

# A Red Flag of Hope

*by Maina wa Kinyatti*

Aloneness  
The cold chill of this life  
But you have been in my mind  
Throughout the season

How long this night?  
The chains on my wrists and ankles  
Whisper horror in my ears

The food half-cooked  
Thrown on the dirty cement floor  
The water contaminated  
My cellmates lice and bedbugs

I have no other way to tell you  
How they mutilate my soul  
Every morning before the sun is awake  
Do you hear my cry?  
Can you feel my pain?

The guards  
Have turned the prison  
Into a charnel house  
Neocolonial school has not taught them  
Those who torture and kill patriots  
Will one day pay with their lives

I have nothing to offer you  
My love  
But a flag  
A red flag of hope

*21 June 1982*  
*Nairobi Remand Prison*