LESSON NO. 3
I AM THE TREE

NOTES:

ABOUT THE POET:

Dennis Brutus (28 November, 1924- 27 December, 2009) was a world renowned South African poet, scholar and activist. He was one of the leading opponents of apartheid, the official policy of strict racial segregation and discrimination. His first collection of poetry "Sirens, Knuckles and Boots" (1963) was published in Nigeria while he was in prison. His other notable works were "Salutes and Censures", China Poems etc.

SUMMARY OF THE POEM "I AM THE TREE":

The poem "I am the Tree" is a beautiful heart-rending poem by Dennis Brutus. It is autobiographical in nature and echoes his sorrowful feelings and protests against the colour discrimination known as apartheid in South Africa.

The poem reflects the agony of a coloured man who craves for acceptance in the society that prevails in the country. He compares his difficult situation to a tree which is left out in the dark night and creaking painfully in the cold. In the second stanza he compares himself to a sheet of a twisted tin shack which has been so mercilessly twisted by the chilly wind making harsh unpleasant sound. He expresses grief and is in a mournful protest.

The poet in the end compares himself to a voice crying in the night. He concludes that his cry will continue forever as he will never attain justice. He will forever remain inconsolable.

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Word meanings:

Shrill	:	*High pitched sound*
Twisted	:	*Turned or wound around*
Protest	:	*Expressing disapproval of something*
Creaking	:	*Making a harsh unpleasant sound*
Stubborn	:	*Determined and having a strong will*
Grating	:	*Making harsh unpleasant sound*
Consoled	:	*Comforted and reduced the grief*

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