

DIAMONDS: A POEM FROM SIERRA LEONE

Hard sparkling, precious beauty
wondrous beyond imagination
then say you belong to the devils,
and that you brought wealth
but woe unto me and my land.

How many magnificent cities have you built?
look how my land bleeds, for your sake
unhealed wounds, with greedy knives
twisting into it everyday creating new cuts
must I laugh, must I cry for you?

See how my people are cheated,
and humiliated everyday for your sake
listen! A cry is heard
a pit has caved-in killing many youths
see the mourners, haggard and in rags
carrying everlasting poverty in their pitiful eyes
glisten stones, must I laugh, must I cry for you?

Hear! A heavy blast
it is for the twinkling stones, the earth shock
houses crack and crumble, there is a sudden cry
yonder lies a woman with baby strap to her back
and an old woman in a pool of blood
smashed and crushed by flying rocks
yet, we did not bemoan them
innocent victims of corporate colonization and reckless exploitation
Gem stones, must I laugh, must I cry for you?

Written by Saa Mathias Bendu, President of the Kono Students Union and a member of
the 'Campaign for Just Mining' in Sierra Leone.

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