

UMaqopholwana, The red armoured fire engine



'Maqopholwana' is our red, armoured fire engine.
He roams the streets in the City of Tshwane
He reminds me of a red-and-black bull that I used to like.
He was a strong bull but a cheeky one - that oke.

Maqopholwana was not from our kraal.
He had many scars on his skin; his horns were like a hook.
We had our own big black bull, very tall.
Granddad used to call him "Hlehlani"
Meaning "Retreat or Stand back"

He walked tall but did not attack anyone.
Hlehlani never liked Maqopholwana, not even a bit.
These two bulls used to fight until sunset.
The red and black bull was the younger.
The sound of their horns was like thunder.

"Maqopholwana" the red armoured fire engine,
Like the red-and-black bull from my hometown,
Has great strength, is powerful and has speed.
No one knows exactly what goes on in his head.
He is called only when there is a need,
As he is the only one of his breed,
He is surely special, one of a kind.
What goes on exactly in his mind?

"Maqopholwana" the red armoured fire engine
Never likes disruptive fires in the City.
He uses his skill, his prowess and his agility
With his bevel bar he sweeps the city clean.
Engine 764 is his official given callout name.

Goes around driving on any ground, any terrain
He has endurance like a diesel train
Nobody knows what really goes on in his brain.
Anywhere else in the world,
I am certain about it and
Thus, I give you my word
A similar one, you will never find.

By **Lindsay Z Mnguni, Poem#27**