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PEOPLE OF PEOPLE, MY PEOPLE

By

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I have learned slowly with my mind and heart
That my people are of these taba trees and Kotu hills
Rich poor old young
Handsome ugly soft rough.
People with people in their hearts
Whose patient voices soar
Through cracked corrugated fences.
People of stories song and dance
Artful with cooking steadfast with living.
I have learned to love the dik-dik
Of their early morning pestles in the air
As they pound onions peppers greens
In preparation for delicious bisaap soups.
I have learned to love the scattered giggles
Of the happy girls of the evening
As they play hide and seek
In the fallen mango boughs
Or around the smoky black walls
Of the deserted kitchens.
I have learned freely in the open air
The way a green parrot learns familiar tunes
While balancing its feathers in the buoyant wind
That my people are
Articulate with wisdom skillful with laughter.
They mold the children
Through song and shouting.
They are people evergreen with satisfaction
Like the incense trees
In the garden of the communal gods.
They are people peopled
With the joys and pains of people
Who thrive in ordinary living.