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Writing Makes Writers Immortal.

These are the words of a tolki

mind.

Wakini Kuria
Chief editor, WSA,
Kenya



The resonating bell from the church jerks her from sleep. Twelve! It's New Year, she whispers. She grabs her torchlight and scurry downstairs, praying to be the first arrival at the rendezvous.

Her torchlight spots John resting on the Christmas tree in the field, fireworks in hand.

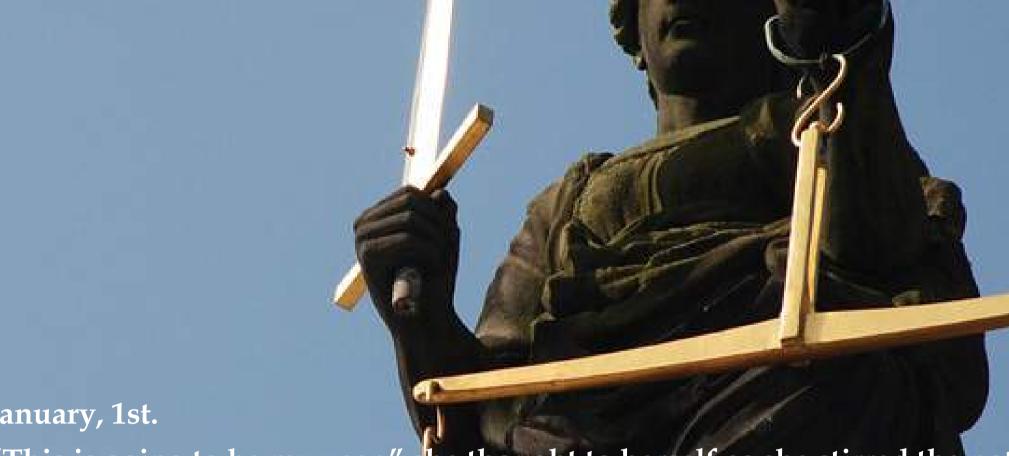
Gosh! He's first. She breathes. Closer, she gives him a slight push and he falls; facedown, the bangers scattering. C'mon, how many shots did you take at the party? She yells.

She tries to drag him up and feels his body cold, a note lying beside him.

Happy New Year Alice! You're next.

Soledad, Nigeria

BLOODY NEW YEAR



January, 1st.

"This is going to be my year," she thought to herself as she stirred the pot of stew. She had stayed up so many sleepless nights plotting. Her parents being around didn't make it any easier. Finally, they were out of town for the New Year celebrations, and she knew he would definitely go out to party, then they'd stab him just as planned.

Indeed it became her year: her year of court dates, standing before a jury and the year that she was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment for the murder of her brother. Stupid sibling rivalry!

Nyambura Gitonga, Kenya

LOST TRUST

120 Kilometres per hour yet I felt like I wasn't fast enough. I stepped on the accelerator even more the speedometer gauge went up. My throat was so heavy; my heart ached as tears rolled down my face in disappointment. And I just wanted to get away.

"How could she sleep with my husband? I trusted her. She is my sister!" I busted in tears.

Fast I drove away not that I was running away but I wanted my heart to heal and start afresh as I focused on the future, the just started New Year.

Wanangwa Mwale,

Zambia

THE BURIAL IS CANCELLED



...while waiting for her only son to arrive, just at the eve of New Year, Mercy laid lifeless on the roadside amidst wailers.

In spite the hot chase by irate mob, the driver however escaped but not with the company's van.

The Pro; Hilltop Plc arrived, but then it was too late; hence the victim is allegedly dead.

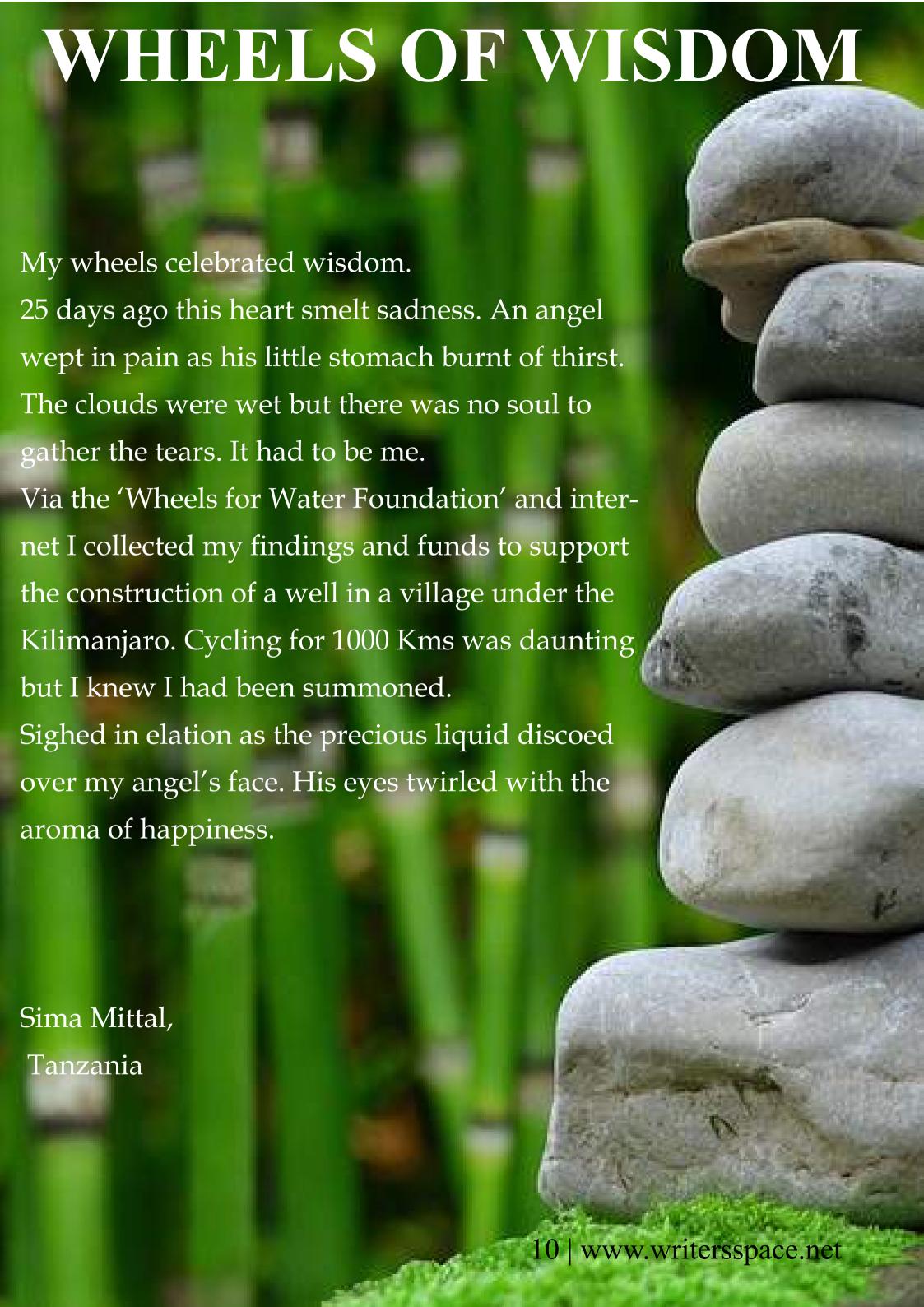
The family has filed a suit against the Company.

At the graveside, while Rev. Frank led mourners in this solemn Hymn:

"Must I go~ and empty handed? Thus my dear Redeemer meet? Not one day of service give Him, lay no trophy at His feet..."

"God's mercy" spoke for Mercy, she sneezed twice, the atmosphere turned into jubilation, overwhelmed with awe of god's wonders, she was rushed to St. Paul's hospital Owerri; sympathizers were stupefied but waited to see what becomes the fate of this poor widow and the reckless driver.

ADM. Uche Henry ~ACIA, Nigeria





LITERARY NEWS with Gabbie

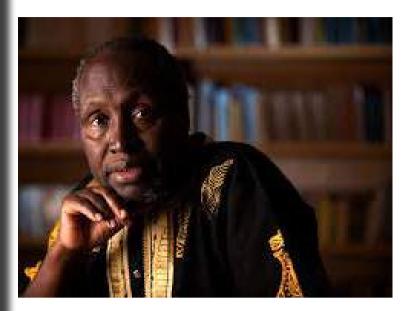
CHIMAMANDA ADICHIE TO BE HONOURED

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Nigeria writer, has been announced as one of the recipients of 2018 Barnes and Nobles Writers for Writers Awards. This honour is owing to her work with the Farafina Trust Creative Writing Workshop in Nigeria. She will receive the award alongside other writers such as Steve Cannon and Richard Russo. The chairman of poets and writers, Susan Isaacs, said that the honourees are models of the qualities: service, integrity, inclusivity, and excellence. In her words, "The board is delighted to be honouring them."

The Barnes & Noble Writers for Writers Award celebrates authors who have given generously to other writers or to the broader literary community. The award, which is presented each year at Poets & Writers' annual dinner, is named for Barnes & Noble in appreciation of its long-standing support.



KENYAN WRITER, NGUGI WA THIONG'O, MISSES OUT ON ANOTHER NOBEL PRIZE



79 year old Ngugi wa
Thiong'o, who had been
tipped to win the Nobel Prize
for Literature since 2010,
once again missed it. He was
shortlisted among 350 nominations made by literary experts and former Nobel Lau-

reates from around the world. If he had won the 2017 Nobel Prize in Literature, he would have been the second African laureate since 1986 when Nigerian writer Professor Wole Soyinka won the prize.

The 2017 Nobel Prize in Literature laureate gets a citation and an 18-carat gold medal that bears the face of the founder Alfred Nobel at an award ceremony on December 10. The prize includes SEK 9,000,000 (\$1,110,000) which will be paid next year.

The Kenyan writer is a distinguished Professor of English and Comparative Literature, and the Director of the International Center for Writing and Translation. He has several works including novels such as Weep Not Child, The River Between, A Grain of Wheat, among others.

BUSHRA AL-FADIL WINS THE CAINE PRIZE

Sudanese Bushra Al-Fadil emerged winner for the 2017 Caine Prize for African Writing. The winning entry, a short story titled "The Story of the Girl Whose Birds Flew Away" was Translated by Max Shmookler, with support from Najlaa Osman Eltom.

The Caine Prize for African Writing is a literature prize awarded to an African writer of a short story published in English. The prize was launched in 2000 to encourage and highlight the richness and diversity of African writing by bringing it to a wider audience internationally. The focus on the short story reflects the contemporary development of the African story-telling tradition.

Gabrielina Gabriel is a writer and editor. She writes novels, poetry, scripts for television and essays. She is also trained in News writing and reporting from The Nigerian Institute of Journalism, and the editor of the book "Why Only A Few succeed".



Primacy of Love

Little did I ever thought of love.

Little did I sense you in my wildest dreams.

Nor did our path cross in a close range.

Did I smell the delicious rays emitting from your dark skin With.

Two tribal marks stationed on each cheek.

Handsome.

Not by face but the strangeness of your heart.

The coral flames blazing love

in the hidden cabin of your chest,

For feeling the sensation without reasons,

They called you crazy.

They questioned your sight and choices in love.

I bet you, they got you almost believing, Them.

But you made it easier than my thoughts suggested.

Making the pool of love cold

for the two of us in a new dawn

of a new beginning.

Neimatu Abdul Samadu, Ghana

To Keep the Lamp Lit

To keep the lamp glowing, brightly lit
You have to keep putting oil in it
To keep the candle lighting
Your hands need make for its hiding
The lamp keeps not burning
When you lag in fueling;
So it lags in lighting
So it lags in heating!

Keep the lamp burning, warming
Keep the candle lighting, defrosting
Winds and storms roll over
Currents and torrents all over
But, for your life you need be a rover
Struggling to succeed till all is over
If Rome was built, it wasn't in a day
And its blocks stood not by just a say
Forget not: To keep the lamp lit
You have to keep putting oil in it!
Its never too late for new beginnings.

Poem idea from a saying of Mother Theresa: "To keep a lamp burning we have to keep putting oil in it."

by Pastory, Tanzania

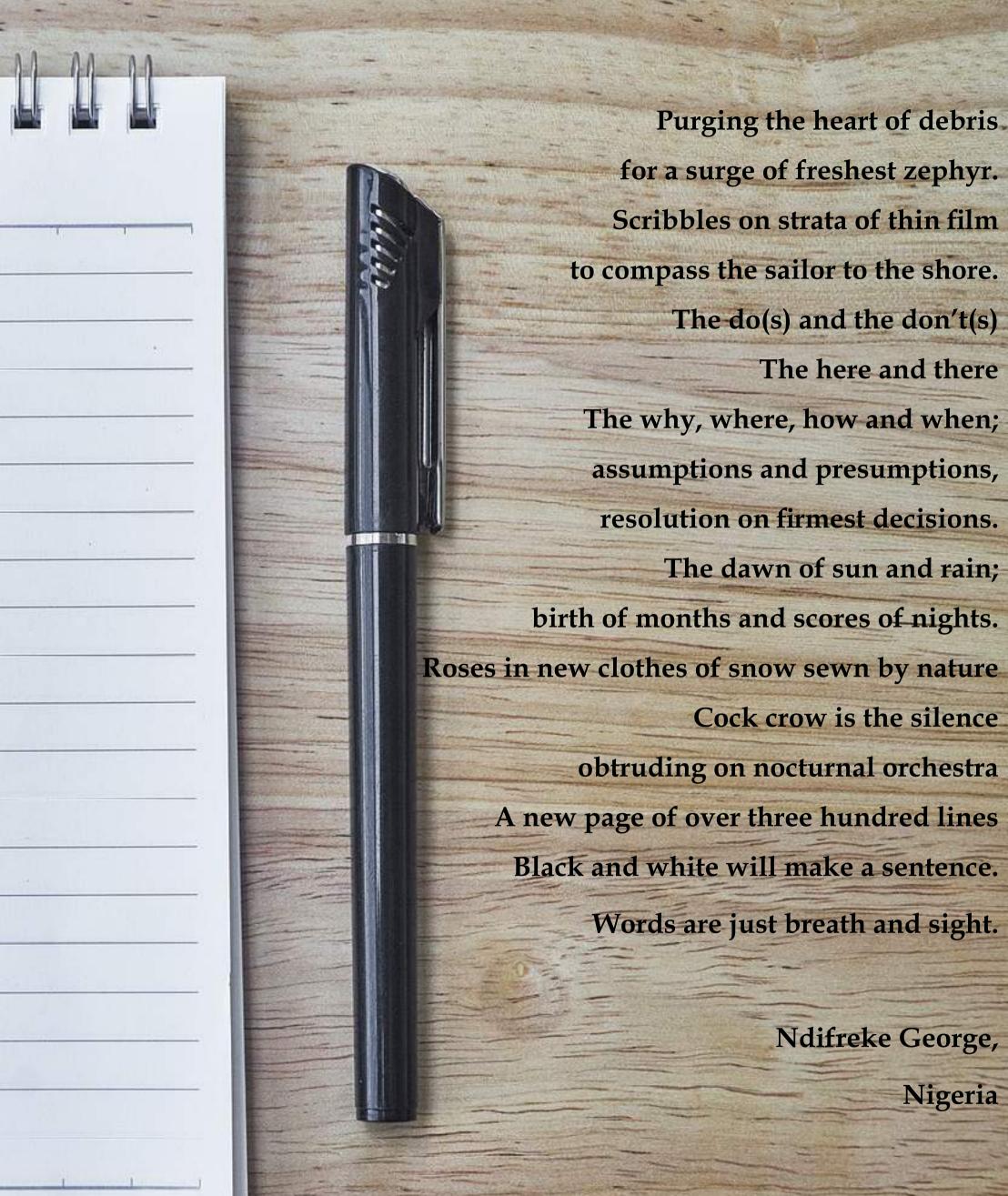


The Countdown

Ten, nine, eight, He's seeking sanctuary in the midst of sin, Seated at the bar's highest seat, His palms engulf his empty glass, As bodies move over every beat, His thoughts draw him closer to his fears, Seven, six, five, His curved image stares right back of his glass, Drives him down to his dark past, To those that define pain as his life, To those lost loves by death's hand, And those still chained in fear of what might come, Four, three, two, He still taking his shots in twos, Scorching his pain at the liver's expense, In the midst of sinners in sin, One, Cheers to hope for a little less of life's tragedy in this new year.

Pinkett Muiruri, Kenya

A New Page



for a surge of freshest zephyr. Scribbles on strata of thin film to compass the sailor to the shore. The do(s) and the don't(s) The here and there The why, where, how and when; assumptions and presumptions,

The dawn of sun and rain; birth of months and scores of nights. Roses in new clothes of snow sewn by nature Cock crow is the silence obtruding on nocturnal orchestra A new page of over three hundred lines Black and white will make a sentence.

> Ndifreke George, Nigeria

Recommendations for a Better Health through Food



cannot undermine the impact of good food.

Over the years, nutritional security has de- dustrial fast foods. clined. The balance between healthy meals and just a meal has been lost. Teeth are being Living a healthy fruit and vegetable based clenched through the pain of diabetes and other lifestyle is both expensive and affordable. In diseases because of less concern and attention the world where chemicals in forms of fertiliztowards healthy eating. Sugars and fats are all ers and pesticides have become a necessity for around in vast unneeded forms and lives have plant growth due to soil depletion and loss of been lost to this unhealthy lifestyle.

Throwing it back to a historic book called the fruit and vegetables can be expensive. Bible, in certain chapters, we were made to re-



for 40years. I mean 40 years! Of course they anyone to fancy fruits and vegetables? did not walk all 40 years at a go; they made life, rested, made homes and above all, ate healthy However, vegetables too can be turned into to have enough strength for the journey. For us art. Today, chefs understand the importance food plan, better nutrition and better health one bowl of yumminess. This implies that in for you in three points;

Take Fruits and Vegetables

Another year is here and it's a good time to get I urge you to take fruits and vegetables. Fruits recommendations for a better health through and vegetables have recorded high health supfood. The year commenced beautifully with port reports that qualify them to be part of festivity. Everyone is wining and dining to another human year. The arrays of vitamins, the joy of being part of another year. How- minerals and phytonutrients present in them ever, some people are doing otherwise; some have been proven to provide the body with people didn't make it to 2018. Destiny some an improved immune system and reduces the would call it. But, a nutrition freak would find risk for non-communicable diseases. Fruits a fault in their diet and wonder maybe if their and vegetables possess anti - aging properties, health was built on a better diet, they would contain low calories and cholesterols that can have made it. In this millennial generation, we be harmful to health when consumed in extra ordinary amount like we find in junks and in-

its vitality, getting varieties of healthy organic

alize that some men walked to a Canaan land But, for individuals who know their ways around farming or would not mind consuming limited varieties of organic vegetables and fruits, getting them in healthy form is affordable. Whichever category you belong, try to get vegetables and fruits included in your diet.

Have Fun Eating

Excuse me! Who said eating healthy has to boring? This happens to be one sadistic myth that flies across countries whenever the average human beings hear 'Veg'. An African hears of a vegetarian and they are thinking of how boring their food life can be. People do not find vegetables as interesting as meat or cereal. The brownness of meat, the numerous kitchen arts that can be carried out of animal products; grilling, frying, roasting, slow cooking, etc. are quite fascinating! Why then would one expect

to walk our life years' journey, we need to be of having radiant colors in food plating. The cautious of our body and take conscious deci- most attractively plated foods have more than sion to feed it with good food. We are what we one color. You can have strawberries, rasp bereat! So, this year, I am recommending a better ries, banana, pineapple, milk and some nuts in that one bowl I have colors red, black, yellow, cream and the nuts; brown. So, if you want colors, fruits and vegetables can also give you col-

ors. A bit of garnishing with green colors of ipes and a pot of yummy goodness. vegetables would take the taste and look of a Ingredients food to another realm. You can have fruit and • vegetable tarts, fruits and or vegetable salads • and, you can take your cereals, meat and vegetables in a meal! You do not have to stick to • boring recipes because you want to eat healthy.

Cook, get a Cook or Choose Restaurants • Wisely

Experimenting and trying out food varieties is • fun and healthy when it is done at home. This is simply because of transparency. When a meal • is prepared at home, you know what goes into it and you have this peace of mind about your Directions nutrition. Of course, we've had food poison- • ing happen at home but whatever the record of oil and the spaghetti and cook till spaghetti tiples of that for 'not- home' food poisoning. red pepper), chop spring onions and set aside. Get your kitchen stocked up and cook or get • Drain the spaghetti to remove water and of the lack of effort and palatability of the ing parboiled canned peas. food. However, I read on medium in early De- • Heat saucepan on medium heat and melt pired movement is one towards better health. so as to get some beef lumps and not crumbs. I currently offer a mini food service where I • Toss the spaghetti into the beef sauce and cook at home and do deliveries and really do stir well. Cover to steam together for 3minute hope to set up a restaurant soon but not too on very low heat and serve. soon. Not too soon to not be able to afford my customers healthy meals.

Cooking and eating at home is healthy and fun and you should make a move towards that this year, if you really care about your health. Alternatively, be wise with your choice of restaurants.

Believing that you're going to have fun while eating more fruits and vegetables this year as well as cooking or making wise restaurants choices, here is a fun recipe you should try;

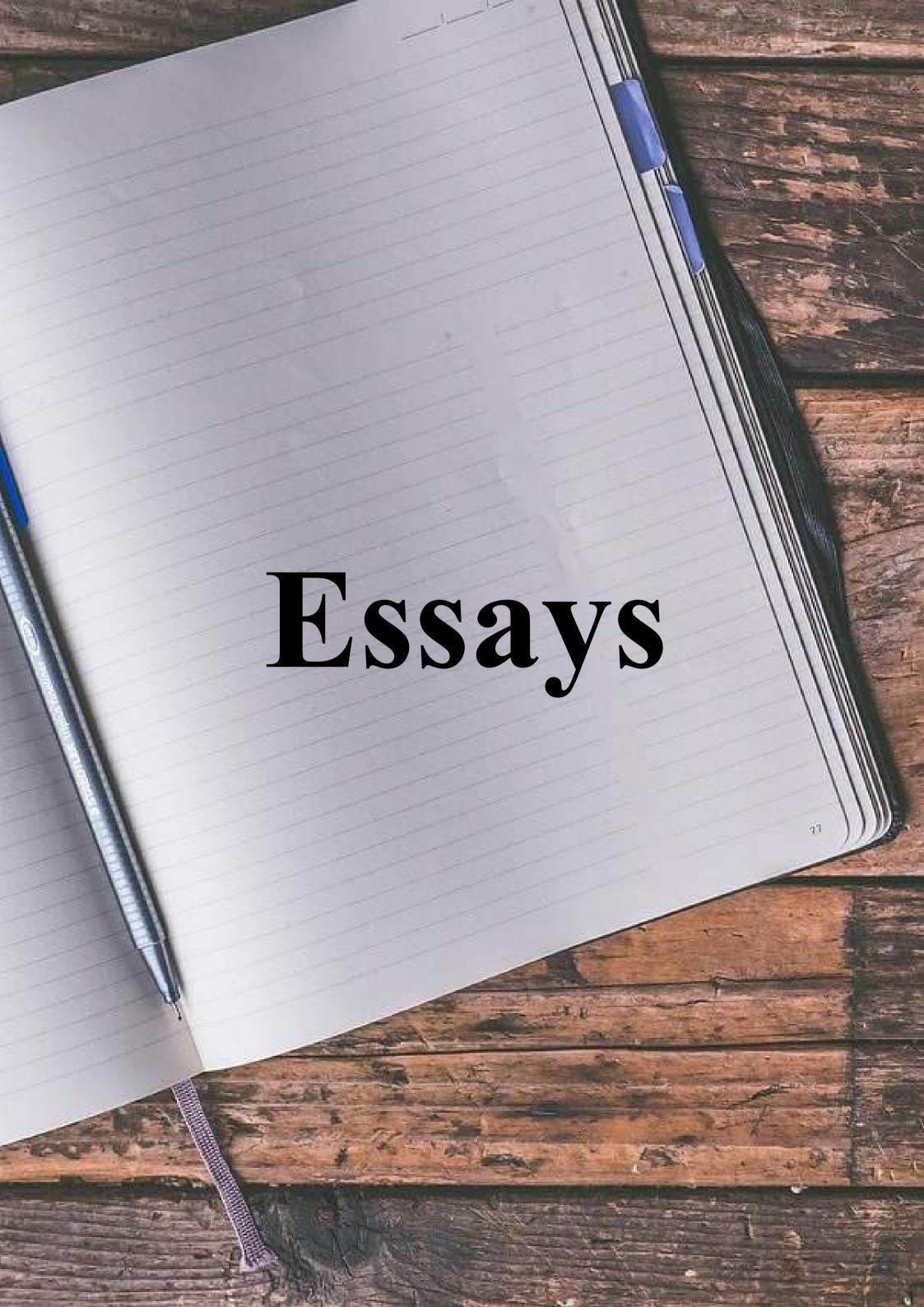
Beef Spaghetti Vegetable 1. As the name implies, this recipe contains spaghetti, vegetables and beef. It is one of my rec-

- 500 g Spaghetti 1 spaghetti pack
- 200g Ground beef or corn beef
- 3 medium sized Carrots
- 3 10 inches long Spring onions
- 1 small bulb Onion
- 3 Large Habaneros or 1 large Red pepper
- 1 fistful Green peas
- 4 Table spoon Margarine
- 2 seasoning cubes
- 1/2 Table spoon salt
- 1 Table spoon curry

- Bring salt water to boil, add a table spoon of home food poisoning reads, we have mul- al dente. Dice carrots, onions, habaneros (or
- a cook. I have been to eateries and restaurants starch. Set aside. Boil little water and steam and my overall remark about eating out is not carrots for 3minutes to soften it. Drain and set a good one. A good number of times, I've sat in aside. Parboil green peas in salted water for restaurants and ate out of frustration because about 10minutes. Skip this step if you are us-
- cember about how restaurants and food com- margarine. Pour the onions and the habaneros panies will move toward total transparency in and fry for 2 minutes. Add the ground beef, sea-2018 and that is a great idea. It will be so nice son and add the steamed carrots, springs and to see what kind of water the food we eat gets parboiled peas. Fry for 2minutes. You need to cooked with, how neat the cook preparing the stir constantly while frying to allow heat penfood and his or her environment is. This as- etrates the beef well. However, stir carefully to



Damilo-**Tominsin** Aladesuru an agriculturist and food blogger foodiedame. com.ng "I love food. I advocate increased vegetable intake."





It's the dawn of a new year which symbolises a new beginning. Another 365 days with opportunity to start afresh and explore a new adventure, to embrace new perspectives and ideas, take up new challenge, etc. It is also a time to build new relationships with people, learn new skills, start new projects, as well as improve on previous ones.

With much festivities and celebration in the air, most people often neglect the needful plans and preparations for the new year. Many make a lot of resolutions in a time like this and end up forgetting and forsaking them during the course of the year.

A few others start out very optimistic with a positive attitude and willingness to improve on their lives. However, they fail at this because they refuse to back up their good intentions with the right actions to produce the required or desired results. They thus end up resigning to fate and going back to the status quo.

Yet another set of people begin the year with the right attitude, optimism and corresponding action but fail in the pursuit of their dreams due to lack of knowledge, right information, keeping wrong company, etc.

Do you find yourself in any of the categories listed above? Have you made several resolutions every year only to end up with little or no progress? Would you like to make a difference in 2018 and give testimonies of improvements and achievements of goals by the end of the year? If yes, then sit back and relax as I share a few tips on how to maximize the new year for effectiveness and more productivity.

Reflection

There is need to cast one's glance at the past and reflect on the previous year, 2017. Reflection on the past is very important as it helps you evaluate your progress so far, note mistakes and lessons learnt from them and know what works and what doesn't. This implies taking a mental note of important happenings, decisions, choices, actions and their consequences in the past. This would help to analyze one's present situation and what to expect or prepare for in the future (new year in this case). You may also need to jot down your thoughts for future reference.

One major advantage of reflection is that it helps reduce or prevent the repetition of past mistakes. It is often said that it is only a fool that does the same thing over and over again and expects a different result. Reflection however excludes brooding and blaming oneself for disappointments and failures in the past year. There is need to learn from the mistakes and let go of the hurts and pain that the memories may carry with them. Remember failure is not falling down, but staying down. What better time to stand up and make progress than the beginning of a new year?

Vision

Vision is defined as the ability or an instance of great perception, especially of future developments. It is simply the ability to see beyond the present into the future, that is, foresight. While reflection is a mental picture of what has happened in the past, vision is a mental picture of what you would love to see in the future. A vision can also be defined as a thought, concept or object formed by the imagination. In the season of new beginning, you need to take time out to visualize and imagine what you would like to achieve in the new year. Remember that many great innovations and inventions today started as thoughts in people's mind. Therefore, don't be myopic in your vision, dream big regardless of your present circumstances. Even the Holy Bible stresses the power of the mind and the importance of vision, it says, "as he thinks in his heart, so he is". This implies that you cannot make remarkable changes or record commendable progress without a change in perspective, perception and visualization.

However, as much as it is necessary to "dream big", there is also need to make your dreams as realistic and attainable as possible. You don't want to dream ridiculously high and end up achieving nothing eventually!

Planning

After having a clear vision and proper understanding of what you would like to achieve,

the next important step is to make plans towards the fulfilment of your dreams. Failure to plan, is planning to fail. Planning requires that you count the cost, consider sacrifices you'll have to make, map out strategies and gather as much relevant information as you can before embarking on this journey.

For example, if your vision is to start your own business, you cannot just go ahead and open up a store. You need to consider how much you'll need as capital, understand the nature of business you want to venture into, understand how profitable or marketable it is, the kind of prospective clients or customers to expect, learn insurance policies, how to manage crisis that face newly established businesses, etc.

One of the major aspects of planning is to cut down your vision into sizeable chunks that you can achieve a step at a time. These sizeable chunks are known as goals. No one goes to the market, buys a quarter of a cow and cooks it whole! Sounds ridiculous, right? That's exactly how it is to think you can go ahead and achieve your aim without setting goals to achieve per time.

Planning is very essential as it forms the bedrock on which every other decision and action lies. And of course, making plans ahead saves you unnecessary stress when opportunities comes; for you already know what to spend your money and resources on.

Corresponding Action.

Visualization and proper planning are of no use when they are not backed up with corresponding action. It is as futile as the efforts of a farmer who clears a piece of land, plants his seeds and leaves without watering, the seeds will most likely not germinate. Important actions defer based on each person's vision. Someone who wants to lose weight may have to exercise more often, another person might need to attend more business conferences and read books on financial management, another might need to acquire new skills for more effectiveness at work, a student might need to take more time to study and cut down his/her leisure time, etc. Whatever is required for the fulfilment of your vision and achievement of your goals is worth giving your time to. Taking action is not always easy, I must confess, yet it is possible with focus, determination and hard work. Discipline is also required to do what is expected of you whether it is convenient or not. You don't wait till it's convenient before you follow your plan, but rather you follow it meticulously and religiously.

When you feel weary, look forward to the end you desire and let it motivate you, close your eyes and dream anew, look within and draw your strength from there. It's a new year and you can decide to make a difference. All it takes is to visualize, make plans, and act. Dream big, go for it. It is absolutely possible. I believe in you!

Fadare Mary Moyinoluwa, Nigeria



5...4...3...2...Happy 2018, January is here. If you are familiar with Kiswahili, you know how the prefix 'n' added to this month defines the mood. This January 2018, I wish everyone would get a fresh start by forgetting time. Yes, I know how hard it is to do so; when the purse is drained, the sun is scorching and each date of the calendar is split into fractions to give a month with 60 days.

To first forget about time, we must not be very stringent with resolutions if we do not have the patience for the journey of achieving them. Resolutions come with deadlines and very few will admit to being motivated once April sets in and you are below par. Do not count days to your birthday, surprise yourself by forgetting it. After all, you will be a year older and it will just remind you how much little time you have left. Let those who care to say so remind you of what a happy birthday it is.

For new beginnings, you must erase all this fuss about time. Imagine a newborn baby growing because its body knows it should and not because the child wills it. If anything, the body's interpretation of time has been proven to be a function of mind control. One could have a sixty year old body with a thirty year old mind which could translate to a sixty year old body. That is precisely the notion I have when I ask you to ignore the resolutions.

A fresh start is by reflection, seeing yourself in the mirror and absorbing that. Approach this January as you would a mirror; no one rushes to fix the reflection. Instead, we use the image to tweak the little mistakes we see. But once you are away from the mirror, you trust that you look good and have faith in your corrections.

A fresh start need not be marked on significant dates like New Year. Everyday is signifi-

or forge ahead in the Gregorian calendar. living. You would live on.

ference.

When we forget about time, I believe we of tasks, that is your time well spent. start living in abundance. Who says you do Just bear in mind that with new dates comes not have a whole week to learn a new lan- the same old you. That is not such a bad thing, guage? Perhaps the same person who insist it is in fact better if you endeavor to improve that you should have time for a week-long on this. The journey of new beginnings can activity by their standards. Time is flexible wear one out but if you just remember to in everyone's hands, malleable to the will of forget time, you might be shocked to find a person. Hence everyone should get stan- yourself at the end. Happy new beginnings dards for their own time.

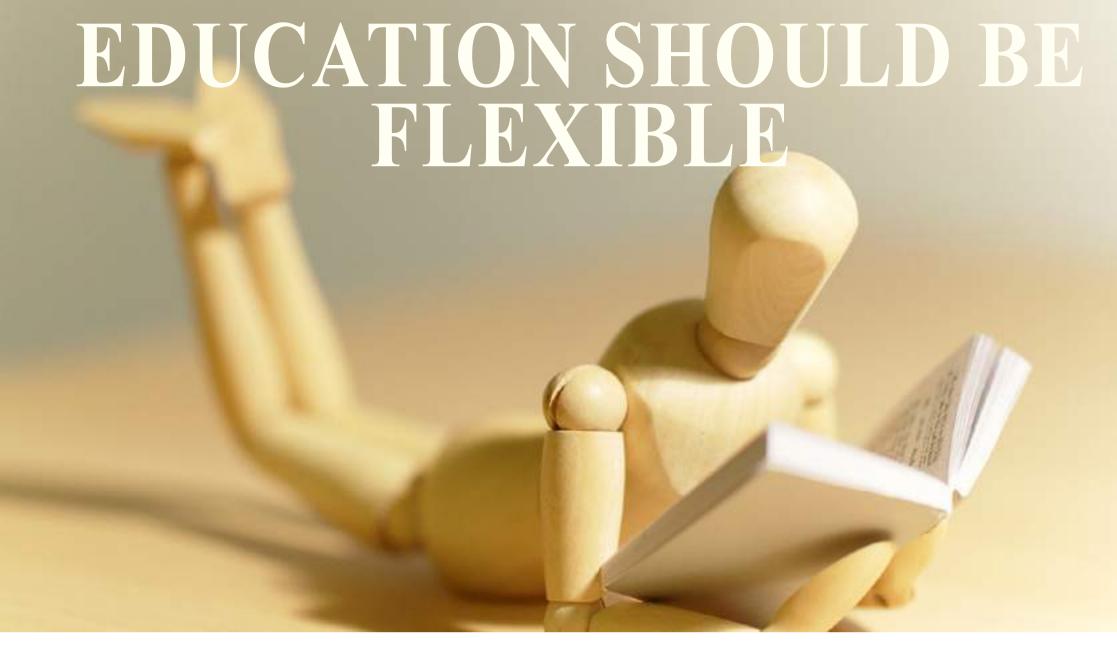
King Solomon says that some experiences in this life are a given. But dwelling too much Edith Adhiambo, on what next time or year will bring kills Kenya the fun of the middle passage between birth and death. It is not easy to stay calm during mourning. Neither is it acceptable to have the blues in a party. But do you know why time heals wounds? Time waits for no man. Time does not obey human definition. Is that not why we have imperfections in our calender? Like leap years or daylight saving?

cant enough to start a change. Imagine the Last year, with all its horrors and sucesses is calendar difference you would experience simply setting stage for this year with all its when you land in Ethiopia and find out that splendour and tears. Time will move on and they are still in 2009. Would it make you feel everyone will line up hopelessly to claim younger or reduce your age? Would you dis- their minutes and nanoseconds, filling that qualify the years ahead that you have lived vacuum of the continuum occupied by the

Forgetting about time is not being late, Time is a continuum, but when it imprisons throwing caution to the wind or betting on you to constantly chase after the wind, it is a chance at the expense of hardwork. It is plannotion. For all we know, we might be 11.86 ning for everyday like a gift, cashing in on years younger by the standards of Jupiter's its value and appreciating it. You had betrevolution. All nuances of time oscillate be- ter enjoy doing one thing for eons than hate tween two concepts: birth and death. You doing a million tasks in a week. If you learn are then, you are not. The continuum be- how to value a new day, can you imagine tween these two concepts makes all the dif- the magnanimity of a whole year's value? This means that if one enjoys handling a lot

and many more to come.





Some of us have got tough times in school, others have not, do not and will not. But until I see Education become what it ought to be, I will not be quite satisfied with our educational system, neither will I let any school teacher take the glory of having made me whom I am or who I will be as regards to career success. I say so because only a few teachers are doing a great job, and that is because they do not have all the power to change the system.

Education is an all-round thing. There is much more to it than what comes into our minds when we hear that word. Have you eaten chicken today? Now, take a sip of orange juice. It's not always sober and frowned faces when it has to do with 'Education'. I need you to follow me through this journey. While I write, please read, consider, relate, register and share your views. It is a beautiful part of education to share opinions, to unlearn and relearn.

We know that lots of people have written books on why students fail, and how to make a distinction in an examination. Students have read these books and they keep failing tests and examinations. But there is something that marvels me about some students who have tough time making good grades in examinations and class tests. I will cite my examples with persons involved in this reality. It is something that I have taken my time to observe and I will not entertain any pride blowing their trumpet.

You know, Sarah is young girl I met at school. She is my junior, who spends lots of her time watching movies, especially Korean movies. Some people attribute her poor grades to her watching movies, but I have seen Sarah read during exams and I don't think so. One need not turn the head upside down before they can read and understand as much as they should for an examination.

But you know what? she thrills me when it comes to being smart. I mean that she's good in tough games and current affairs that I'm far from. Sarah knows the Bible better than an average Christian and better than I do. I think she was exposed to lots of reading and watching that built her brain of information to an admirable level. For me, she knows enough that compensates and advocates for her lack of A1 grade.

A software company director had recruited employees and the best of his workers turned out to be the one with the least of school grade. Being a man of experience and open minded fellow about life, he didn't fear to give her a trial, on seeing her CV and interviewing her.

Oh! Don't start chewing me up yet. I am not saying that you, as a first class student is unappreciated or invaluable. If all the first class students in my class were the only students we had, class would have been boring beyond our imagination because right now, it is quite boring. But I also have backbenchers sit like dummies! but most of the time, it is the low grade students who bring up innovative ideas and click a button of laughter and liveliness once in a while. I Hope you're not planning on alighting from this first class train. The journey has just begun and I see you liking this last part of it.

Everything that I have written up there boils down to saying that Education is not exactly what it ought to be! Here is a fact; we don't have dull students, we have inflexible teachers! All living things digest food; but in different processes. What exactly I want us to know and discuss is that most times, it is not the students being unable to learn, understand and reproduce; it is the teachers being unable to feed, or say, impact.

What we expect today is; students should sit in a class and listen to boring speeches in the name of lectures every day. It is worse in West Africa from my research and observations. Children are expected to be in school from morning till evening. There are no practical, intelligent and recreating extracurricular activities. People are so busy starting up academic institutions, not having innovative ideas of how to impact knowledge. There are so many forms of impacting knowledge, and a person cannot be expected to fit into a particular method. That is a height of ignorance on the part of teachers, as long as education is concerned.

A teacher be flexible.

The younger generation need to be better than we are. They shouldn't be penalized for not being able to pass an exam and forget that they can do better in a system of not having to read a textbook and memorize it, remembering its pages and sub-headings, and reproducing it in a black sheet to be marked and graded. Everyone have different memory capacity. Anyone can understand a thing that she/he is meant to understand if they were taught in the different ways which they tend to understand better. But what happens? A particular way of teaching; a particular expected way of learning.

I hate a system of education which forces students to do something that will not help them through life. I hate this system of education which makes a fish dwell on ground. I hate a system of education which confines her students in a classroom, that when they come out to the world, they are confused. I hate a system of education that confines students within the four walls of boredom. I hate a system of education that ignore values, etiquette of communication, etc., and fail to encourage decency.

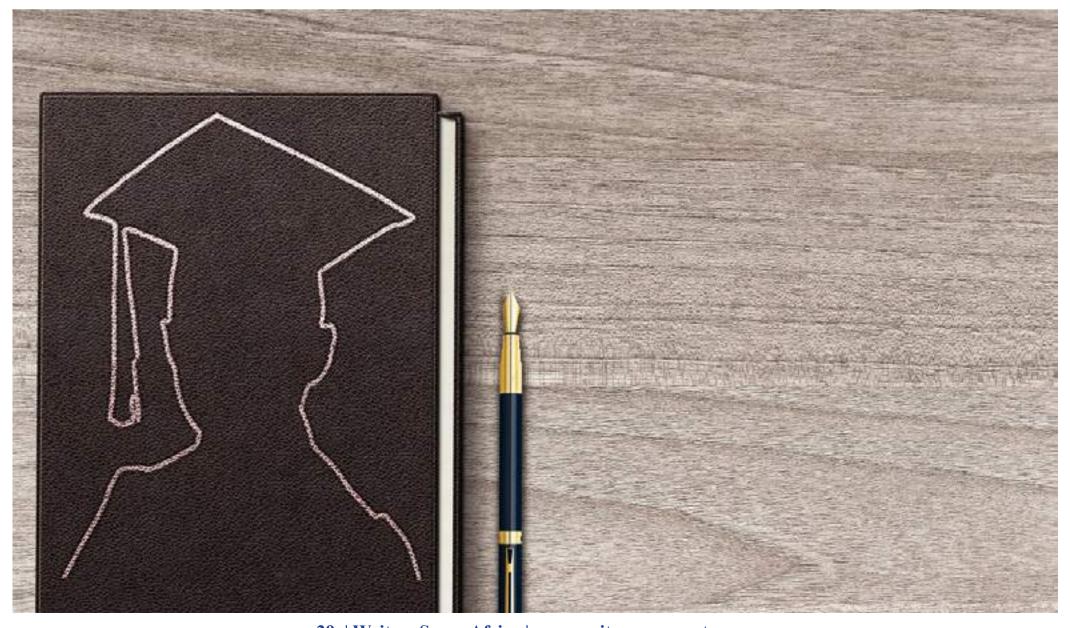
Education is beyond a teacher pointing at the board. Education is beyond imparting. For me, "EDUCATION IS DEVELOPING OR TRAINING THE MIND OF A PERSON TO THINK BIGGER AND BETTER, AND EMPOWERING THEIR HANDS TO ACT BIGGER AND INVENT SOLUTIONS".

No one is perfect, definitely, but then, there is a level of perfection education should bring to us, starting from how we speak to people, to how we relate with them, even to being able to come up with solutions, both personal and societal. I feel like we have a system of education which brings unnecessary excitement; excitement that "Oh, I got an admission", and after all, a graduate cannot make a simple CV to find a job. A graduate cannot critically analyse situations. A graduate cannot speak in a way that attracts and keep attention. It is unfortunate where we are at.

If I were to be given an opportunity to suggest a system, it will be practically one that gives every child a chance to discover themselves, to think wild and be criticised, to invent within the four walls of school and to be confident at the time of graduation that "I have arrived and I am ready to face the world!"

This system of education that forces a fowl to live in the river shrinks creativity, liveliness, initiative, and should be discouraged. It's time to start anew.

Blessing Chidinma Amadi, India



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EPISODE 1: ABOUT THE MAN

There is no doubt that our world is woman will love only the good side of mountable challenges.

man, the Adamic folly you hear about. stake. Man is polygamous in nature. Yes, like a butterfly bent on kissing every colour- This is one of the reasons men get anful flower that catches his attention.

Don't even compare an animal to man. mous right and the alarm is sounding! Not even the goat or doggy dog the Don't judge him for being a man and crown head of escapades because, none that is a whole lot if you ask me. of these has it that the housemaid can it becomes an issue. You don't even look for a saint, who doesn't exist. come across as an animal ready to conquer more women for his harem.

of her league of faults? Trouble is, a that animal instinct away from him.

changing fast from complex to compli- man and hate his faults with passion, cated with its attendant ills of unsur- even complaining to people who have no idea of what is actually at stake. Well, Every real man loves many women; some of these people even dare to bear you can bet that is the animal side of witness to what they believe is really at

> gry when women get jealous; just because the man displayed his polyga-

conveniently assist madam when no- My thinking is, if a woman wants to be body is looking. If she gets bolder then a man's one and only, then she must

Trouble is, the easiest things do not come easy; the boy will one day become A man believes anyone who loves me man and man will be man. However, must love me with all my faults. Don't the woman can always fight a man for we all know that the woman is also full unfaithfulness but she can never take



Success by Endurance:

A TALE OF NAHIDA ESMAIL

by Sandra Oma Etubiebi

Every lazy person will suddenly become filthy rich on the very day excuses become a trade commodity on the Stock Market. Excuses are the bane of lazy people who will most likely never succeed. Many tangible and genuine successes are traceable to series of actions and consistencies despite daunting opposing situations. At Writer's Space Africa, one of the World's Best Empowering Platforms for African Writers, an evening spent x-raying the life of one of her indefatigable members is the backdrop of this narrative. Tanzanian Writer, Social Networker, Mother and Proud Muslim, Nahida Esmail epitomizes, for the community of writers, a picture of rising literary success, which is not a product of happenstance, but a lingering lasting tale of success by endurance.

A Writer's Unique Start time, Nahida was shop- da Esmail made a remark-Nahida

Esmail started ping for books for her little able decision to be that writing her first book to daughter's book collection missing Tanzanian author solve a nagging problem when she suddenly real- of children's books. When she just couldn't shake off: ized she could hardly find asked why, Nahida had the dearth of children's one written by a Tanzanian this to say, "I wanted my books for Tanzanians writ- author. Without prior book daughters to read about ten by Tanzanians. At that writing experience, Nahi- Tanzanian characters, and

I came across this quote by Toni Morri- writers to write fiction. Her four young read, but it hasn't been written yet, then the City Maasai, Detectives of Shangani, you must write it." This quote became and Living in the Shade: Aiming for the the underlying force that propelled her Summit have all received CODE's Burt voyage into an unknown territory with Award for African Literature. In 2015, faith and confidence. Her first book, "I she was also honoured with the Tanzania am Musa" is about a young Muslim boy Women's Achievement Award in the edliving in Durban, and how he was help- ucation category. Nahida owes her book's ful to his parents and enjoyed variety of participation in the BURT Awards to her Musa as "a well-balanced boy" while her challenge. It was a remarkable twist that full color, self-published children's book book collections into a literary voice for about an elephant taken from the Holy social causes in Tanzania. Quran but set in the plains of the Serengeti. With two books down, Nahida did Rising Influence of a Social Networker thing.

Books

to the therapeutic world of writing. Ac- tion that "everyone had a role to play," knowledging that she was indeed gifted prompted Nahida to visit a Publisher to express herself in ways that could help telling him she wanted to "write a book her give back to society, she continued to to educate people on albinism." The Pubwrite with even greater depth of creativi- lisher looked at her, and knowing she had ty and meaning. Her decision to continue never written such before, responded, writing paid off; now, Nahida Esmail is "Submit your story in 4 weeks and we an award-winning author of four young will enter it into the BURT award." That adult novels, author of four textbooks; was it. In 4 weeks, Nahida met the deadtwo for secondary and primary school line, and submitted a story about a girl levels each, and author of ten children's with albinism. Her title was shortlisted picture books; three of which have been and her book, Living in the Shade, won translated into Swahili and another into the 2nd prize for BURT in 2012. Maa, the language of the Maasai.

Nahida never fails to appreciate Cana- da is also an energetic athlete who furdian philanthropist, Mr William Burt, for ther amplifies her voice for social causes, starting the BURT Award for African Lit- outdoors. She has participated in a num-

son, 'If there's a book that you want to adult novels: Living in the Shade, Lesslie activities. Nahida's quest was to portray ability to meet the deadline of a writing second book, "Mahmood my Hero" is a elevated Nahida from a mother building

not stop there, she had discovered some- Nahida, having lived away from DarEsSalam for 15 years at the time, became overwhelmed by the ugly media cover-Amazing Journey to 4 Award Winning age attacks on people with albinism in Tanzania. Albinism affects one in ev-Nahida's first two books introduced her ery 1,400 Tanzanians. Her deep convic-

Beyond writing for social causes, Nahierature to promote and encourage African ber of outdoor events like cycling and

est once.

sively on her personal climb as well as tion. the climb of her characters via her blog at www.nahidaesmail.com and on other news media, spreading more love and awareness towards the plight of those Nahida describes herself as "part-time with albinism.

Education and Role Model Influences as rica WhatsApp platform, she was cajoled a Backdrop for Her Writing Nahida's rich repertoire of activities and revelation was inspiring. Nahida said, results raises curiosity about her educa- "My day starts as early as 4am. It gives

mountain climbing; in 2016, Nahida cy- many influences on her amazing personcled 377km from Mount Kilimanjaro to ality. Nahida graduated from Goldsmiths Ngorongoro Crater to raise funds for ac- College, University of London, with a BSc cess to clean water in Africa. In anoth- in Psychology and completed a Masters er event, she lead a team of women on in Child Development with Early Childa mountain climb to the peak of Mount hood Education at the Institute of Edu-Kilimanjaro for WHY PAUSE NGO as a cation, University of London. She is well way to create awareness on the need for travelled and has lived in London, UK; better healthcare education in rural Tan- Cairo, Egypt; and Durban, South Africa. zania due to alarming high infant mortal- She enjoys reading, cycling, mountain ity rates. Her efforts were rewarded with climbing, photography, and exploring enough funds used in purchasing prena-the world with her children. When asked tal equipment for a hospital in Karatu, whether her educational background had Tanzania. Nahida has reached the sum- a strong influence on her writing, she was mit of Mount Kilimanjaro twice, Mount quick to say, "Yes, my educational back-Toubkal (Morocco) once, Mount Fuji (Jaground, perspective on life and my role pan) once and reached Base Camp Ever- models do have a strong influence on my writings. My story about girls with albinism was not only an effort to edu-Nahida's latest young adult fiction in the cate the Tanzanians on the plight of those Living in the Shades series, Aiming for with albinism, but it was also to make me the Summit, infuses her love for moun- understand their feelings and empathize tain climbing with her support for the with them, so I could reach out and help. care and respect of girls with Albinism. In the same way, my writings are realis-She wrote about a group of girls with altic and relatable stories with strong social binism and their brave attempt to climb themes." She proudly spoke of her moth-Mount Kilimanjaro as a means of raising er, her elder brother, Jodi Picoult, Khaled an awareness of their unique condition. Hooseni, Toni Morrison, Oprah Winfrey, Aiming for the Summit won 2 BURT and the Prophets as role model influencawards. Nahida has since written exten- es from whom she draws a lot of inspira-

A Day in her Life

writer and full time mother," and during an evening x-ray on the Writers Space Afto unveil a typical day in her life and the tional background, upbringing, and the me an opportunity to pray, reflect and

ready for the school bus. As soon as she writers in Tanzania and the rest of Africa. leaves, I wake up my younger daughter and repeat the same routine. I drop her We asked Nahida to counsel budding

niece. I try to fit in about a 10 to 15 min- endurance. You have an idea, you sit utes powernap in the afternoon.

dinner ready, making sure the girls finish be a writer." homework, and uniforms are ready for the next day. With great difficulty, I am da's daily schedule was simply awesome endurance. as it showed off the super woman in her.

Her Lessons for Today's Young Writer

Nahida Esmail has shown initiative, resilience, and consistency in applying her

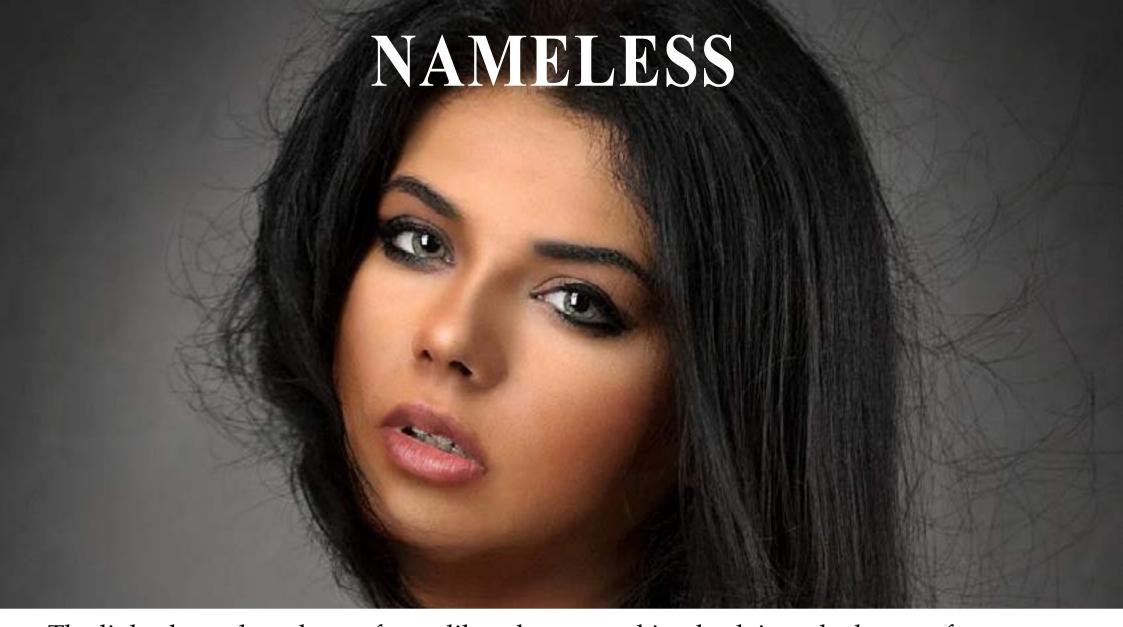
write while the world is sleeping. I wake innate writing ability to social good. An up my older daughter at about 5.35am, set amazing indefatigable personality, she is the breakfast table and make sure she's definitively a rising role model for young

off to school by 7.15am. Then, I go for a writers, and she gracefully obliged; "Read walk every other day for about an hour. a lot. Read a variety of genres. Read the I shower, eat breakfast and then my day classics. Read authors of different nationbegins. From about 9.30am to 1.00pm is alities. Read about your history. The first my work time for writing, phone calls etc. step to writing is actually writing, even if it's just one sentence. Don't allow nega-Depending on what day it is, I may cy-tive people to scare you off. Africa is in cle, play squash or go for a swim in the need of more writers. You don't know ocean. Keeping fit is my great way to get your potential till you try it out. Rememthe blood and ideas flowing. My younger ber, JK Rowling was rejected by about 9 daughter is back by 1.30pm. So, setting publishers for Harry Potter, and Jody Pithe table for lunch, picking her up, feed- coult was rejected 100 times! Writing is ing, praying, and homework make my not all about talent. I have many talented afternoons busy with my daughters and friends who don't write. Writing is about and you write it down. You write till you complete it. Then you re-write parts of it. Evenings are spent getting the table for That's endurance. That's what it takes to

Reading Nahida's unambiguous sometimes able to fit in about half an hour words and listening to her crystal clear of work somewhere in between. Reading voice, you cannot but applaud a unique time before sleep is an absolute must. I writer making Africa proud, helping let them read whatever book they want those with Albinism find hope, and showand also read a book for them. Lights go ing younger African writers that success off by 8.30 or 9pm. Not a lot of time to get is not by chance. Excuses will never trade creative, but that's my typical day!" At on the stock market and success does not Writers Space Africa, we thought Nahi- fall on the laps of the lazy. It comes by

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The light danced on the rooftops, like a lover sneaking back into the house after a moonlit rendezvous. Lightly it brushed the window and turned away only to come back once more. The occupants of the house slept quietly unaware of this scared dance of sunrise, expect one. She stood at the balcony letting the tender rays of the sun play mischievously with her hair. This was the only time she felt like she belonged; when this strange new world slept and she watched it from the balcony of the flat she shared with her uncle and his family. It was a year and a half since the Incident and she still felt like life was happening to someone else. Her cousin, Bertha found her half an hour later still on the balcony. "You'll need this; first day and all," Bertha pressed a hot cup of coffee into her hand. "Do you ever sleep at all?" It was a rhetorical question. Bertha slept in the room next to hers and Grace knew Bertha heard her nightmares and the restless shifting that followed.

"Are you excited?" Bertha asked now. "I feel like I'm going back into the real world. To be honest, it's a little unnerving," Grace confessed. Bertha patted her on the shoulder encouragingly. "Come find me when you are done. I'll drive you," she grinned and went back into the house. Grace nodded absently and forced down the swarm of anxieties that threatened to drown her resolve. The truth was that, she wanted her life back and as far as the legal system was concerned she had it. The only person holding her back these past months was her.

Four years ago when she was eighteen, she met Kuda. It was a typical whirlwind romance at first. In six months they got married and she had truly thought she had found her happily ever after. Her parents were angry at first that she had refused to pursue a degree in favour of marriage but Kuda had paid the bride price in full and given Grace a white wedding; that had seemed to placate them somewhat although they maintained that everything had moved too fast. A few months into the marriage, Kuda became overly possessive and quick to anger. "I am no longer taking you out to dinner. You are always dressed like that and other people smile at you," he would say.

Grace would frown because it was Kuda who had bought her the dress and it covered her completely.

The jealousy moved to baseless accusations, which in turn lead to him constantly going through her phone and bag. Within three months she was barely leaving the house at all. She was cut off from her family and her friends. Once, Bertha had come to visit unannounced whilst Kuda was at work. When he came back and saw her, he lost it, accusing Grace of conniving against him with her cousin. That was the first night he shoved her. "I do everything for you and you bring people into this house to talk about me behind my back," he had shouted at her after shoving her to the floor. She had lain there long after he had gone to bed wondering how she had ever mistaken that mad gleam in his eyes for mere jealousy.

Kuda came from an estranged family so she hardly knew anyone from his side to talk to. The one time she tried to talk to her mother had been a disaster. "You chose this against our wishes. Be strong. Marriage is hard." Grace was sure it wasn't supposed to be hard, at least not like this. The man she had married had seemed sweet and caring but the one she lived with was a monster filled with rage, jealousy and insecurities Grace had no hope of smoothing. Everyone kept telling her to be strong but she had no idea what that meant. Did it mean she shouldn't cry when he beat her until her teeth rolled on the bedroom tiles? Did it mean she should believe him when he told her she had made him do it?

The night Kuda died, he came home drunk on rage. The previous night he had raped her then told her it didn't count because she was his wife. That last night he came in and started beating her. The entire time he kept saying, "Look what you've made me into." Grace could tell that this time was different. He seemed to seek some sort of redemption by laying the blame at her feet. He had beat her within an inch of her life when she realised he meant to kill her. Some long forgotten self-preservation instinct kicked into gear and Grace crawled on the bloody kitchen floor to get to the knife she had been using to cut up vegetables. Without thinking she turned and slashed blindly. She heard the wet gurgle Kuda made before she saw his open throat.

In court she pleaded self-defence. Her family had disowned her. Her friends shunned her. The court granted her her freedom. Her uncle had taken her in and she had been in self-proclaimed solitary ever since. A few days ago she had realized that almost two years had passed since that night. She had realised that despite everything she had been through she was still here. That no matter what people said about her struggle and the darkness she had lived through, she had survived and perhaps one day she could help other broken people live with their sharp edges and ugly angles. So here she was in Bertha's car entering the university campus grounds. She waved Bertha goodbye and rushed into her first psychology class. She beamed at her classmates because for the first time in years she could envision a future for herself. She wasn't just another nameless victim of domestic abuse; she was starting a new chapter and her name would be brave.

Kimberly Chirodzero, Zimbabwe



The day I met you I couldn't believe it. You were sitting across from me, clad in a well-tailored blue suit, looking like a finer version of Boris Kodjoe, sipping on a glass of water and concentrating on the laptop in front of you. You looked like everything I ever dreamed about, my very own Mr. Right, except you hadn't noticed me yet or maybe you had and were just pretending.

There I was still nursing a broken heart, thinking I would never be lucky in love, little did I know my luck was about to change that day. Well, I was wearing my lucky dress, a flare mini floral dress that emphasized my curvy body and showed my perfect legs. So I wasn't too surprised. I had no makeup on because I dressed in a hurry and didn't feel like it, but now I wish I had taken my time to put on some makeup. I couldn't help but notice the way your eyes cringed as you concentrated on your laptop like you were trying to figure something out. As you looked up and caught me staring, I quickly removed my eyes and started rummaging in my purse as if there was something inside I needed to find. I took out my sunglasses and put them on so you wouldn't notice I was looking at you.

I looked up, you were standing right in front of me, much taller than I expected and even more handsome. For the first time in my life I was short of words. If I told my

friends they wouldn't believe me because they always said I was gifted with a sharp tongue and I never lacked what to say even in the most awkward situations. I heard you ask if the seat beside me was taken and I can't remember whether I answered or not because the next thing I knew you were seated next to me and every word you spoke took my breath away. You said I looked like the girl of your dreams, naturally beautiful and sexy as hell and even though I thought you were the sexiest man alive, I didn't tell you that because I was playing hard to get. Once we got to know each other, we realized that even though we were a bit different, we complemented each other. I hate that you loved football but I watched it with you because it made you happy. You hated my chick flicks but you watched them with me. I bet you secretly liked them because you watched the full season of Sex and the City with me, and till today, you still call me Carey because you think both of us are so much alike. Though we fight, we makeup and the sex is wonderfully crazy.

You said I am such a girly girl and I told you you needed to get in touch with your feminine side and quit being strong-headed all the time. You claimed you were a better cook and I just indulged you because I liked watching you in your briefs as you bustled around the kitchen trying to cook what you labeled the most delicious meal I will ever taste. We told each other everything, even the most stupid things and sometimes I still can't believe we are where we are.

Every day with you is like a new adventure; I never know what crazy agenda you have up your sleeves but I always look forward to it. I remember the day you made me breakfast in bed, I cried because no one had ever done something like that for me and when I wouldn't stop crying you promised you would never make breakfast in bed for me ever again if it upset me so much, but you did it again the morning after, and the morning after that saying till I get used to it and stopped tearing up, you would not stop. You have treated me like a queen and made me feel like the only special girl in the world. I can't imagine being with any other person but you; you are all I want and all I keep dreaming about. On Valentine's day you took me to the same restaurant where we met and after we had dessert you brought out the most beautiful ring I had ever seen and asked me to be the only one that will make you happy, laugh at your silly jokes, tell you you look hotter than Boris, and complete you for the rest of your life.

And as I opened my mouth to say yes, my alarm rang. It was 5:30am and I had been dreaming all along. Where are you my Mr. Right? It's high time you stop coming in dreams and show yourself.

Christine Anikpeh, Nigeria

With Rukewe in Italy

"This is Italy. It is risky for you. You should return to your people, unless you want to die young too." Those naked words continued to clang in Uloma's ears like some church bells by the wee hours of dawn. It was Rukewe who had pricked her soft 'yellow pawpaw' skin with the needle of her mouth, at the hospital, the other day. Uloma stood before the mirror on the wall, staring at the orange dots in between her breasts, the slight rings on her neck, and the wrinkles that glued to her forehead like three lines of tribal marks. With all those face primers and lotions lining up in the cabinet, she was dying slowly.

"Oh lord," she cried pulling her hair worn in rubbery dreadlocks. She snatched one container of Mary K face powder and smashed it against the wall as if there was solace in the pieces. "Please, lord, heal this dying creature."

The whole agita started some weeks ago, when Rukewe contracted a strange illness. And the red-head doctor said her condition would continue to deteriorate. She looked pale, her hairs thinning and falling out so easily like dry baobab leaves.

"Italy is not safe," Rukewe coughed and struggled to tell Uloma on the hospital bed. Uloma bobbed her head.

"You will be fine," she said stroking her friend's shoulder. Italy was harder than she'd thought, it was different from what Madam G had claimed.

"Italy is a business hub for smart Nigerian girls. They come in and make cool cash." Madam G, Uloma's pathfinder used to sing in her small office in Lagos. She had helped many girls into Italy. "When you get there, you will serve me until I recover my money," she would say. Uloma had agreed to Madam G's terms. Her freaking naive ass had then made its way into Italy.

It was during her fresh moments in Italy that she met Rukewe, an experienced prostitute who kept narrating her many escapades with dogs, dogs with thick and thin rods.

"Just fuck anything fuckable and your bank account swells with foreign currency," Rukewe would say.

"It is only a man's thing that will pass though my legs," Uloma would always contend, circling two fingers around her head and snapping them afterward.

But she had Madam G to refund, a mansion to build at home. Papa needed money to expand his clothing line, mama could buy more Hollandis wrappers, Gideon and Mary would go to University. With all these targets to meet, she was swayed into acting like Rukewe.

"Double the pay for the dog's thing or I'm off," She'd insist. "Okay I will," her clients would reply. And the dog's thing would make its way inside her.

Rukewe coughed again and Uloma took her fingers.

"You'll be fine," Uloma assured her.

"No I won't," Rukewe said in between chokes and coughs. "I'm going to die."

"Please, be kind to yourself. The doctor is working hard, come on."

Rukewe continued to make kpoho-kpoho sounds until she coughed out the words that Uloma was not prepared to hear.

"This is Italy. It is risky for you. You should return to your people, unless you want to die young too."

Uloma felt some hot coals burn through her chest. The hairs on her skin rose. Her lips quivered. She started to softly pull the strands of hair slanting on her forehead, suddenly Rukewe started to convulse on the bed. Uloma rushed out shouting for the doctor.

Rukewe kept shaking until she heaved a deep sigh and stopped moving. The doctor simply wagged his head and said, "I'm sorry, she's gone."

Uloma continued to smash every cosmetic her hand reached in the cabinet. She tore her skimpy top, the brassiere padding her breast, and then got out of her bump short. She was stack naked. She started to cry and cry until her whole body was like wet banana stem, and her eyes swollen.

"Lord, heal your possessed child," she cried. "Give me a chance for a new life."

She pulled her drawer and took out a pocket size bible. She hugged it, and on her knees, started to cast and bind and rebind the spirit of prostitution, until she had no more strength. She lay on the floor wheezing.

The following week, Uloma parked some clothes into her box. She had decided to return to Nigeria to begin a new life, a life devoid of sexual profligacy. But many things raced through her mind as she locked the door. The most perturbing: The orange dots on her breast.





The Caine Prize 2018 for African Writers

The Caine Prize for African Writing is a literature prize awarded to an African writer of a short story published in English. The prize was launched in 2000 to encourage and highlight the richness and diversity of African writing by bringing it to a wider audience internationally. The focus on the short story reflects the contemporary development of the African story-telling tradition.

The deadline to enter the 2018 Prize is 31st January 2018.

Eligibility

- 1. Unpublished work is not eligible for the Caine Prize.
- 2. Submissions should be made by publishers only.
- 3. Only fictional work is eligible.
- 4. Only one story per author will be considered in any one year.
- 5. Submissions should specify which African country the author comes from and the word count.
- 6. We require 6 copies of the work in its originally published version.
- 7. If the work is published in a book or journal, we would like to receive at least one copy of the book / journal and five photocopies; but particularly where several stories are submitted from one anthology we would like if possible to receive six copies of the book / journal itself.

If the work is published online, we would like to receive six photocopies.

For more, please visit - http://www.caineprize.com



Calling all African Writers!

Writers Space Africa, an international literary magazine which features rich diversity of writings from African writers to a global audience, is calling for submissions for the February Edition. The theme of the edition is LOVE. Please send us your creative piece but consider the following:

Articles/Essays: 1,200 Words

Drama: 1,000 Words

Flash Fiction: 100 Words

Poetry: 1 Poem, maximum of 18 lines

Short Stories: 750 words

Visit: http://www.writersspace.net/submission/ to upload and read the terms. Entries close January 15, 2018

