

Tudde Ekka (Let's Go Home)

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Upcountry, Brother,
Is the name cultured topographers
Call those gnarled ridges
And lands with vast green plains
Interposed with thick tropical forests.
It's in this land that our cosmopolitan parents,
Both aliens in the land,
Gave birth to us,
Us their otherworldly offspring.

Once upon a time, Brother,
Life grew wild on the plains.
Streams meandered and beasts wandered.
The heavily cultivated fields,
Then were virgin rustic meadows.
Men bothered not to cultivate,
But lived on promiscuous windfall:
Wild grapes, *ntuntunu*, and *matugunda*.

Now then, Brother,
Evening came, and morning—a strange day.
Neighbours each built a gluttonous granary
And with poison planted their homesteads.
From dawn to dusk,
Men clawed away at mother earth,
Sweating heavily, laboring:
Damn the civil metamorphosis.

As we head upcountry, Brother,
May your sight seeing hungers be filled double
The ridges are death-riddled,
The streams are sucked dry.
Men's spirits are withering.
Soon, very soon, the desert shall grow there.
Hunger and anger fury is brimming
The sun no longer rises:
Life now blooms misery.

But, Brother,
You, the children of the land,
Are carousing in foreign lands.
When, oh dear brother,

You drink in those frothy juices
And belch bubbles of health all over you,
Do you, oh do you care a memoriam
For our land?