

Maya Angelou pens Mandela tribute, 'His Day is Done'

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(GIN) – A video tribute to Nelson Mandela by poetess Maya Angelou is being distributed widely over the internet.

Angelou reads the poem with deep feeling on the video, which was recently aired on the news show DemocracyNow! The American novelist, in an interview with CBS New York, described meeting Mandela in the 1960s. Mandela and Angelou's husband were members of rival liberation movements when Mandela came to Egypt, where Angelou was living.

"I had been so used to these rivals arguing and shouting in the living room and shouting in the street against each other," Angelou recalled. "But when Mr. Mandela came, he never had a cross word to say to anyone. I was amazed. He had a compliment to give to everybody, including my housekeeper and the doorman. A gentle giant he was."

"He was a magician," said Desmond Tutu, former Archbishop, "turning South Africa, a poisonous caterpillar, into a beautiful butterfly."

"He came out of prison to set us free from hatred and racism," Tutu continued. "The world expected a bloodbath and atrocities, what we now have, instead, is this wonderful multicultural rainbow."

"Mr Mandela himself must not be adored on a pedestal," the cleric stressed. "One of the wonderful things about him is that he is so human. He is aware of that, in a way, there are feet of clay."

The Archbishop headed the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to investigate crimes committed at the time of apartheid, at the request of Mandela.

Meanwhile, Father Sebastian J. Rossouw of the Regina Mundi Church - the epicenter of the Soweto township uprising in 1976 against white rule - described Mandela as "moonlight," saying he offered a guiding light for South Africa. Hundreds of people attended the Mass.

"Madiba did not doubt the light," Rossouw said. "He paved the way for a better future, but he cannot do it alone."

A link to the video: <http://dailyoftheday.com/maya-angelous-touching-tribute-poem-nelson-mandela/>