  
Fell head over heels with emotion  
But with time  
I now realise  
It was all but infatuation  
A like mistaken for love  
I do like you  
But I like you not enough  
To declare deep seated emotions  
But my like to you  
Should be like  
A shoulder you cry on  
My like for you  
Is like a brotherhood  
For I like you for like's sake  
No expectations  
No emotions  
Just pure love  
Like siblings' love for one another  
Please hear me, understand  
You are precious to me  
I value our friendship  
And it like my like for you  
I pray it lasts like a brotherhood

## 12. Sundowners

Shining crisply across the horizon  
The beautiful gaze of golden rays  
Miraculously intertwined with earth  
Like two maidens hopelessly in love  
Willing never to leave each others sight  
Forever basking in one others presence  
Like reptiles sprawling for the sun  
Oh sun, the golden god of light  
Hanging lowly in the west  
Curled across the mountain tops  
As if in cue  
As if in suspense  
Anticipating your arrival on earth  
How magnificent  
That sight  
Golden yellow brown  
A dash of redness  
Rasping through the skyline  
A meeting of greats  
From the heavens  
Through the skies  
Matching through space  
Touching the mountains  
All the way to the seas  
A journey travelled  
To be repeated over and over and over  
Till the end of time

### 13. When I Was

In the beginning  
There was man, and there was freedom  
Life was there to be lived  
Live to the fullest  
No worries  
Life was just that  
Life

In the beginning  
I was free  
Free to speak  
My mind dished out like food  
To anyone who cared to listen  
I was proud to be a man  
A man with an opinion  
For an opinion is better  
Than no thought at all

Wisdom was the source of my inspiration  
The knowledge that I am black  
And the pride that black was beautiful  
Acknowledging God's work  
His creation in me  
That I am who I am  
And so I remain  
For that is my heritage  
That I am a Black man

There was a time  
Back in my past  
When a man was judged by his deeds  
His convictions and beliefs  
When the African God was great  
He who made you and I  
Gave us all that I call mine  
Mind, body and soul

When I was a man  
I taught my children  
What it means to be African  
I openly called onto my ancestors  
Evoked ritual upon ritual  
In praise of God the Creator  
Fully acknowledging my lineage  
They from whom I come  
Hence forth called ancestors  
My forbearers

Once upon a time  
Fezekile Futhwa

When I was conscious of my responsibilities  
I proudly spoke my tongue  
Never gave thought to appeasement  
Of those whose origin I know not  
Proudly I was African

Generations down the line  
Where I stand today  
Reflecting and reassessing  
A life that has taken turns  
Shaped by deeds of man  
History one sidedly retold  
To favour one man over the other  
This is today  
This present moment  
Our time, you and I

I have sat and thought  
Went into deep meditation  
In an effort to rediscover  
A journey to reclaim  
My rightful place in the world  
As a proud African child  
With no apologies to anyone  
Simply living life as life should be

Am I innocent  
Standing here, now  
Thinking of who I am  
Of what makes me African  
Of what my heritage is  
Or am I  
Like those before me  
A corrupted mind  
One which remembers not  
How far we have come  
As a people  
To where I stand today

Can my innocence be proven?  
Or my corruptibility evidenced?  
For I seek to claim  
To stake a claim in this world  
That I am a man  
Like those who came before me have done  
Declare my manness without fear  
That I have done a huge disfavour  
To those who shall come after me  
They who will look back and declare  
What a sorry soul  
When they talk of me

Fezekile Futhwa

## 14. When Love Was Free

Back during the day  
When I was a young boy  
Innocently naive and green  
Seeing the world through my childhood eyes  
In whose nothing is ever bad  
As long as my stomach was full  
Peace reined in Fezi land

Young, innocent and pure  
Living life to the fullest  
Happiest when those around me were happy  
When my measure of success was happiness  
A smile on the face  
Was the key to my good books

Those days past and gone  
When the sun shone and I basked in its rays  
When the moon graced our skies  
Turning night into day  
Feeling the fresh drops of rain on my tender skin  
When rain did not cause flu  
But brought happiness and joy  
To us all young things

Way way back  
In the archives of history  
The history of my life  
The day I learned about love  
The dawn of immaculate emotions inside me  
Turning up a storm deep down  
Deep down the valleys of my soul

I innocently loved  
And loved I was  
I loved for the sake of love  
And I was loved for love's sake  
No agendas, no expectations  
Love was free

People gave away their hearts  
To the ones they love  
And the miracle of feelings took place  
Twisting and turning people around  
Souls transformed into emotions  
Sweet emotions of feeling  
Never afraid to be broken hearted

Mhh, back in those days  
We loved, for real

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Love was real  
And we were happy to love  
Love was embraced  
Sitting eagerly in the glow of emotions  
For that is all we cared for  
To love and be loved

## 15. Days Gone

I remember those days  
When you and I were like tongue and saliva  
Nothing happened, without the two of us  
You were so close to me  
And I so close to you  
We were inseparable  
Like twins, always in each other's company

Things do change  
People do change  
Your world can change  
For the worse  
When those you love  
Are no more  
And you are left alone  
In this vast world  
Marred with contradictions

In those days  
It was unthinkable  
That you and I  
The two of us  
Could ever be apart  
Like North and south  
Fully aware of each other's existence  
But never to meet again  
We exist only in thought  
As a distant memory  
Bringing memories of yester days  
When life was sweet and wonderful  
This day, of today  
Never a considered possibility  
That one day, this day  
I would look back at us  
With us being a memory  
As history usually does

## 16. Games People Play

These games, that we play  
On each other  
Constantly looking for a better way  
To outsmart you  
To hurt you  
To humiliate you  
Just to prove the point  
That one is better than the other  
Games peoples play  
When I give no thought  
To your feelings  
What you feel  
Like you matter not to me  
These games we play  
When all I care about  
Is me and me alone  
Damn what you think  
This is the twenty first century  
Where people care not for commitment  
Give no second thought to truthfulness  
This is a game, and I am a player  
When all is said and done  
I am all lonesome  
When you finally have had enough  
Of my shit  
This game, we play  
The game of hurt  
To see who can boot the other first  
And marvel at your pain  
That is the game  
Those are the rules

**17. Love Overflow**

Somebody hear me  
Someone please answer  
I am full  
Today I overflow  
My limits are limited  
This is too much  
Too much of anything is waste  
And I wish not  
I endeavour not  
To waste this love  
That is abundant  
Deep down my veins  
Coming out to make me sick  
Love sick  
Wishing someone, anyone  
Would take this love  
And let it not waste

## 18. Tell Your Story

Lend me your ear  
For a moment, just a minute  
Let me breathe my being  
Spill out my heart  
In this rendition of acknowledgements

I was told  
By those who wield power  
Men and women of difference  
They on whom everything rests  
Most lustful dictators  
That only they, know better  
That only their ways  
Are God's gift to the world

Today let me tell my story  
A story borne out of necessity  
Out of a man's need for footing  
For a place to call his own  
For a man is a man only while he asserts his will  
It that they have tried to imprison  
But no man can ever keep another's will  
In bonds and shackles  
A will is a gift from the gods  
And from uMdali, the Creator

Let my lips move  
My mouth utter words of conviction  
My tongue spill out edible sounds of sense  
For today, this moment  
From here henceforth  
I am convinced, totally  
That my people are great  
That we are blessed with a great gift  
The gift of wisdom

I listened to my elders  
Gave them all ears I have  
Attentively heard every single word  
Felt every syllable uttered  
Through those patched lips  
Said with those missing teeth  
Yet delivered  
With great passion  
That I was lulled into believing  
That this must be the great day for me  
The day my people stood tall  
To deliver deep held secrets  
About my past, present and future  
Fezekile Futhwa

And therefore anointing me  
As one of them, a grown up  
For nothing was held aback

How could I not  
Believe this that I saw  
With these my two eyes  
Heard clearly, with these my ears  
Felt, lived and touch by  
Acts of humility  
Words that ushered light into my soul  
Engraving themselves deep down inside of me  
Never to be erased  
For as long as I shall live

I must have been careless  
To have even fathomed  
That my people could know less  
That God could have created us  
Only to abandon us in the face of fate  
Firmly grasped by the hands of those  
Who call themselves masters of man  
Yet in whom I have seen evil in this raw form  
My spine shudders  
Coils of my being shaken  
That I have ever lent my ear to them  
To hear them tell me lies  
About my people and myself

Yet over and over again  
My people have said  
Son, ize leze  
A mans will is like a soul  
Devine in nature, yet still vulnerable  
Wanting to be caressed at all times  
And if left wanting  
It just might catch bad influences  
Like the proverbs declare:  
O kgahlwa ke None e feta  
Thinking that they deliver us  
From this they call heathenism  
From this they call Godlessness  
From this they call uncultured

Today I needed no decades of schooling  
Needed no big words to convince me  
Sought no dictionary to grasp the meaning  
The meaning of words spoken  
So naturally, so fluid  
Like a sonnet recited by a gifted poet

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Capturing me with the spoken word  
Yet progressively delivering a meaning  
That only those with this gift  
The gift of appreciation can understand  
Meaning delivered in poetic prose  
To connect with the mind and spirit

Momentarily, though it felt like a lifetime  
I was taken into the past  
To the beginning of time  
When all else stood still  
When life was innocent and pure  
People living in the face God  
Reminded of greats the likes of uShaka ka Senzangakhona  
King Moshoeshoe of Basotho  
Kwame Nkrumah, Dr Luther King  
How can I forget  
Nkgono Mantsopa the great priest  
Ntshwekge the greatest runner  
uHintska ka Phalo king of amaXhosa  
These are legends of our times

My mind drifted away  
To the gravesides of earth  
Where down lay heroes and heroines  
Ancestors who bore testimony to my conceival  
They who laid down the laws  
On how an African child should carry himself  
As a true testimony to our heritage  
It that is so rich and full of wonders  
Waiting to be explored by those on whom it was entrusted  
As a gift passed on from generation to generation  
Until it reached me, my generation  
Standing here now on cross roads  
As revelation takes place right before me  
Revelation in the form of mere words  
Words spoken from the heart  
A father to son  
Uncle to nephew  
Elder to child

Suddenly, it is like I am in two worlds  
A world of physics, the physical  
And the imaginary world of spirits  
It that my soul is taken to  
While I listen to these words  
And hear them fully, yet seeing myself as a third person  
Removed from this miracle I witness  
That me, the son of this earth  
Have suddenly become so attuned to words  
And the meaning they carry across

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As they reach my ears on behalf of my mind  
Spoken in pure isiXhosa  
It that requires no interpretation  
And straight into my being they go  
And I can tell they shall live deep down there forever  
To serve as testimony that this day indeed did happen  
That indeed I did witness this greatness  
About my people  
About myself  
Ya nang le ditsebe ho utlwa  
O utlwile

