

CHARLES MULEKWA

*Time is Strange*

Damn the bus! Taking me back to that woman Violet . . .

I swear the days Violet was strictly under her parents' home, I found it unbearable to keep away from her. Currently, under the same roof, I find it hard to stay with her! This partner of mine is a real violet. Just like the flower. In the morning one color, and evening, totally different.

Before we met I was incomplete, but now I'm finished! Back then she was an enigma. She is now a stigma. The girl I met was wise. She has gone and become otherwise. I had taken her for a pearl, but that was before she unleashed her snarl. At the time it seemed she came from heaven. Reality now is: she comes from hell.

Our relationship simply degenerated from a glow, to a flaw. From gold to cold. The electric touch no more, all that transformed into icy hands. Question for question, instead of conversation. We used to talk for hours; lately we spend the hours sulking. The smile that charmed my heart is the sneer that torments it. The eyes that used to be a glitter are now but a glare. Her kiss used to taste of honey, but now it tastes of bile. That delightful voice vanished; in its place, dreadful silence.

I found a day, looked her in the eye, and assured her! I dare not be seen with her. I mean people look. Just how can one deteriorate from being an angel, to being a fat-old-woman? Plus nobody has a license to be a nuisance. No monopoly on mischief. If she wanted to be cold, I'd fit in the fold. Moment for moment. Torment for torment. Who-is-she? Anything she can do, I can. But I would leave her the choice of what-was-what.

Violet reacted. She went out, and on return showed up with a mirror. Full-size. Not a word about this action. Without a care, she planted the mirror before me! Once again it was Violet, doing

bloody well what she wanted. No me in the picture. Except for the image in the mirror.

I saw me. A strange man!

For the local hero I used to be, I saw a zero. My physique completely sagged. I involuntarily pulled my tummy in, against the nostalgia of how flat it once was. My formerly slick face was wrestling with wrinkles. The princely hair I prided in was deserting! The head growing bold, tending to bald!

My style had been to blame it on time. Telling whoever cared to listen the strangeness of time. But time is innocent. We are the arses; Violet and I. Me being the bigger arse. I mean, the cool me had faded into but a fool. Otherwise I'd have retained the decency to figure angels too can be fat or old; and a prince can well be bold headed – hell, even bald!

Time to save what was left, and nurse it. Hopefully revive the past. But Violet was gone! Door wide open. I raced after her. Some of her belongings were strewn along the way to the bus stop. My eyes caught a glimpse of her disappearing into the bus. I ran after the bus, without a care about who was looking. . .

Could not that stupid bus break down?