

# THE DUBE TRAIN BY CAN THEMBA

## 1. Summary



The narrator is at Dube Station in Soweto on a cold Monday morning, waiting for the train to Johannesburg. All his descriptions of the station and people emphasise his depression, which he feels is shared by all the people around him.

When he gets onto the train he sits opposite a huge man. When the train gets to Pheloni Station a young woman enters the carriage and sits next to the narrator. Soon afterwards a tsotsi jumps onto the train and begins verbally harassing the girl. When the girl reaches her stop and wants to get off the train the tsotsi prevents her and slaps her. She tries to get away from him by jumping over the narrator but the tsotsi follows her.

No one dares to say anything to stop the tsotsi, until an older woman starts shouting at the men and calling them cowards. This causes the tsotsi to swear at the woman. This angers the huge man sitting opposite the narrator and he gets up and moves towards the tsotsi. The tsotsi pulls out a knife and cuts the big man's chest and arm. The big man is enraged and, in spite of his injuries, he grabs the tsotsi and lifts him up. He throws him out of the train window.

Everyone is shocked, but the incident soon becomes just another event on the morning Dube train.

## 2. Title

The title focuses on the train journey rather than on any characters in the story. The writer intends us to see the train journey as a comment on the lives people experience. Even when bad things happen people just accept them. The incident on the train happens to people no one knows or is concerned about. It soon becomes: Just an incident in the morning Dube train.



## 3. Themes

The main themes of this story are:

- Violence, crime and barbarism in the townships; and



# Short Story The Dube Train

**Ursula A. Barnett**



## Short Story The Dube Train:

*South Africa's Alternative Press* Les Switzer, 1997-02-13 Collection of essays on the South African alternative press from the 1880s to the 1960s

**The South African Short Story in English, 1920-2010** Marta Fossati, 2024-09-05 Through detailed close readings alongside investigations into the history of print culture Marta Fossati traces the development of the South African short story in English from the late 1920s to the first decade of the twenty first century She examines a selection of short stories by important Black South African writers Rolfes and Herbert Dhlomo Peter Abrahams Can Themba Alex La Guma Mtutuzeli Matshoba Ahmed Essop and Zo Wicomb with an alertness to the dialogue between ethics and aesthetics performed by these texts This new history of Black short fiction problematises and interrogates the often polarised readings of Black literature in South Africa that can be torn between notions of literariness protest and journalism Due to material constraints short fiction in South Africa circulated first and foremost through local print media which Fossati analyses in detail to show the cross fertilisation between journalism and the short story While rooted in the South African context the short stories considered also hold a translocal dimension allowing us to explore the ethical and aesthetic practice of intertextuality These are writings that complicate the aesthetics ethics binary generic classifications and the categories of the literary and the political Theoretically eclectic in its approach although largely underpinned by a narratological analysis *The South African Short Story in English 1920 2010 When Aesthetics Meets Ethics* offers a fresh perspective on the South African short story in English spotlighting several hitherto marginalised figures in South African literary studies

**The Short Story in South Africa** Rebecca Fasselt, Corinne Sandwith, 2022-03-24 This book considers the key critical interventions on short story writing in South Africa written in English since the year 2000 The short story genre whilst often marginalised in national literary canons has been central to the trajectory of literary history in South Africa In recent years the short story has undergone a significant renaissance with new collections and young writers making a significant impact on the contemporary literary scene and subgenres such as speculative fiction erotic fiction flash fiction and queer fiction expanding rapidly in popularity This book examines the role of the short story genre in reflecting or championing new developments in South African writing and the ways in which traditional boundaries and definitions of the short story in South Africa have been reimaged in the present Drawing together a range of critical interventions including scholarly articles interviews and personal reflective pieces the volume traces some of the aesthetic and thematic continuities and discontinuities in the genre and sheds new light on questions of literary form Finally the book considers the place of the short story in twenty first century writing and interrogates the ways in which the short story form may contribute to or recast ideas of the post apartheid or post transitional The perfect guide to contemporary short story writing in South Africa this book will be essential reading for researchers of African literature

**Can Themba** Siphiwo Mahala, 2022-03-30 Mahala's biography gives insight into the life and writing of Can Themba 1924 1967 an iconic figure of the South African literary world and Drum

journalist who died in exile Can Themba *The Intellectual Tsotsi* a Biography brings to life the iconic South African writer and journalist Can Themba 21 June 1924 8 September 1967 who died while exiled in Swaziland in 1967 Best known for his classic short story *The Suit* Themba has been somewhat of an enigma with very little known about his personal life This biography brings forth the voices of those who had personal interactions with him shining the light on different aspects of his life including education literature journalism and political fraternities It features interviews with prominent individuals including his former students Abdul Bham Pitika Ntuli and Mbulelo Mzamane journalistic mentees Juby Mayet and Joe Thloloe as well as friends colleagues and contemporaries Parks Mangena Peter Magubane Jurgen Schadeberg Don Mattera and Nadine Gordimer in addition to artists and academics Mothobi Mutloatse Muxe Nkondo and Njabulo S Ndebele Also featured in this biographical text are veteran political figures such as Mangosuthu Buthelezi Lindiwe Mabuza and Ahmed Kathrada Themba's intellectual acumen scholarly aptitude and witticism are some of his most revered characteristics amongst those who had interactions with him either in person or through comprehensive reading of his works Mahala is a master storyteller and deftly weaves together the threads of Themba's dynamic life In this edifying biography Mahala recreates the sparkle and pathos of Sophiatown of the 1950s and the Drum era Can Themba's successes and failures as well as his triumphs and tribulations reverberate on the pages of this long awaited biography **Fact - Fiction - "faction"** Horst Zander, 1999

**The Journal of Commonwealth Literature**, 1988 *Still Beating the Drum* Lindy Stiebel, Elizabeth Gunner, 2005 Lewis Nkosi is one of South Africa's foremost writers and critics and one of the few survivors of the exile generation dating from the Drum era Up until now however no full length study has been done on his work This is a gap in South African literary history and criticism that this book is intended to fill Besides his well known earlier works Nkosi is still very much an active writer as the publication in 2002 of his novel *Underground People* shows with his latest novel due out in 2005 The timing of *Still Beating the Drum* a book which intends to highlight and evaluate his extensive and varied oeuvre is thus appropriate Given Lewis Nkosi's life trajectory this volume will appeal to readers interested in South African and African literature both in South Africa and abroad *Black South African Short Fiction in English Since 1976* Martin Trump, 1986

**Claiming the City in South African Literature** Meg Samuelson, 2021-08-23 This book demonstrates the insights that literature brings to transdisciplinary urban studies and particularly to the study of cities of the South Starting from the claim staked by mining capital in the late nineteenth century and its production of extractive and segregated cities it surveys over a century of writing in search of counterclaims through which the literature reimagines the city as a place of assembly and attachment Focusing on how the South African city has been designed to funnel gold into the global economy and to service an enclaved minority the study looks to the literary city to advance a contrary emphasis on community conviviality and care An accessible and informative introduction to literature of the South African city at significant historical junctures this book will also be of great interest to scholars and students in urban studies and Global South studies *Ourselves in Southern*

*Africa* ,1988      *Alternation* ,1995      Literature in English Albert-Reiner Glaap,1987      **Apartheid and Beyond** Rita Barnard,2012-08-01 Apartheid and Beyond offers trenchant historically sensitive readings of writings by Coetzee Gordimer Fugard Tlali Dike Magona and Mda focusing on the intimate relationship between place subjectivity and literary form It also explores the way apartheid functioned in its day to day operations as a geographical system of control exerting its power through such spatial mechanisms as residential segregation bantustans passes and prisons Throughout the study Rita Barnard provides historical context by highlighting key events such as colonial occupation the creation of black townships migration forced removals the emergence of informal settlements and the gradual integration of white cities Apartheid and Beyond is both an innovative account of an important body of politically inflected literature and an imaginative reflection on the socio spatial aspects of the transition from apartheid to democracy      **A Vision of Order** Ursula A. Barnett,1983  
*Dictionary Catalog of the Schomburg Collection of Negro Literature & History* Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture,1962      World Writers in English Jay Parini,2004 Provides critical and biographical essays on English writers from parts of the former British Empire      *Race and Literature* ,1987      *Reflecting Apartheid* ,1990      **Research in African Literatures** ,1988      *Marimba* Nicol Faasen,1996

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