

*Lebohang Masango*

*25 July 2022*

*Sanlam Cape Town Marathon*

*Poem: African Champions Unite*

**African Champions Unite**

**by Lebohang Masango**

The Atlantic sea breeze whispers a salty greeting

As the morning mist drifts before us

Parting a path that reveals

only a little of what the day holds

Behold, this moment you have wished and waited for;

Timed yourself and trained tirelessly for

Alongside your fellow runners

You warm up and take your place

To put your best foot forward

At the Sanlam Cape Town Marathon

Where victory awaits

At the sound of the starting gun, bodies lunge forward as one

Your racing heart, your determined lungs

The music of the marathon has now begun

The sharp breaths and the steady beat of running feet

Pound a relentless rhythm into the hard concrete

Hear the wind whistle against your body as it tries to keep pace

Feel your legs and feet power through pain

Let that ache be a reminder:

that there is nothing on earth that your mind can't conquer

'If you want to go fast, go alone

If you want to go far, go together'

These ancient words of wisdom, we remember

And you are not alone

From our homes; our radios, our TVs, our phones

We marvel at all your strength

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We spectate on the side-lines  
As you carry our hopes across distances and lengths  
And though each one runs as an individual  
Today isn't only about how we compete  
Runners and supporters  
Officials and spectators  
We all collaborate to achieve  
The Abbot World Marathon Majors dream  
We run towards the goal  
To make Africa's future brighter  
With every milestone we reach  
Behold, this moment you have wished and waited for;  
Timed yourself and trained tirelessly for  
Who we are is who we have always been:  
A proud people who live with confidence,  
Knowing we are worthy of this dream  
Worthy of winning together  
Beneath these open skies  
We race to meet our best selves at the finish line  
Here in Cape Town where African Champions Unite