Themba, C. 1963. The Suit. (*In* Hendry, J. O. *ed.* 1991. Wordsmiths: an approach to short story study. Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman. pp. 61-67.)

# THE SUIT

FIVE-THIRTY IN the morning, and the candlewick bedspread frowned as the man under it stirred. He did not like to wake his wife lying by his side – as yet – so he crawled up and out by careful peristalsis. But before he tiptoed out of his room with shoes and socks under his arm, he leaned over and peered at the sleeping serenity of his wife: to him a daily matutinal miracle.

He grinned and yawned simultaneously, offering his wordless Te Deum to whatever gods for the goodness of life; for the pure beauty of his wife; for the strength surging through his willing body; for the even, unperturbed rhythms of his passage through days and months and years – it must be – to heaven.

Then he slipped soundlessly into the kitchen. He flipped aside the curtain of the kitchen window, and saw outside a thin drizzle, the type that can soak one to the skin, and that could go on for days and days. He wondered, head aslant, why the rain in Sophiatown always came in the morning when workers had to creep out of their burrows; and then at how blistering heatwayes came during the day when messengers had to run errands all over; and then at how the rain came back when workers knocked off and had to scurry home.

He smiled at the odd caprice of the heavens, and tossed his head at the naughty incongruity, as if, "Ai, but the gods!"

From behind the kitchen door, he removed an old rain cape, peeling off in places, and swung it over his head. He dashed for the lavatory, nearly slipping in a pool of muddy water, but he reached the door. Aw, blast, someone had made it before him. Well, that is the toll of staying in a yard where twenty . . . thirty other people have to share the same lean-to. He was dancing and burning in that climactic moment when trouser-fly will not come wide soon enough. He stepped round the lavatory and watched the streamlets of rainwater quickly wash away the jet of tension that spouted from him. That infinite after-relief. Then he dashed back to his kitchen. He grabbed the old baby-bathtub hanging on a nail under the slight shelter of the gutterless roof-edge. He opened a large wooden box and quickly filled the bathtub with coal. Then he inched his way back to the kitchen door and inside.

He was huh-huh-huhing one of those fugitive tunes that cannot be hidden, but often just occur and linger naggingly in the head. The fire he was making soon licked up cheerfully, in mood with his contentment.

He had a trick for these morning chores. While the fire in the old stove warmed up, the water kettle humming on it, he gathered and laid ready the things he would need

# **The Duube Train By Can Temba Summary**

**Horst Zander** 

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Alternation ,1995 <u>Unisa English Studies</u> University of South Africa. Department of English,1970 **English and South Africa** Alan Lennox-Short,1972 **A Vision of Order** Ursula A. Barnett,1983 **World Writers in English** Jay Parini,2004 Provides critical and biographical essays on English writers from parts of the former British Empire **SA Literature** ,1982 <u>Rendering Things Visible</u> Martin Trump,1991 Much recent critical practice sharpened by an engagement with theory has questioned conventional notions about literature The essays in this book reveal the complex and arguably inevitable politicization of South African literary culture <u>The Motion Picture Guide</u> Jay Robert Nash, Stanley Ralph Ross, 1996 **Parade** ,2000

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