

ODE TO THE COMRADE
FAROUG KADOUDA

*A simple childhood in Tabaj, south of Abri
Could not have foretold such a heroic life;
After all, he was just a child in Old Nubia,
Meandering in the wind-etched passageways
Of a sand-covered village that had but touches of colour.*

*A place where nothing and everything happened,
Where nothing and everything was known,
Where resistance to tyranny came swiftly
And engulfed Old Nubia in a struggle for survival.
Still, how could we have known what his life would hold?*

*This Comrade never wrote his prison notebooks,
Nor memoirs of a life so richly lived,
Nor recorded the stories that made others laugh—
Even in prison-- those wise tales from childhood
With the humor that drew others to him.*

*Still, this Comrade spread his wisdom and love
Of country and party, of family and Nubia,
Of students and friends, a public intellectual
Who reached us through every medium—
An irrepressible voice waging struggles for the poor.*

*Then death too young, a body spent,
Abused by tyranny, his work unfinished.
But silence was not allowed by those who hold him dear.
They are left to write his memoirs,
To carry his legacy on their shoulders,
A white-shrouded figure of a Nubian boy.*

*Thousands thronged his funerals,
His many funerals in many places,
Making tyranny listen to cries for justice,
To listen to a Sudanese boy raised simple,
And to a man whose truths were simple.*

Take our hand, Comrade, we will finish it together.