

# Walking with Masai

## My sisters

Into a brown and dusty landscape  
they weave colours of song  
Into a life of drought and thorn  
they string children like pearls  
between gap-toothed smiles.  
They cannot read, my sisters,  
but they write welcome with their laughter  
and sign it with strings of beads  
pulled from their own necks,  
offered to me.



## My brothers

Tall, thin, they move slowly,  
nod gently,  
agree with a backward jerk of their chins  
eeeh.  
They speak a language of motion,  
Carry authority like their slender sticks  
Obey their fathers, care for their cattle,  
Fear no man.  
Occasionally they walk out of the solitude  
of this ancient landscape,  
Forget that we are there  
And jump, deep-throated, like drums.



## Children

Small, sometimes ragged  
Always dusty, they offer their heads  
For blessing.  
They move as one with their animals  
Can name all the birds  
School divides them into those who will stay  
And those who go.



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