

Best Poem by a refugee

My Pain Cannot Be Traded

by Arad Nik

Here colour and race fight together
Like boat people fight with politics
The yellow sun in the flag stamps the red earth with a black struggle
And sets over Nauru where into the black night our hopes crumble
Detention is just another word for jail
The tears of a stolen generation cannot fail
Aboriginal history is a bloody book
Offshore you will find another one — if you look

My talking with aboriginal was beautiful and sweet
The boat is witness for where our stories meet
Between sky and ocean lies the only path for the refugees feet
Welcome said aboriginal and opened a door to me
A man from a different minority
I could read his story in the face behind the smile he gave me
I could read his story in the face behind the smile he showed me

His eyes became a mirror of peace rippling beneath the shadow of pain
His heart revealed my vision of paradise
His pain is my pain
How can I treat it?
His sad sound
How can I explain it?
All the stars in the sky tell his stories and reflect his love for this place
In this light Australia makes sense
Respect the sun in his flag
This was my first lesson

I am full of pain
Full of suffering
Full of torture
The dots painted on his face dance my pain

Don't doubt
the world is beautiful
You can see it
enjoy it
But why in all this beautiful world
Can't they give a space for me

You want to know more about my pain
Sit and listen

For my pain there is no cure
It is the same pain as his pain
Do you listen to him?
Do you hear him?