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FEBRUARY
2018
EDITION

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Editorial

How are you planning to celebrating February, the month of cupid? How about breaking free from routine where love smitten birds do candlelit dinner dates, red roses and chocolates? Routine can get boring and monotonous at times.

Extend the love. Let love blow up to the universe. You can decide to share the love with the less fortunate in the society. At random, touch a soul, make someone smile this month of love, without expecting something in return, even that little 'Thank You!' from them.

Its the little things that we do, that makes the difference. Make the world feel your presence.

While you are at it, get to enjoy our magazine.
From WSA,

HAPPY VALENTINE AFRICA!

For comments or queries. Contact at us at: editorial@writersspace.net

Wakini Kuria
**Chief editor ,
Writers Space Africa,
Kenya**





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The friction between the pen and the paper can be lubricated by inspiration



- Edeh Chinecherem,
Nigeria



LOVE ON THE DOTTED LINE

Melissa Sanyati tightened the scarf around her head and looked away from the lovers walking along the Thames. She berated herself silently as she began walking back home. She was a fool for falling in love and today she felt even more foolish. She had never minded Valentine's Day before but this year with her heart foolishly longing for a man, who did not want it, she found herself hating the red roses, pretty gift bags and the ever-smiling thongs of lovers. She had no idea how she had ended up here; in love with her husband. Love was never part of the contract she and Chris Harper signed. All she had to do was sign her name on the dotted line and get a contract marriage and citizenship. That is what she had wanted; to stay in London and continue her hard-earned business. She had not considered she might develop real feelings for her fake husband.

She might have been deported back to Zimbabwe if not for her friend, Vimbai Mufudze who had come up with the crazy plan to marry Mel off to her other childhood friend. Melissa had never met Chris before and he had returned to London to take over his late father's business at the same time Melissa's visa was almost up. Marrying for anything other than love seemed horribly immoral but considering the auditing and accounting company she had built from scratch in the past three years and the reputation she had gained as one of the elite best, Mel knew that she had to sacrifice her happily ever after. She had built a life for herself in London and leaving was impossible so she let Vimbai introduce her to Chris Harper.

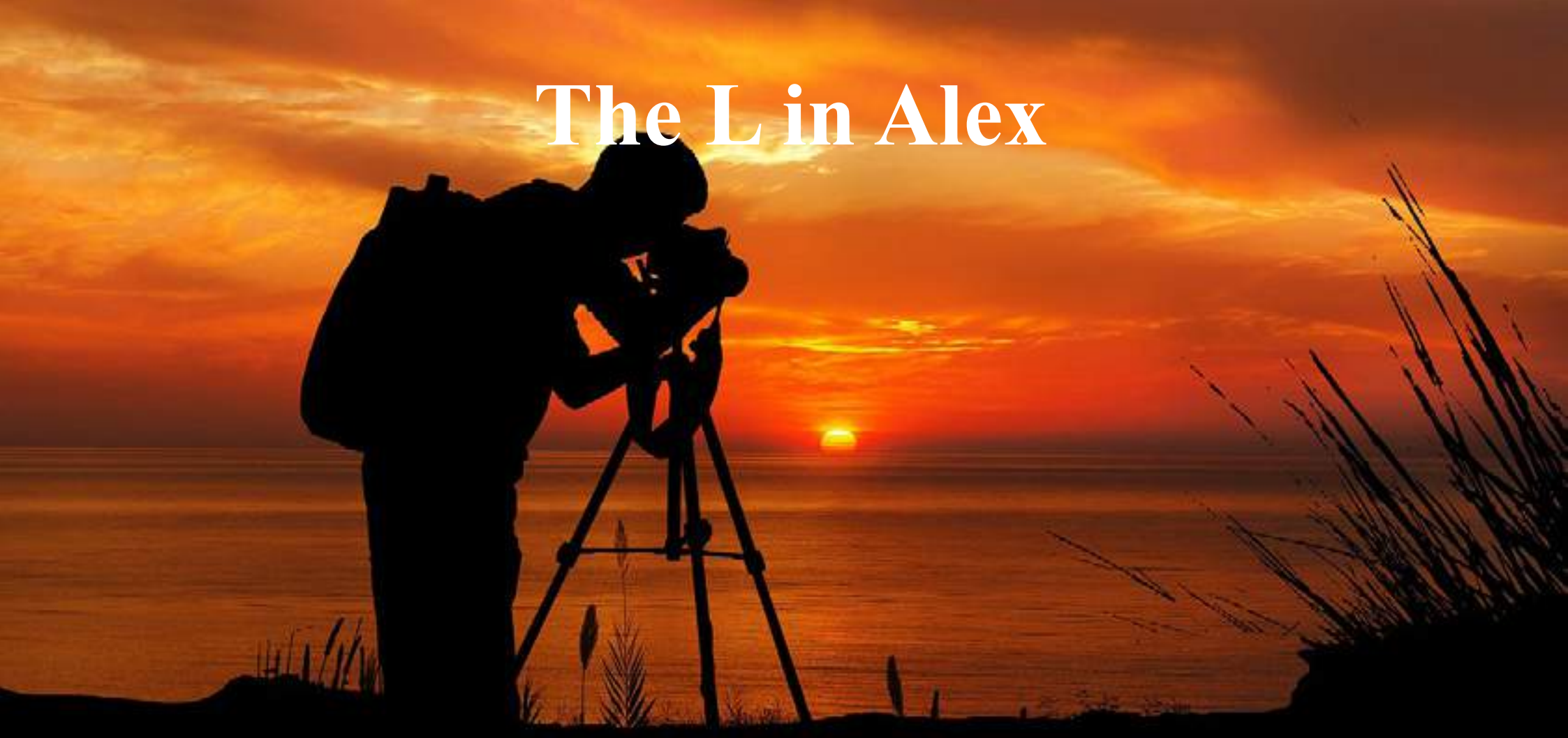
Mel had been unprepared for the phenomenon that was Christopher Harper. He was singularly captivating, like a modern day Adonis. She could not understand why such a handsome and wealthy man would agree to a contract marriage. "He needs the best auditor for his father's business and you need a contract husband. Chris has been unlucky in love and it's not like he's waiting for true love so he'll sign his name next to yours on the dotted line," Vimbai had explained happily. Mel knew Chris only agreed to marry her because of the guilt over abandoning the family business and his father's dying wish that he continue that business. They agreed that it would be a marriage in name only and that after an acceptable time; they would both go their separate ways.

Their honeymoon was spent pouring over Chris' financial books. True to her reputation, Mel had Chris' business sorted out in no time and earned herself the genuine respect of her husband. The first month they were both awkward around each other and would sneak into the kitchen for snacks whilst the other was sleeping. The second month they became shy friends and discovered they had very similar interest. By the third month, they were going out together since they enjoyed the same things or so they claimed to themselves. By the fourth month, Mel knew she was in trouble when Chris began making her dinner.

Now Mel pushed open the front door to their house and froze. Red rose petals were strewn seductively on the floor beckoning her further into the house. Frowning she followed the trail all the way to the other side of the house. There on the patio, a table set for two with decadent dishes, a bouquet of white roses, and her favorite bottle of Italian red wine. Chris stepped out from the garden arch and came towards her. He took her hands into his trembling ones. "Mel, sweetheart, I know neither one of us got into this marriage for love but I must confess my love for you. Maybe mine isn't the love poets would write about but these past months with you my heart has opened and I am truly in love with you," he looked earnestly at her as he continued, "I'm violating our agreement but I didn't plan on this; I just woke up one day and realized if I had to get married again, I would choose you." By now, Mel was smiling and crying at the same time. "Please say something," Chris begged her. Mel did the only thing that she could; she stood on tiptoe and kissed her husband, igniting an explosion of emotion that had been lurking in wait since their wedding day.

BY
KIMBERLY CHIRODZERO ,
Zimbabwe

The L in Alex



It was a day like any other. The rain poured; rustling, howling, wetting the shantytowns; claimed its supremacy and went it did. The sun shone high, defying the clouds that were dominating the mid-summer sky. Slick with the sleets of mud the earth seems to take pride. Regaling in its mighty traction-less surface it splashed, tripped and ruined all that came before it. Yet it was not a generic day for Alex.

He was a man of purpose. He knew what he wanted and went after it with lackadaisical zeal that made it seem as if he was not looking for anything. He was a man of few words and even fewer actions. His life was no different either; he never married, bore children, or lived with someone else. His days were spent roaming the streets as a photographer and his nights were spent on editing his photos. He preys upon his trusty laptop fine-tuning his photos every night with a beer in his hand and a cigarette clenched between his teeth.

He took out his trusty Fuji X-1 camera from his pocket and fiddled with the dials. The screen on the back of the camera suddenly came alive with a magnificent spectacle of swirling colors and people. He smiled in a self-assured way. He loved the summer, the cascading rain, the commuters uninhibited rush to avoid wetness. You can only capture humanity at its best when no one is looking, he mused to himself. After setting the dials for optimum exposure, he surreptitiously pulled down his camera to his side. He had only two days to complete his submission for The World Press Photo Awards. He was feeling optimistic.

His eyes wandered on the vista before him to a middle-aged woman selling roasted corn by the side of the road. Scanning the street upward and downward in search of a customer, she continues fanning the ember of the dying coals up front. Alex toggled the dial on his camera to live view mode. The wide-angle lens did what it did best. The woman comforted herself in the middle of his frame. He zoomed on her face marveling at the hardened and chiseled features. The penetrating eyes stared defiantly ahead. For a moment he thought she was looking straight at him. Blink,

Alex triggered the shutter to fire off successive shots in perfect synchronization with the moment.

“Alex”

Her voice broke him out of the trance he was in, quickly pocketing his camera he replied sheepishly, “Yes, Weyzero Askale”

“Didn’t see you there. What are you doing in the middle of the road?” she asked.

“Waiting for someone,” Why was he lying to her about photographing her? He unceremoniously put the thought aside and changed the subject. “Can I have some corn?”

The woman smiled at him warmly; a simple unassuming grateful smile that seemed to radiate from her core.

“Here you go my son,” she extended her hands with a freshly roasted corn. Alex reached out and took it. Handing her a 10 birr bill, “how’s business?”

He already knew her response as she reached for her change purse “it’s slow today...” she broke off mid-sentence then let out a piercing scream. Alex jumped in alarm. “What happened?”

“It’s gone!” tears flowed down her face in agony.

“What’s gone?”

“My money! It was here! They took it all I’m ruined!”

“When?” Alex was flummoxed with the sudden purse theft that seemed to emanate unexpectedly.

“Here, just before you came. It was beside me when I was fanning” The woman stood up and started shouting “Leba! Leba”, Thief! Thief! People swarmed the place. Alex spotted uniformed police officers coming through the crowd, as the woman sat desolately with the bystanders closing in.

His hands wandered towards his camera-laden pocket with instant worry. Alex kept silent even though he knew he had to say something. He had one camera, his trusty comrade. Admitting he was taking shots will most certainly cause him to hand it over as evidence. Even if the thief got apprehended through some sheer luck the chances of him going for another shoot seemed slim to none. He knew the photographer would be needed to give testimony. Such a shame, he pondered as he thumbed his pocket absent mindedly; the bulk in his pocket felt unusually inaccessible as his fingers strained to reach the camera strap. Two days to go and he had taken the perfect shot. Alex took out the camera from his pocket.

By

Misak Workneh,

Ethiopia

Magic

Like a trick of magic it's thrilling to the eyes that see
And an art to the man who performs it
Love is a mystery to those who witness its pull
A blessing to those who live in it
But just like magic, believing is key to feeling the thrill.

Nicole Enwonwu Gandaho
Benin Republic

MY BIRD

I had a bird in hand who was one of a kind.
With colours of every band, none like her I'll ever find.

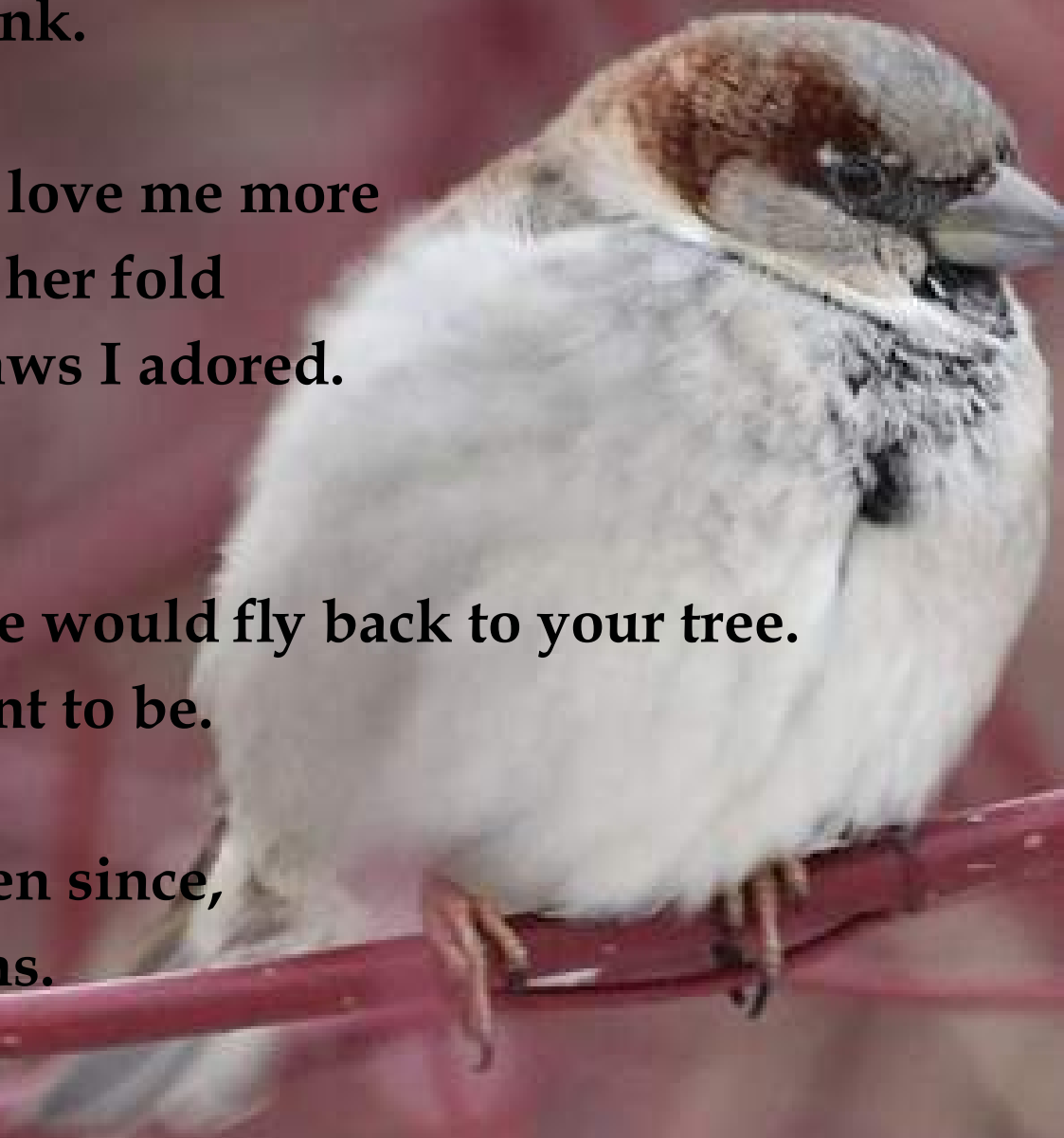
Golden beak and silver claws,
Beauty not another bird comes close.
Purple feathers and eyes of pink,
Love was written in each of her blink.

I gave my all for her so, she would love me more
But one day my bird escaped from her fold
The cage she tore, with the very claws I adored.

Friends comforted me,
Said; if the bird was truly yours she would fly back to your tree.
If she doesn't then she wasn't meant to be.

Well, my bird hasn't come back then since,
May be she is afraid of her own sins.
Her memory is all I'm left with.
I had a bird in hand,
I loved her more than two in the bush..

David Gitau,
Kenya



Love with a gypsy woman

I sat with my sad mood in my usual nook
At the park reading a book.

As she passed, my melancholic persuaded her to take a second look.

She got closer wearing a smile on her face

And said "Hi, my name is Grace"

"Why read all alone in this lone place?"

I replied with a smile

And said "such is my style"

"Whenever loneliness soak me up, I come out here to catch fan for a while"

With ease, she fell into deep love with me

So we kissed, we laughed as we walked along the sea.

As more days passed, our love only grew into fame and glory

So I got lost in love with this gypsy woman

Forgetting all I have is only but the moon and the sun.

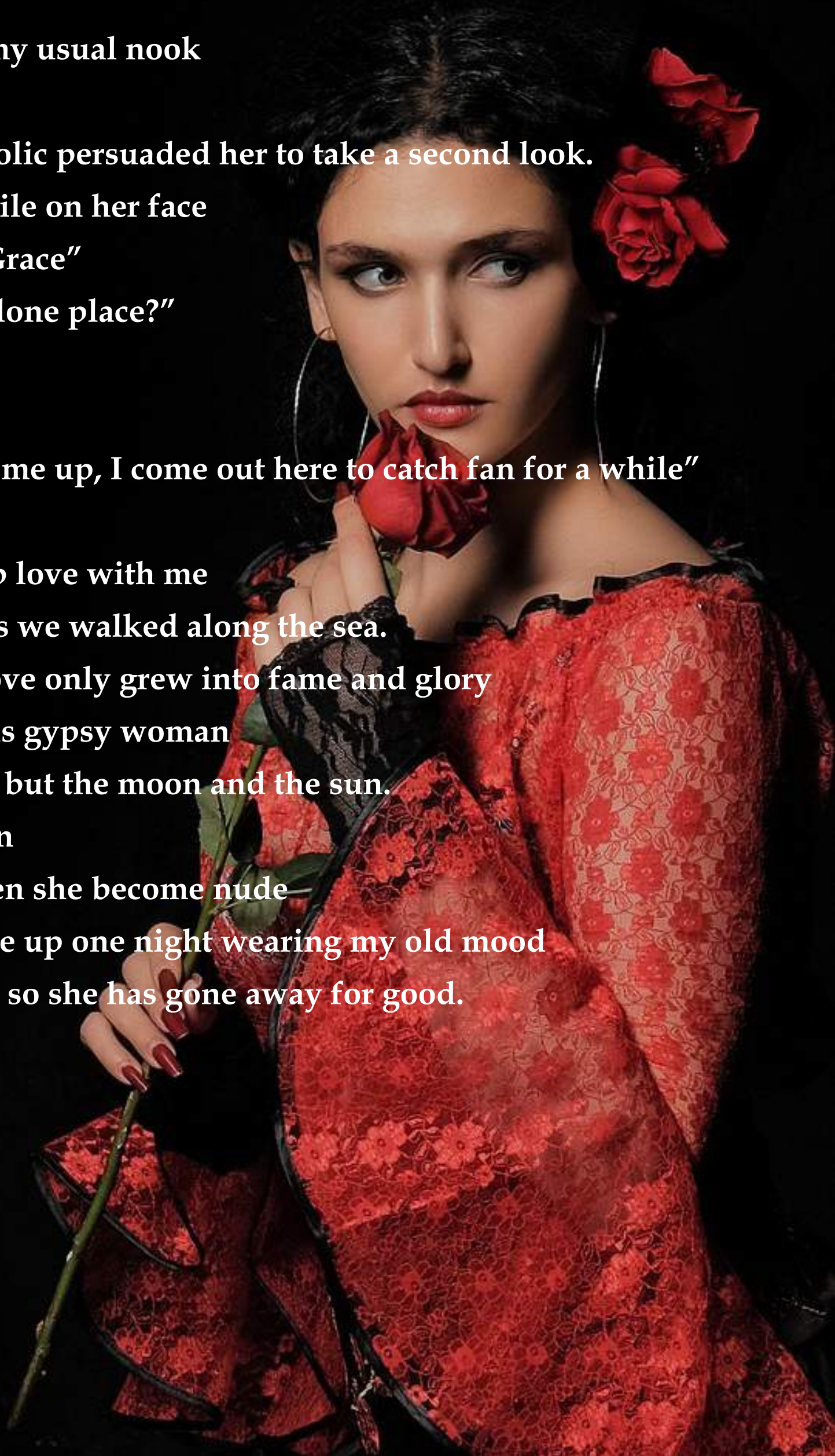
Her company is so much fun

That I loved especially, when she become nude

But just like a dream, I woke up one night wearing my old mood

Because she is born a gypsy so she has gone away for good.

Wisdom Koffie Kpodo,
Ghana

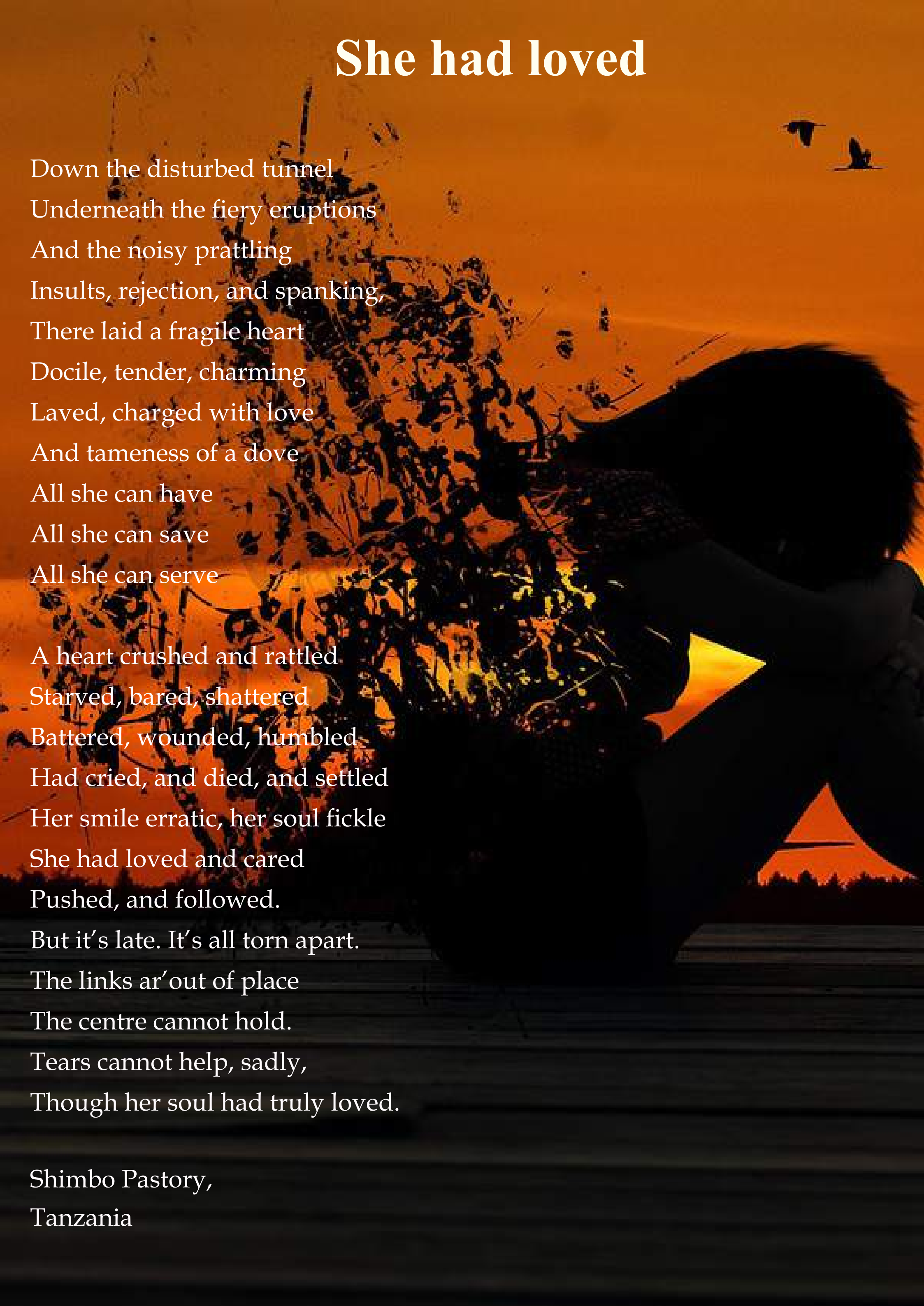


She had loved

Down the disturbed tunnel
Underneath the fiery eruptions
And the noisy prattling
Insults, rejection, and spanking,
There laid a fragile heart
Docile, tender, charming
Laved, charged with love
And tameness of a dove
All she can have
All she can save
All she can serve

A heart crushed and rattled
Starved, bared, shattered
Battered, wounded, humbled
Had cried, and died, and settled
Her smile erratic, her soul fickle
She had loved and cared
Pushed, and followed.
But it's late. It's all torn apart.
The links ar' out of place
The centre cannot hold.
Tears cannot help, sadly,
Though her soul had truly loved.

Shimbo Pastory,
Tanzania



LET US BE ONE POEM

I know my soul is a complex of ballads &odes,
A barn where harvested poems are stacked,
But let me stare into your eyes, my fair one,
For there are sonnets scribbled therein,
Written in verses of infernous passion
And if only you'd affix your hands in mine,
We will become an anthology of poems,
To be read by our estranged lovers-
The ones who promised to be rainbows
To scare away the floods of gloom,
But left when clouds gathered in our eyes.
The curvy figures of speech may become amoebic,
For I have seen metaphors, melt like candle wax
And oxymoron, made morons out of poets;
But if we superimpose and become one poem,
And heated arguments tear us apart and break us into lines,
After enjambments have tried in vain to keep us together,
My fair one, we will surely be re-united by verses.

Ogwiji Ehi-kowochio Blessing
Nigeria.

LOVE AREN'T BLIND

Love is beyond what the ears perceives
It comprehend what other eyes fails to see
For seeing isn't always believing
And seeing can sometimes be deceiving

But love surmounts it all

Love is faith
For faith sees not
Rather believes in the unseen

It takes a leap of faith
To jump into love
Because love is unpredictable but very believable

Love aren't blind
LOVE isLove

Wanangwa Mwale,
Zambia

Love , what art thou?

Shall I compare thee to a snowy day?

A day so icy we miss the golden smile

But you are more like a night in May

A sky so dark you can't see a firefly

I fail to fall and I know not why

Love lies not within my grasp,

If death be my only escape I seek my grave

For love has defeated even the brave

Who am I then to fight for love?

Thou hast weakened mighty man of valour

Yet we know not your touch .smell or colour

Oh! Oh Love! What are you?

If you be the food of the soul .I shall die starved

For in all my life I know not what it is to be loved

If you be the music of life .let silence drive me insane

If you be the light of life I choose to remain in darkness

If you be the source of warmth in this cold world I shall

shiver to death

If you be the answer to all my questions let me die ignorant.

Sostina C. Magorimbo,

Zimbabwe

CRITIQUE MINE ... WRITE YOURS.

- Saka DBOSZ Junior,
Nigeria





Salsa of Words

David Njuguna and Open Mic Nights

by Sandra Oma Etubiebi

“Poetry is to me a salsa of words dancing with emotions on paper and speech. And I love it.” - David Njuguna

He loves writing so much that if both his hands were cut off, he'd still write! Loving anything artsy fancy, music, poetry, photography; David Njuguna is a sucker for the Arts.

David and I settled into a comfy chat about his writing and spoken word adventures which trailed off into chats on cats and writing with no hands. This amiable sappy and sensitive writer fell in love with the world of books and writing from the first moment he could comprehend words.

He performs at Open Mic Nights at the Kenya National Theatre in front of large audiences that number in their hundreds, and alongside artistes who brace diverse themes and socio cultural perspectives. David's first open mic night was at a camp experience in the year 2015. It was an amateur attempt that would lead him higher and higher to breathtaking stages of lights and thunderous applause. The competitive nature of open mic nights, the poets in their genres, and excitement of words blending with more words have made David no stranger to the open mic nights at

the 'pawa254' and Goethe Institute in Kenya.

David Njuguna is a young poet rising from obscurity as he blazes his unique trail in a masterful blend of words, words, and more words. He believes in the relevance of poetry in everything happening around us. Quick to point out that poetry was one of the oldest art forms used for teaching and giving instructions, David strongly advocates that to make changes in our world, we can pull the heartstrings of humanity through the instrumentality of poetry matched with action.

Studying for a degree in The Creative Arts, Film, and Media at the Kenyatta University, David Njuguna is optimistic that school presents a minefield of ideas and social interactions that greatly benefit any word artist. His artistic expressions can be read via his blog www.poartblog.wordpress.com.

And as the young poet and I kept chattering about cats and writing with no hands, David intently whispered, "Poetry is to me a salsa of words dancing with emotions on paper and speech. And I love it."



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BLANK



‘So I don’t know if I should start asking you out,’ he said, holding my soft hands with his firm, strong ones, and his eyes not the wide, bright ones I used to know, were now slightly closed, red, and laced with affection.

I smiled and told him I didn’t know, the choice was his after all, mine was to enjoy the attention, the attraction, and to say No. But as I looked at him, I knew I had made a terrible mistake, I should have just started another conversation to cover it up. God! His gaze was enough to undress me. I quickly moved my hands and he looked away, trying to secure my hands again, anything to stop him from looking at me like he would make love to me at the spot.

‘I love you,’ he blurted. I knew that whatever would keep me in check would have to be God’s miracle. ‘Not only do I love you, I want you,’ he stressed. Those words shook me as an earthquake shakes houses, and I went blank, not knowing what to say, do or look at, because he already had my face turned to face his. I couldn’t but look into his lit up eyes, our noses up close to each other, I could feel him breathe, and I found myself praying, God please help me, please.

Nanaaysha - Shittu Aisha Adetoun
Nigeria



Love at First Sight

Machozi walked along the dark and lonely street; her thoughts louder than the sound of her own footsteps. The Almighty had denied her a fair shake of life; for what was a wealthy woman without a womb, if not empty?

Then she came across him. The crying months-old angel was wrapped in a bundle of torn lesos and dumped among the stench-filled garbage bins.

When she picked him up, he smiled, and his coffee-brown eyes shone like the sun melting her heart like ice. And just like that, two strangers from two different worlds; but love at first sight!

Joyce Nawiri,
Kenya



WHEN DEATH BROUGHT LOVE

She sat pensively by his deathbed, reflecting back on the years they had shared. It had been a sad violent marriage but she had endured. Now after twenty years, death had knocked at her husband's door and brought her life.

As he breathed in his last, she breathed in her first of freedom.

She would be inherited by her husband's brother as custom dictated. Into the arms of her only true love, the elders would unknowingly thrust her. She had loved him from the days they played kalongolongo by the river, And now death had brought her love to her.

Edith Knight,
Kenya

writers Africa *Space*

We are accepting submissions from African writers, for the March Edition of Writer Space Africa. Published every month, Writers Space Africa is an international literary magazine, which features rich diversity of writings from African writers to a global audience.

Please submit either of 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

Please note the following:

Due to the number of entries we receive only selected authors will be published.

Your work must be neatly typed and uploaded in MS Word format Only. Remember to edit your work. We are allergic to unedited works although we will edit all selected entries.

Your work must not have been published anywhere and please submit in one genre only.

Author retains copyright.

Some selected published works will be featured on our website.

Deadline is **February 10, 2018.**

Please fill the form below and use it to upload your work. In case of difficulty, contact editorial@writersspace.net. We always reply our emails.

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