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Edition
Issue 25



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Oluwagbenga Ayomide Ruth - Nigeria
Musenga Katongo, Zambia
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Tanyaradzwa. N.L. Mtema, Zimbabwe
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Sandra Oma Etubiebi, Nigeria
Kimberly Chirodzero, Zimbabwe
Okwesili Bryan Joe, Nigeria
Nonhlanhla Radebe, South Africa
Gabrielina Gabriel-Abhie, Nigeria

EDITORIAL

Jambo Africa!

Every exit is an entry somewhere else. This is the beginning of a new year. You either move or be moved.

Always, every new year is a second chance to new beginnings. A second chance to take another swing, score another goal and break virgin grounds.

In the inside pages, our writer Shimbo, highlights on Making Meaning of a New Beginning, while Sandra, riding on the title, Once Upon a Time Still To Come speaks of how the phrase has never left the listener or reader without a lesson or more to take home. It sprinkles lessons the very same way life leaves a trail of lessons in its wake.

Now that we speak of new beginnings, WSA in every issue will celebrate a winner of the 2018 African Writers Awards (AWA). Starting us off, is the winner of children's literature, Manu Herbstein from Ghana. Congratulations to all finalists.

Happy New Year Africa. Keep it WSA!

**Wakini Kuria,
Kenya,
Chief Editor**



**HAPPY
NEW
YEAR**

An open notebook with lined pages is shown from a high angle, resting on a dark wooden surface. The notebook is open to a blank page with horizontal lines. The cover of the notebook is dark, and the pages are a light cream color. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of the paper and the wood grain.

IN THE NEWS...

- African Writers Conference and Awards Lights up Abuja*
- Tapiwanashe Nyabvure, the 13-year-old Award Winning Poet*
- Zamani College Students Shine at African Writers Conference*



African Writers Conference and Awards Lights up Abuja

On the 1st of December, 2018 writers from across Africa gathered in Nigerian's capital, Abuja for the first African Writers Conference and Awards put together by the African Writers Development Trust (AWDT). It was set on the theme: Re-imagining African Literature: New Voices, New Narrative in the Fight for the Girl Child. It held at the beautiful edifice of the Abuja International Conference Centre.

The host for the day was Kolabomi Adeko, a suave and sleek poet, one of the emerging voices in African literature. The conference kicked off at 10 AM as planned with a welcome address by Halima Usman Chairperson of the Association Nigerian Authors, Abuja chapter. She spoke in glowing words about the timeliness of the theme and its relevance to our society. Following this, the Chairperson of the conference, Her Excellency, Hadiza Elrufai, the First Lady of Kaduna State, stressed on the fight for educating the girl child as more important than climate change. She stated this in her opening remarks and further explained that part of the problem why the girl child is left behind is because she's not given the education she deserves. She stated, "education is what allows social mobility, it gives you the ability to change your situation and this is what the girl child is not given. What do we do as writers to help the girl child? We need to write

more stories showing women in positions of authority, so we can give our young girls the role models that they can relate with.”

For her, the girl child is more important because it is doable. She used the Kaduna state government’s free education for girls as an example to buttress this point. She also spoke on the need for functional education.

The tone for the keynote presentation was thus set.

Nahida Esmail from Tanzania, who was the keynote speaker, built on the momentum with her captivating narrative on the theme. She began with a fascinating account of her childhood and how she became a female pilot against a barge of opposition just because she was a girl. In her words, “the girl child is a powerful individual and her value does not depend on her ability to be a wife, daughter or mother. She could be successful without being any of these.” Nahida then proceeded to give a well researched historical rundown on the predicament of the girl child in different civilizations. The concept of who the girl child is was analyzed from cultural and academic perspectives. It was interesting to learn about the Quintilian theory of the art of education and the issues surrounding the rights of girls in different times and cultures across the globe.



A cross section of participants at the conference

Giving examples from Ancient Egypt, The Roman Empire, The British Empire, etc, she expounded how Women’s rights were not allowed to fully manifest; they were not allowed to vote, to own businesses or to even divorce. She gave examples of advertisements that demeaned the girl child and women in general in the Victorian era and other eras.

Nahida threw up interesting statistics on gender-based violence especially rape, female genital mutilation and infanticide. “At least 200million women alive in the world have undergone Female Genital Mutilation from age 5. At least 15 million women in the world have been raped, physically and sexually abused.....” She went on to say, “in India this year, because of the dowry system where the girl pays the dowry, the parents that can’t afford it tend to kill the girl child.”

She further went on about the happenings and dangers the girl child faces and experiences just because she is a girl. According to statistics which she stated, boys are more likely to be in private schools than girls and girls are more likely to be out of school than boys. Nahida expressed her displeasure on the recent statistics which revealed that; today the girl child is still neglected.

Nahida concluded her presentation with displays about women who have made an impact in various fields but are not well represented in literature. Most noteworthy was Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti, who despite all her exploits is mostly remembered only as the first woman to drive a car in Nigeria.

How do we solve this issue of marginalisation?

Nahida answered this by saying, "African women need to tell African women stories, we need to speak for ourselves rather be spoken for. We need stories that inspire women to be game changers and heroes of themselves."

After the presentation by the keynote speaker, there was a panel discussion to reflect on the theme of the conference and the message from Nahida. The panellists to lead the discussion were Sandra Oma Etubiebi from Nigeria and Faith Mutheu from Kenya. Both discussants gave glowing personal testimonies of how they were promoting the education of the girl child. Sandra



Sandra Oma Etubiebi (Discussant), Nahida Esmail (Keynote Speaker) and Faith Mutheu (Discussant)

gave an interesting lesson on girl child education outside of the school system. She stunned the hall when she spoke of how her 9-year old daughter can sew a full dress from material to finish. Faith Mutheu, who is below 20 years of age, stressed the fact that we have to practice what we preach, to change our narratives and actually follow through. Sandra Etubiebi further explained that when we write, we shouldn't just paint a picture of the pain of the girl child but we should also show the victories and rise of the girl child. Nahida added that training the girl child is also training the boy child because the boy child comes from the girl child.

It is important to note that students and teachers of Zamani College, Kaduna were present at the conference. The students presented poetry pieces at the interlude between the keynote address and the panel discussion. They were a colourful addition to the conference. Just like Her Excellency, Hadiza El-rufai had stated earlier, education must go beyond the school system. The visionary act of the school authorities in Zamani College is greatly acknowledged.



Students of Zamani College, Kaduna, Nigeria

There was a question and answer session after the discussion as well as comments and contributions to the discussion. There was then a short tea break before the participants split into 4 groups. The group discussions lasted about 50 minutes, each group discussing different topics.

The topics were:

1. Why the girl child?
2. How can African writers use their shared values to promote African literature?
3. Culture as a catalyst for developing African literature
4. How to overcome the challenges of writing and publishing in Africa.

Members of the groups were given an opportunity to discuss the various issues under their sub-topics and a representative of each group made a presentation on behalf of the group. At the end some of the recommendations made were;

- Writers should consider folklore, proverbs, and folktales as sources of rich local content for promoting culture.
- We should be proud of our culture and infuse positive elements of them into our literary works.
- Research and documentation are an important means of developing our literary space.
- The need for better systems to make books easily accessible to a wider range of the population at a cheaper rate.
- We have to be deliberate about the type of education we give our girls.

At the end of the conference which ended some minutes past 4 PM, excitement could be seen on the faces of the participants. Everybody spoken to had great experiences to share about the conference. They spoke about how they had a better understanding of how literature could be used to promote the girl child and expressed optimism that the 2019 African Writers Conference will sustain the literary renaissance. The participants all received a certificate of participation.

Away from the conference, winners emerged at the 2018 African Writers Awards held later in the evening of the same day. The event which paraded the finest writers in Africa was a celebration of the beauty of the girl child. The winners at the event were;

Children's Literature – Manu Herbstein (Ghana) for 'Roise'

Flash Fiction – Maryhilda Ibe (Nigeria) for 'Fragments.'

Poetry – Chiamaka Onu-Okpara (Nigeria) for 'A Battle Cry to be Read Loudly and Softly.'

Short Stories – Benson Mugo (Kenya) for 'Dawn.'



Chief Saka DBOSZ Junior Receiving an Award for Excellence

Special awards were given to some writers of African descent who have contributed immensely towards the growth and development of the African literary space. Those recognised were;

Sandra Oma Etubiebi (Nigeria)

Wakini Kuria (Kenya)

Edith Knight Adhiambo Ochieng (Kenya)

Nahida Esmail (Tanzania)

Halima Usman (Nigeria)

Saka Dbosz Junior (Nigeria)

Artists like Zaguru and Blessing Benson thrilled the guests with spectacular performances.

by
Namse Udosen,
Public Relations Manager,
African Writers Development Trust,
Kaduna,
Nigeria



Tapiwanashe Nyabvure: 13-year-old Award Winning Poet

Thirteen-year-old Tapiwanashe Nyabvure, a Form 2 student at Irene Christian College in Harare beat 150 other Poets and their entries to emerge Winner of the 2018 DD4P Annual Poetry Competition in the 13 - 15-year-old category. The selection was done by ten judges; three men and seven women from Namibia, Nigeria, Tanzania, UK, US and Zimbabwe.

This happened on the 24th of November, the eve of the UN Campaign on 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based violence, where Daughters Destined For Purpose (DD4P), a charity organization held its annual Poetry Competition Awards Ceremony. For the past three years, the competition has been a regular activity of the organization to raise awareness around gender-based violence for teenagers. The poetry competition targets boys and girls aged 13-19 years old, who have written poems on different themes, in 2016, it was "My Body", in 2017, it was "My Emotions" and in 2018, it was "My Relationships".

When interviewed on the motivation for her award-winning entry, Tapiwanashe said, "I started to write because there was no one to share information with. Mum

was too busy to talk to and dad was never present and family members were too far. Hence, I keep a personal Journal named, 'Julie,' which I started writing in my 6th grade in 2016 when I was eleven years. I pictured Julie as a personal friend I could tell what was happening to me. I could tell her about what had happened in the past, present and the future."



Tapiwanashe Nvabvure

Understanding that Poetry is one way of expressing emotions that might otherwise be difficult to express and can also be a form of therapy, the founder of DD4P, Hopolang Phororo, is hopeful that the organization will engage and encourage more young people to have conversations on sensitive topics while raising awareness.

We at Writers Space Africa (WSA) and the African Writers Development Trust (AWDT) celebrate the brilliance of her words as we showcase her award-winning poetry titled "My Relationship."

My Relationships

Relationships are punitive and hopeless.

What is the point of being conjugal but worthless?

One day, he loves you and makes dishonest vows,

The next day he whips you and treats you like a cow.

She wants to be treated like a human with affection,

Instead, he sends her signs of rejection.

Who is she to you, a human or an object?

She is living and not some science project!

A war emerges from nothing but fire,

Although it seems harmless,
It spreads and becomes dire.
The seedling produced from their fake love,
Is brutally burnt like a discarded white glove.
Her tears of sorrow are nothing to the unit,
She hides away, untouched and forgotten.

As the war continues,
The young seedling grows;
With weary wallows,
That she does not show.
Like a tramp lost in the deep dark woods,
She is trapped in confusion,
With depression as her hood.

The voices in her head grow stronger and louder,
Making her do things that she must carefully ponder.
She scars herself for sins she did not instigate,
Her best friend, a book, a treasure too intimate.
Love to her is nothing but a dream,
When she processes the word all she gets is a plastered seam.



2018 AFRICAN WRITERS CONFERENCE AND AWARDS



Zamani College Students Shine at African Writers Conference

Literary enthusiasts from across Africa gathered at the International Conference Centre Abuja for the first African Writers Conference and Awards on the 1st of December 2018. The conference was themed; “Re-Imagining African Literature: New Voices, New narratives in the Fight for the Girl-Child.” The discussions at the event, led by Nahida Esmail from Tanzania, Faith Mutheu from Kenya and Hadiza El-rufai, first lady of Kaduna state, centred on how literature could be used to paint a better picture of the girl child in Africa.

A shining light among the participants at the event were the students of Zamani College Kaduna. In an era where schools are obsessed with only curricular activities and exam preparations, it was refreshing to see secondary school students engage in academic activities outside traditional school ones. The students wowed with their contributions during the breakout sessions to discuss narratives on the girl-child. In addition to that, they performed three pieces of breathe taking poetry that displayed a rare depth of thought by teenagers

The presence of the students from Zamani College at the African Writers conference awakens the call for a deeper curricular experience for students in Nigeria. The curriculum is the total learning experience provided by the school, it includes the content of subjects, the pedagogical methods and other activities. Adeinoye (2007) puts forward a view that “curriculum is a laid down activity followed in any school system. Nigeria’s philosophy of education begins with the

declaration that, “we believe that: education is an instrument for national development; to this end; the formulation of ideas, their integration for national, and the interaction of persons and ideas are all aspects of education (NPE, 2004)”.

In 21st century learning environments, curriculum is not a static document but a dynamic tool to improve teaching and learning. The school authorities in Zamani College have displayed a



Students of Zamani College, Kaduna, Nigeria

firm understanding of this principle by their participation in the African Writers Conference and Awards. They have put their students above the WAEC-NECO-JAMB mentality prevalent among schools in Nigeria. They are birthing a new generation of Achebe’s and Alkali’s in literature but it goes beyond that. They have also been exposed to a platform to develop essential critical thinking skills especially in challenging primitive cultural stereotypes. They have had an experience of rubbing minds with some of the best thinkers not just in Nigeria but in Africa. In years to come, they would reflect on their engagement with Hadiza El-rufai, Shittu Fowora, Anthony Onugba, Halima Usman, Bashiru Amuneni, Nahida Esmail to mention a few.

The door of opportunity opened for those teens leads to limitless educational development that they would never receive in any classroom.

by
Namse Udosen,
Nigeria

FLASH FICTION



AMARYLLIS

OLUWAGBENGA AYOMIDE RUTH - Nigeria



To any other person in the locale, there might not be a big deal about that day. The warm summer sun, the grasses wet from a drizzle, the quiet neighbourhood, the early joggers, people and school children setting out for the day, are just the norm to be experienced on Kruger Street in Pretoria, Johannesburg. For Mary Malibongue, she woke up feeling calm. The year has been pure trouble. Having finally recuperated from the nervous breakdown that the divorce with her husband of 30 years caused her, she'd wake up every morning, flip through the day remotely and stay in bed all evening, waiting for the next day or the day she'd been pronounced dead. But, hope did seem to smile down as she noticed the nice scenery that November 29, 2018 had. She smiled as things seem to look picturesque and wondered about her brightened mood.

Mary made her way to her kitchen and wished something would just brighten up the interior of her house as well. Just then, right before her eyes were the first bloom of the 'Red Pearl' amaryllis she had bought early January. Her eyes shone at the nursery pots by the window containing her favourite flowers which she had not been able to take care of in a while. She felt energized with joy and knew she must strive again like the amaryllis. Just then, her phone rang and she picked it up to hear the cherry voice of her daughter from faraway in Canada, informing her that she and her family, alongside her older brother have planned to spend the holidays with her - a dream she never thought would manifest.

This is surely the start of a new beginning for a woman who has decided to give 'faith in God' a second chance.

POETRY



NEW BEGINNINGS

New nights draw nigh while
Eyes and ears are edified as
Wisdom waives whys.

Beckoning bright lights bring
Events expected to excite while
Gears grind to guide and
Invite innovative insight!
Novel nuances every night;
Negative notions nullified;
Interests and ideas incite us to have
Norms thrown in a gravesite.
Our Goals are gauged in Fahrenheit as we gorge on
Seasons summoned before sight!

Musenga Katongo,
Zambia

EXCITEMENT OF NEWNESS

The leaves are so fresh with dew
The musicians pluck their harps
The birds take over with their chirps
As if announcing that the year is new

Mother is excited,
Her little boy will join school
Little boy is excited,
His new uniform is very cool
Father is excited,
His daughter's got a job opportunity
Daughter is excited,
She will now be shifting to the city
Blacksmith is excited,
The farmer will buy his smelt fork
Farmer is excited,
His new cart will transport the pork

The villagers attend the chief's meeting
To pick calendars from the government
Every January this is the year's first event
Announcing the start of a new beginning

Benny Wanjohi,
Kenya

HONEY TEARS

Every time those memories we shared sink deeply inside my heart,
I feel like my soul has been chained.
The anxiety you left me creeps in but,
With silent footsteps I rise not knowing where I am proceeding.

I have learnt to live a life of inconvenience.
I have learnt only to trust no one but myself.
In the comfort of my small red blanket,
Only my pillow wipes away my tears.

Beyond the boundaries set by society,
A space for myself I have created.
Voices of contempt shouting,
Why can't you just man up and act like a lady!
Lady?
How can I be a lady in tatters!
Spare me the drama for I cannot live for anybody.

But the sun shines and my hope is kindled.
I see brightness sweeping away the sorrows of yesterday.
I have re-imaged and learnt to live with this separation,
With the anxiety creeping in as night falls,
Alone in my small dark quota with no-one to send a goodnight kiss,
Those romantic texts and emails,
I have no option but to face it with brave eyes.
This is just the beginning of the fate of my life.

Tanyaradzwa. N.L. Mtema
Zimbabwe.

SHREDS OF HOPE

Dead ends are rather epic
Shadow of the night could reach a peak
Pangs of death on you may rake
Crawl ye under the confusion ache
The shreds of hope burning at the stake.

Reality is not so real after all
Alone, you are cut out from all
Darkness is become your pal
In the arms of loneliness, you fall
In the tomb of life, like one with a pall.

Joyful sound, a thing of the past
Light in the tunnel, a mirage
Failures, defeats and co, you can't run past
They have become your reflections
Firm with you, like your shadow.

Like phoenix, you can rise
Death may be a good thing
You think not but the seed rises into a tree
Once dead, but now flying free
A new beginning, proclaimed by her wings.

Fasanya Adesoji,
Nigeria



FREE FROM PRISON

Set free from prison:

The door's widely opened;

As we peer in its vastness,

And here comes the new moon:

Seeking consolation in the sun.

What hope for shedded leaves?

The soles of their feet

Dry as the dust;

And gloomy pictures ahead.

Gone's yet another year;

Whose scars of recess are deep.

Pity the paupers' son:

For his frail chance in the city.

Retrace your roots, poor lad!

Leave those festive memories:

The eyes of hope are blinking;

Upon those meditating on her.

Omadang Yowasi,

Uganda



KEEP YOUR HEAD UP

You can look back
At funerals
Grave yards swallowing you present
What turn to be fire
Was crimination burial

You can reflect on your flaws
Scratch your back against the wall
For your body screams for help
Having flash backs that of
Knives that cut loose with no remorse

Keep your head up
See your reflection on the sky
With your invisible wings
Imitate the angels when they fly

Float in the air
Breathe right
Don't suffocate

Live for you are full of life
Adventure
Let the universe feed you pleasure

You won't die yet
You have divided yourself
Into trinity love, peace, hope

Out of darkness comes light
At the end you are everywhere
Living

Xolani Ntuli,
South Africa.

SURVIVING SUICIDE

All the while 2018 was a movie with only 12 scenes
In each one of them I was both the lead and the stunt man
Also the supporting actor occasionally thrown under the bus,
Every time the director says 'cut!'
I am rushed to the emergency room and it is end of scene

12 scenes all end in blaring sirens
12 notes suck between here and gone
And a shame too dark to navigate alone
They don't tell you about the journey back to sanity
After letting the waves swallow you
And then crush you back to shore

After a cocktail of pills and detergent
Even the road back to sobriety is repulsive
I did not mean to die by my own hands
Depression is a visitor without etiquette
Often overstating her welcome
But we survived
If only to start all over again
This time more alive than ever
Embracing one ray of sunshine with such hope
Because new beginnings have never felt this welcoming

Phodiso Modirwa,
Botswana.

THE PUZZLED HOPE

Whose hope at juncture?

The parents who pawn one's property,
Or the child who refuses to hold the pen –
Believing that their parents will live long.

Whose hope at juncture?

The one who cuts-down the price,
Or the one who opens the opportunities –
Expecting survival-for-the-fittest will serve them.

Whose hope at juncture?

The driver who gives a grain of sugar to policeman,
Or the policeman who receives a grain of sugar;
To let him go with worn out car –
Prone to cause recognizable calamity.

Whose hope at juncture?

The man who rejects the girl,
Or the girl who damps the innocent infant –
Believing that problems will be resolved.

Whose hope at juncture?

The one who thinks like a lion,
Or the one who believes like a deer –
In fertile jungle full of green grasses.

The mist and smoke in our heads
leak the golden future.

Meckson Kaboga,
Tanzania

WATERFALL JOINED BABY'S TEARS

Heaven winkles afar

We've travelled miles on end

Cloudy skies smile at large

Not less Cumulonimbus clouds drive the gate

We came

Seeking undefined home

Followed this trajectory

We came in free fall

This beautiful emptiness we fall

So good without sun's call

We fell

But in three thousand holes surrounding a theatre

Choked gushing streams we joined

Friends we made without auction

The skies kept crying

While the clouds quake

Waterfalls join baby's tears

And that a fallen rain could start its new

Life on the rock

Kweku Anamoa Taylor,

Ghana.

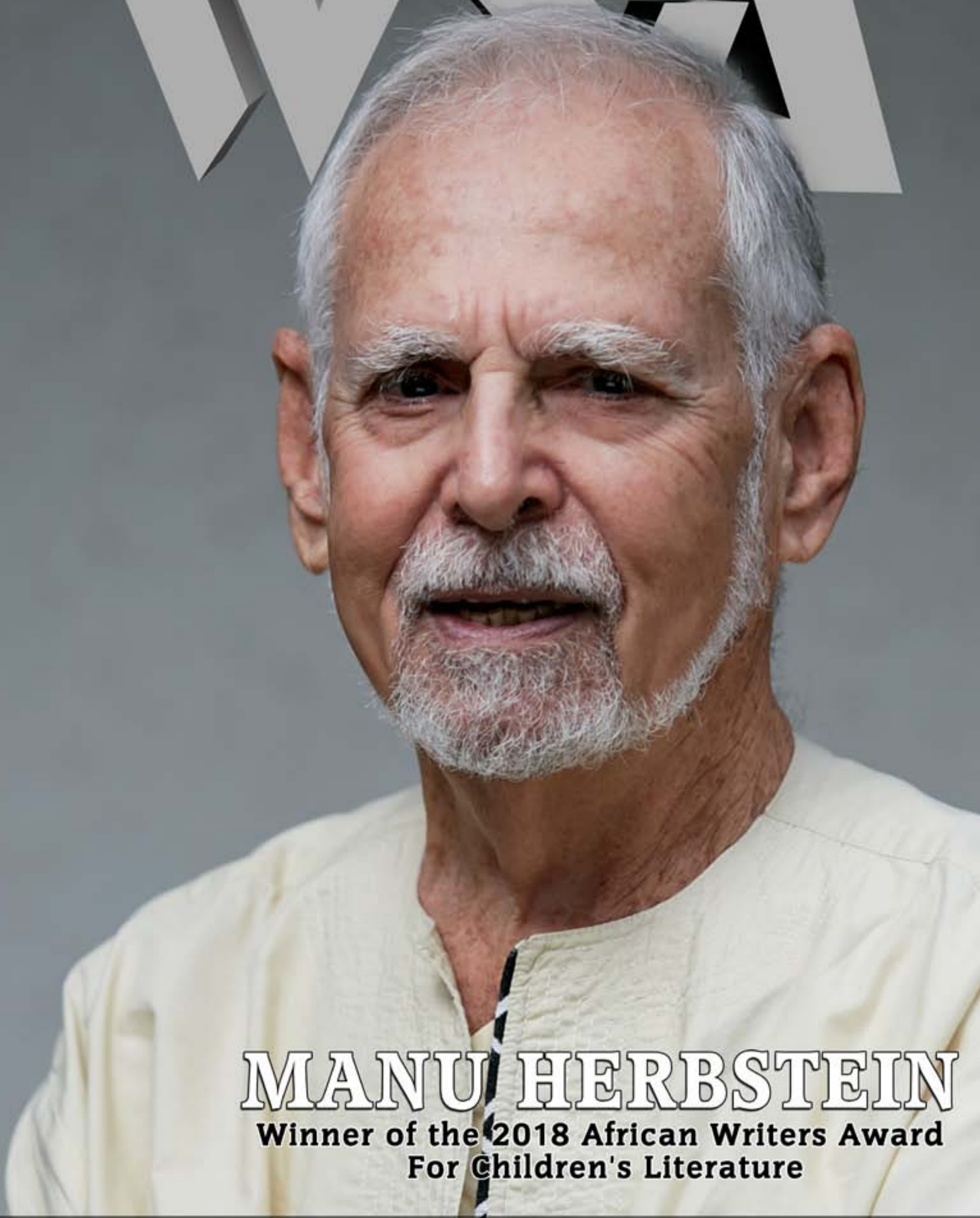


ALL I REMEMBER

I forgot
And when I reached with my hand to the twilight
To explore its talents
I thought that it is a lipstick that a black woman left in the sky
That is all I remember
For I forgot most realities of things
That truth hidden in the crossroads of a poem
I did not touch it, I was afraid of it
And scared of its hymen
She is far away there between two ports
I used to drink from her bosom a thirst
That never quenched my simplicity
But she sneaked one night alone in a dream
And left for me a speech on the table

Fethi Sassi,
Tunisia

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MANU HERBSTEIN
**Winner of the 2018 African Writers Award
For Children's Literature**

About Manu Herbstein

Manu Herbstein (b. 1936) has dual South African and Ghanaian citizenship and lives in Ghana. His grandson, Kwaku Thamsanqa, 10, lives in Johannesburg. His granddaughters, Marie, 13, and Sophie Akosua, 10, live in Warsaw, Poland.

Manu's novel, *Ama, a Story of the Atlantic Slave Trade*, won the 2002 Commonwealth Writers Prize for the Best First Book. *The Boy who Spat in Sargrenti's Eye* received the Creative Book of the Year Award of the African Literature Association in 2016 and a Children's Africana Book Award in 2017. The novel *Akosua and Osman* won a Burt Award for African Fiction in Ghana in 2011.

You can find out more about him from either www.manuherbstein.com or www.ama.africatoday.com. Please enjoy his winning story titled, *Rosie was a Dawdler*

ROSIE WAS A DAWDLER

by

Manu Herbstein



Rosie was a dawdler

She dawdled taking her bath.

She dawdled getting dressed in the morning.

She dawdled eating her breakfast.

“Oh, Rosie,” said her mother, “you’re such a dawdler. I don’t know how we’ll manage when you start school next year. If you don’t hurry up I’ll have to report you to Sasabonsam.”

“Oh, Rosie-Maame,” said her father, “Please don’t trouble my little girl.”

Rosie’s father was the headmaster of the village school. Rosie had two big brothers, Kwame and Yaw, and a big sister, Ama, but Rosie was her father’s favourite.

That night, after he had told her a bed-time story, she begged him not to leave her.

“What’s the matter, Rosie?” he asked.

“Sa-sa-bon-sam,” was all that she could stutter.

“Oh, that’s it,” her father laughed, wiping the tears from her eyes. “Rosie, there’s no such creature. Sasabonsam lives only in storybooks.”

But he lay down by her side and stayed with her until she fell asleep.

Every morning at 5 o’clock, when it’s still dark, Rosie’s mother wakes Kwame and Yaw and Ama. They dress quickly, slip on their chaley-wote’s and collect their buckets. She also wakes Rosie.

“You may still be too small to carry a bucket of water on your head but that’s no reason why you shouldn’t join your brothers and sister. Next year, after your birthday, you can start with a small bucket.”

“Rosie,” called Yaw.

“Rosie,” called Kwame. “Hurry up. We’ll be late for school.”

At last they were ready to set off. Kwame led. He’s the oldest. Now there was just enough light to make their way down the narrow path through the forest. Yaw and Ama followed. Rosie was last, carrying her red plastic beach bucket.

“Rosie, don’t dawdle,” said Ama.

At the stream, Kwame helped Yaw and Ama to balance their full buckets on their head pads. Then he lifted his own bucket.

“Let’s go,” he said.

But Rosie was busy, filling and emptying her own small bucket. When she looked up Kwame and Yaw and Ama were already out of sight, round the bend in the path. Leaving her bucket behind, she ran after them, calling, “Sister Ama, wait. Wait for me.”

Then, suddenly, something gripped her under her arms, holding her tight, and something else, something rough and smelly, gripped her face, covering her eyes.

A gruff voice whispered in her ear, “Don’t be scared, little girl. I won’t harm you.”

A moment later Rosie felt herself whooshing up through the air. Up, up, up. She wiggled her feet, to see if she could touch the ground, but there was nothing there. She stretched out her arms and leaves brushed over her hands.

At last she came to a stop.

“I’m going to uncover your eyes,” said the gruff voice. “But first you must promise that you won’t look at me. Do you promise?”

“I promise,” said Rosie.

“What do you promise?” asked the voice.

“I promise that I won’t look at you,” said Rosie.

What a sight met Rosie’s eyes. She was right on top of the forest, looking down on the tops of the trees. Green, green, green. Leaves, leaves, leaves. Green leaves as far as she could see, dancing in the gentle breeze.

“Wow!” said Rosie, beginning to turn to speak to the owner of the gruff voice.

The grip tightened.

“Remember your promise,” said the voice.

“Have you seen the forest?” it asked.

Rosie nodded her head.

“Now look down there,” said the voice.

The forest had been cleared. The trunks of great trees lay scattered on the ground. A man stood on a flimsy platform, using a chainsaw to cut into the trunk of an enormous silk-cotton tree. There was already a



vee-shaped cut on one side of the trunk. Now the man was cutting another, a little higher, on the opposite side. The chainsaw made an ugly high-pitched buzzing noise.

“That’s my favourite tree,” the voice whispered in Rosie’s ear, “my favourite, favourite tree. Do you see what they’re doing to it?”

Just then the tree began to topple, first slowly and then more and more quickly. The chainsaw man jumped down from the platform and ran for his life. The tree hit the ground in a great cloud of dust and leaves and broken branches, making a noise like a clap of thunder. As the dust settled, Rosie heard the voice sobbing quietly.

Then it said, “That’s why I brought you here. To see what your people are doing to my forest. Now you may turn and look at me. Don’t be afraid. I won’t hurt you.”

He was indeed fearful to behold. Straggly black hair. Red eyes. Pointed ears. Sharp teeth. And a long slimy tongue that flickered as he talked.

“My name is Sasabonsam,” he said. “Have you heard of me?”

Rosie nodded.

“This forest is my home, my only home,” Sasabonsam said. “If the chainsaw men cut down all the trees I’ll have nowhere else to go. Do you understand?”

Rosie nodded again.

Sasabonsam told her what he wanted her to do. He made her make a promise. Then he lowered her slowly to the forest floor. As she felt her feet strike the ground, Sasabonsam said, “Close your eyes.”

“Goodbye,” he said. “Remember your promise. Now count to ten before you open your eyes.”

When Rosie opened her eyes Sasabonsam had disappeared. She looked up into trees above, but there was no sign of him.

Just then her father came rushing down the path, with Kwame and Yaw and Ama following him and Rosie’s mother behind, holding her skirt and trying to keep up.

Rosie’s father picked her up and hugged her tight.

“Rosie, what happened?” he asked. “We thought you were lost.”

“Oh Rosie,” said her mother, “dawdling as usual.”

That night, after he had tucked her in, Rosie's father picked up a book.

"Papa," said Rosie, "tonight I want to tell you a story."

Rosie's father raised his eyebrows, something he did when he was surprised.

"Fine," he said. "Go ahead."

Then Rosie told her father everything that had happened to her that morning. She told him what she had promised Sasabonsam and she made her father promise too.

The next morning Rosie's father went to see the Chief and his elders. That evening the town crier went around the village beating gong-gong and making an important announcement.

Before dawn the next day the young men of the Asafo Company gathered in the village square, armed with cutlasses and axes and sticks. Singing war songs, they led the way into the forest, followed by the Chief and his elders. Behind them Rosie's father marched at the head of all the school children, dressed in their khaki-khaki.

As dawn broke, they heard the noise of the chainsaws. Then, as they entered the clearing they saw the chainsaw men at work. The drummers set up their fontomfrom drums and beat out an ancient rhythm of war. The chainsaw men heard the drums above the sound of their saws. They turned and saw the Asafo Company approaching. Without hesitating they just dropped their chainsaws and ran. They didn't even wait to put on their shirts.

The Asafo men used their axes to smash all the chainsaws to smithereens.

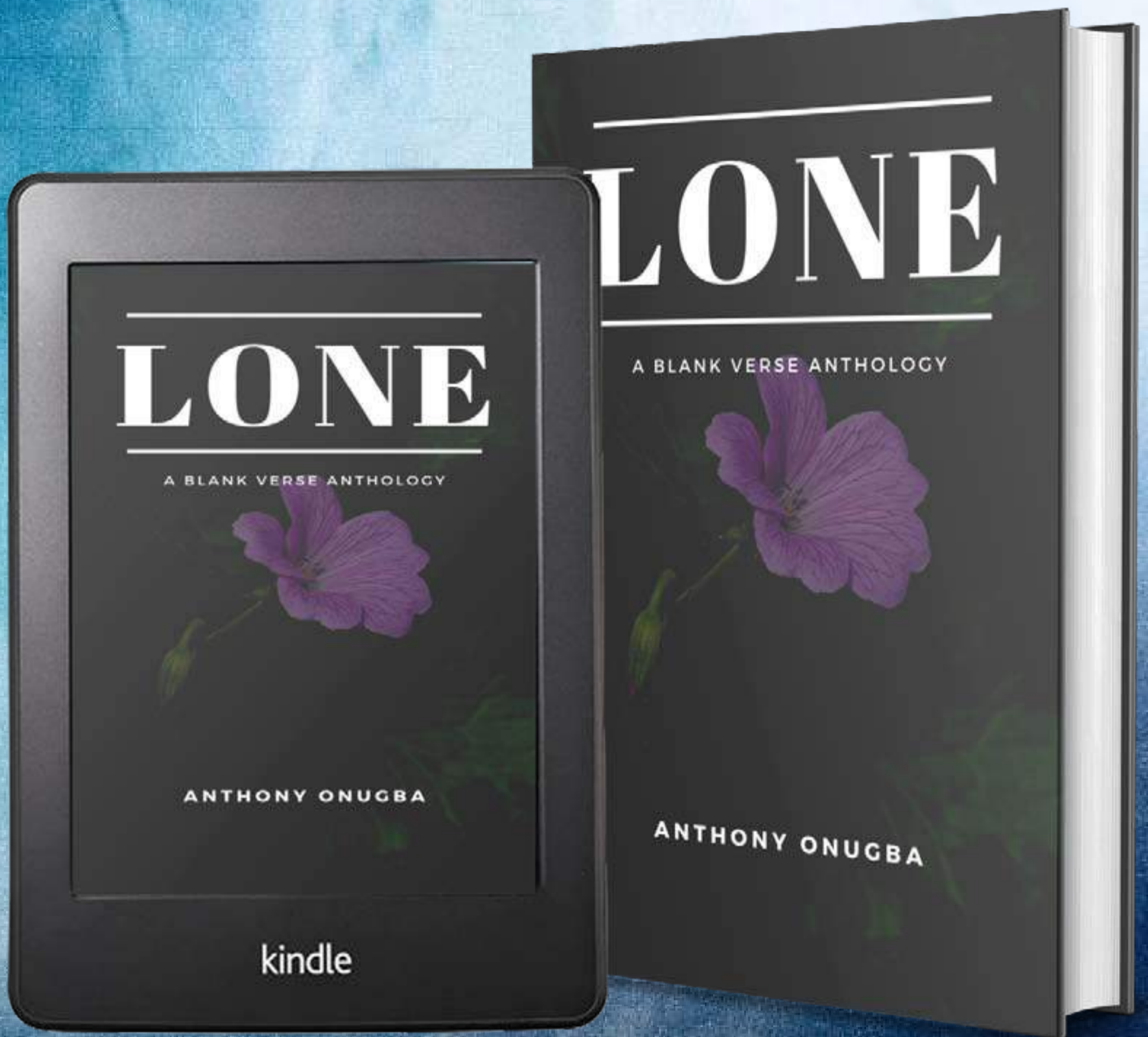
The Chief took his seat under his umbrella, with his elders on either side of him. Through his Okyeame, he made a long speech. In the end, he called Rosie's father to bring Rosie to the front so that he could praise her for all to hear. Then he sat her on his knee and a photographer took their photograph. Rosie looked up at the unspoiled forest and thought she caught a glimpse of Sasabonsam peeping over the top branches. She waved to him.

"Who are you waving at?" asked the Chief.

But Rosie didn't tell him.

The next day the photo of Rosie and the Chief appeared on the front page of the newspaper with the headline "Six-year Old Girl Saves Sacred Grove from Chainsaw Ruffians."

"Sometimes," Rosie's father told her mother, "it pays to dawdle."



Coming Soon in 2019

* The image on the cover is for promotional purposes only.

A close-up photograph of a silver and gold fountain pen lying on a spiral-bound notebook. The notebook has white pages with light blue horizontal lines. The word "ESSAYS" is written in large, bold, black, serif capital letters across the center of the page. The background is a blurred wooden surface.

ESSAYS



Making Meaning of a New Beginning

by

Shimbo Pastory William – Tanzania

Have you wondered why we always celebrate ‘beginnings’? Is our optimism exaggerated? How much does the beginning guarantee the future? But at least it guarantees beyond reasonable doubt, the existence of the future. New days, months, years, come and go. We cannot discern much, just as we cannot design much. Everything is said to happen in the beginning. The credit of a good thing goes to its beginning, and in the same the failure of a bad one also is attributed to its beginning.

The joy of a new beginning does not come from what is begun, neither from the act nor from the process of beginning; of course it is itself never clear until it grows to a somewhat independent adolescence. The joy comes from the relief

that we have passed a stage, the recognition of transcending from the normalcy, the creation of historical fact. It is not a joy of reaching a step higher, but of leaving behind the familiar grounds.

The celebration of a new beginning therefore needs not to be a moment to celebrate passage of time, but rather of recalling and critiquing our maximization of utility in the previous phase of the natural provision we call time. How much has the old beginning impacted in us? Can the new beginning we joy over find hope in the old circumstances we ourselves have worked out?

An epochal wisdom by George Santayana reads: "Those who forget their histories are condemned for repeating the same." The lessons of the past should mark new beginnings of growth and progress. Otherwise we are dumb to the question in John Donne's verse: "... Tell me where all the past years are..." At first it all was beginning, of course new, Holy Writs would say. But it will not stand so, all has got to grow. Life and the living, knowledge and the knowers, questions and the questioners, all about the same we rotate.

The story of a new beginning is the story of bettering old scripts. It is the story of smoothing down crooked alley ways and clearing windscreens; emptying one's cup so that it can be filled once more. It is the story of appreciating the wonder of limitation, lack and deficiency, and setting up plans for improving them. It is a story of embracing new knowledge and discarding ungrounded preconceptions, bias and prejudices. It is a story of retreat, resolution and change, employing new means to solve our ancient tight spots. It is a story of trying and testing the merits of the relationships we keep.

With new beginnings, life is ever full of smiles. Darkness enters when the new beginnings disease and strangle to death the very richness which nature and the Maker has deemed on man from the most primeval of all beginnings. It is never late for new gracious beginnings.

Bien Cordialement.



Once Upon a Time Still To Come

by

Sandra Oma Etubiebi - Nigeria

“Once upon a time” was how every story began. That phrase never failed to perk up the ears, widen the eyes, and make the mind open sesame. It is a lovely phrase, especially to the listener or reader. It is a promise of an adventure into something that has happened. According to World Wide Words, “The expression has for a very long time indeed been an idiom ... People often use it in a hand-waving imprecise way to indicate a moment in the past or to imply a fairy tale.” The phrase has come to mean much more than the sum of its parts. When “once upon a time” is said or read, expectations are aroused. We expect to hear a tale. We ready our minds to take in unique pictures of a memorable event. Today, most stories, writings, and novels do not begin with “once upon a time,” yet all of life’s events can be capsulated in the phrase “once upon a time.”

Once upon a time, in the book of Beginnings called Genesis found in the beginning chapter of the Bible, we also find the phrase “once upon a time” written as “in the beginning.” True to type, those words introduced the creation of the world and the tale of how everything fell into place. In the enduring 1965 movie “Sound of Music” when Maria wanted to teach the seven kids how to sing, she gave a most memorable melodious rendition,

which began with, “Let’s start at the very beginning, a very good place to start. When you read, you begin with ABC. When you sing, you begin with do re mi.” With words so true, Maria led the kids on a journey with the sound of music –the journey of their own “once upon a time.”

Once upon a time can begin anytime; this very minute can usher in the birth of a child – once upon a time, a child was born. The minute after, a couple could be exchanging their vows entering into matrimony –once upon a time; they said “I do.” The minute after the next, a car accident leaves a drunken driver alive but without the use of his limbs – once upon a time, he lost his limbs. Another tick of the clock and someone left for dead got a miracle, rising, leaping, and praising God – once upon a time, he was healed. Tomorrow will come and a writer will finally reach the end of his manuscript, authored, done and dusted –once upon a time, he wrote a book. It really is a beautiful adverbial phrase that captures the tale of life’s events –whether bad or good.

“Once upon a time” gives room for retrospection. It invites us into what has been and the opportunity to leave with lessons learned. When we read that “once upon a time there was a beautiful girl called Cinderella,” the writer invited us into the world of an iconic hardworking beautiful young girl who suffered at the hands of her stepmother, but later went on to become the bride of a handsome rich Prince. The phrase has never left the listener or reader without a lesson or two or three. It is an unofficial bearer of morals as seen by the many fairy tales, folktales, and moonlight tales that begin with “once upon a time.” It sprinkles out lessons the very same way life’s event leaves a trail of lessons in its wake.

Once upon a time can be written, again; Of course, anyone can write a story that begins with “once upon a time.” Anyone can capture life’s has-been and capsule it in “once upon a time.” That’s easy enough. But what about writing a “once upon a time” before the time? What about writing a story before it happens so that it can be made to happen? What about lessons to live instead of leaving lessons? What about lessons to earn instead of lessons learned? The start of a year, the turn of a time, and the iconic tick of the clock that ignites the “Happy New Year” roar is all the impetus needed to write a “once upon a time” before the time. It is the opportunity to capsule the dream of tomorrow’s preferred events on a freshly opened blank screen with the opening lines “once upon a time...”

Happy New Year



Short Stories



A HOME FARAWAY

By

Kimberly Chirodzero - Zimbabwe

We are strangers in a new land, learning to carry a language on our tongue that isn't ours. We are like children once more, learning the proper way to act and speak. Our words are heavy with accents that scream, "Africa! Africa!" Today we celebrate the birth of Tanaje, the first of our family line to be born in this land. The one who will not have to feel like a stranger borrowing space on alien shores for the rest of her life. A year ago we fled the tyranny and military rule of our beloved motherland. My brother and his new wife were expecting when we ran and so Tanaje was born on this land. Today she turns one so my family is throwing a party.

It will be the first party we ever throw here. We have been far too scared to be loud so we kept to ourselves the entirety of the past year. Mama is determined to celebrate Tanaje's birthday in style and yesterday Baba went around the block inviting neighbours by himself. We live in a relatively nice part of town. Baba saved a lot for us to start our new lives here comfortably. I stand in the black and silver kitchen wondering if I should tell Ratidzo, Tanaje's mom that I do not know how to bake a cake either. Mama will take it as a bad omen, that our tentative first step into this new world is doomed to bring disaster. Mama believes in omens the way other people believe in God.

I am still standing there clueless when there is a knock on the back door to the kitchen. Happy to do something other than staring helplessly at the ingredients on the kitchen counter, I rush towards the door. For a moment I stare wordlessly at the visitor. It's a triple tier chocolate cake with chocolate dipped strawberries crowded on top. "Hey, I'm your neighbour, Riley," a voice says from behind the cake. I finally notice the girl behind the cake as she moves it to peek at me. She has honey blonde hair and the deepest blue eyes I've ever seen, set against milky skin only slightly sun-kissed. In her white t-shirt and blue jeans, she is the ultimate all American girl. "Can I come in?" she asks, smiling.

I step aside and let Riley in. She sets the cake on the counter next to the cake ingredients we had out. "My mom owns a bakery. When we got the party invite we decided to bring a cake for the birthday girl," she says breezily as if she hasn't just saved our day. "Thank you so much," there is tremendous relief in Ratidzo's voice. Riley looks at me questioningly. "We had no idea what we were doing," I explain. "I'm Tinashe, by the way. This is Rati, my sister in law." Riley nods at us both. "Need any help with the preps?" She smiles at us. She is friendly and likeable. I had lived an entire year in this neighbourhood and never made friends. None of us did. I guess deep down in our blood, we were still running.

Riley and I are sitting around the kitchen counter laughing when there is another knock on the back door. Rati has her head stuck in the oven poking at something so I go to the door. The girl standing there is the same age as me and Riley and she is resplendent. Her skin is a flawless tawny colour with undertones of burnished umber. As she extends her hand she tosses the tresses of her ink black hair over her shoulder. They land on the glittering pink scarf covering half her upper body. Her top is gold glitter that ends just below her breasts. Her skirt is pink and edged in gold at the hem. In one hand, she holds a casserole dish against her hip. "Hi, I'm Aisha Patel. I live down the street," her voice is lilting. I smile as I introduce myself and let her in. "I brought some Chettinad pepper chicken. Made it myself. It reminds me of home," Aisha says. The yearning in her voice tells me she understands what it's like to miss land, stars and a sky you can call your own.

Riley and Aisha go to the same high school as me. We are making plans to walk to school together this year when someone knocks on the door again. Our next guest mo-

mentarily steals my breath because I had not expected to find another African girl so close to our house. Her deep mahogany skin is just like mine, her kinky curls identical to mine under my braids but most of all, that look in her eyes when her gaze locks on mine. It's a look of utter relief. "Hi, I'm Ada. Adaeze but you can call me Ada," her accent is definitely Nigerian. She walks in, hands firmly gripping a huge silver serving dish, her African print cocktail dress swish-swashing softly. "I made jollof rice," she tells me, her dish joining the others on the kitchen table.

Ada tells me she has been in America only six months and still feels a little out of place. Aisha and Riley are extra nice to her. I just know the four of us are going to be great friends. The fourth knock is welcomed by both Rati and I. We both rush to the door and laugh. Our guest says hello with laughter in her voice too at the welcome. Rati takes the two casserole dishes in her hands as I usher her in. Kemala, she tells us to call her. Kemala is a few years older than me. She, like all our guests today is mesmerizing. Her toasted almond skin looks as if it's lightly brushed with gold. She is wearing what I can only call a sarong knee length wrap dress in vibrant yellow and red.

"Smells good, Kemala. What is it?" Rati asks, opening the dishes Kemala brought. "Family recipe of Asinan Sayur. It's a salad. The bigger dish is Nasi Padang," Kemala indicates the rice in spice and veggies. "My grandmother made it all the time back home in Indonesia." We all beam at her, silently initiating her into our rapidly growing club. "Tina, why don't you go check on mom and dad in the living room? I'm ready to taste all these dishes," Rati says. She doesn't have to ask me twice. In the living room, I find a group of people I'm calling the parents. Obviously, they used the front door. My parents are standing with some of them, talking and sipping the lemonade I squeezed first thing in the morning. Outside I can see my brother and a couple guys going around back. "Your brother and some guys from the block are taking the grill out back," Mama tells me with a smile.

"We are all done in the kitchen," I tell her. "Good. Let's start the celebrations. I'll wake the birthday girl," Mama's head bobs towards the couch we moved against the wall to create an open space for the party. Tanaje is sleeping there on her belly in a fluffy pink dress. As I start for the kitchen, the front doorbell rings. I change direction and go to open the door. There are a lot of guys milling about outside, mostly my age and my brother's age. There are also kids playing games as they wait for the party to

start in earnest. It seems hard to believe all these people showed up for a family that has studiously avoided its neighbours for an entire year.

My attention, however, is on the couple who rang the doorbell. He is tall, with skin like swirled hot chocolate and a military haircut. He is wearing a red and black flannel shirt with black jeans and holding a casserole dish. She is petite and classy in black jeans and a red silk blouse that depicts a golden dragon snaking around her left breast to rest its head at the Mandarin collar. Her captivating blouse and the Chinese knot she has her hair in sets off her soft caramel beige skin to perfection. “Hi, I’m Ming and this is my husband Lamar,” she smiles as Lamar hands me the casserole dish. “I made you some Cahkangkung,” Ming tells me after I introduce myself. I thank her and usher them in.

On my way to the kitchen, I smile as I listen to the hum of different accents mixing and lifting in laughter. In the kitchen, I tell the others, “Cahkangkung from Ming and Lamar.” “Wow, we should totally throw parties more on this street. This is going to be an education,” Riley laughs. This year is going to be different for us because we have opened our hearts and found that we are not alone. We can carve our own space in this new land as our brave neighbours have done.



A FROG'S HOME IS CALLED A POND

By Okwesili Bryan Joe - Nigeria



I know you grew up in the streets, that you feel the streets made you, that you are now the streets, maybe just a human version. I know that when you were younger, death led your parents along and your relatives rejected you saying you were a bad omen, that wherever you passed something got missing. But you knew you were not a thief, that you could do nothing with your skinny limbs, so you told everyone you met on the streets that your relatives were wicked. But those strangers never understood you because you spoke Igbo in a city dominated by pidgin-speaking strangers. The few who understood you called you a liar, *ajonwa*, a bad child. You must have been six then.

I know that you roamed the streets and searched bins for cabbage and burnt rice and sardine tins for traces of oil; that bread moistened by morning dew was your favourite. I know that your hair turned the colour of rusting nails and your scalp was adorned with ringworms. I can remember them; pale brown and scaly in large patches. God! They

were really itchy.

I know that birds live on trees, that a frog's home is called a pond but you had no home. I remember you slept in empty danfo buses at night, sometimes in uncompleted buildings, crickets rhyming sorrowful tunes. They must have been dirges for you wished to never wake. But you always rose from the touch of the morning sun, with the will to get through the day in one piece, to survive.

You loved reggae, danced reggae, and sang reggae. You loved the way it made you feel; drunk and carefree. "We all die in the end", you said to yourself often.

In some ways, you survived into your teens and changed your name from Uchenna; the father's will, to Tijani, a name you heard one call another although you did not know what it meant but it sounded heroic, like a protagonist in a play. You made friends, homeless friends like you. Four, all boys. Friends that turned family but none cross-eyed nor smart as you were. They were family to you not because you all enjoyed bread moistened by morning dew nor because you touched one another at night but because family did not feel like a word amongst you; it felt alive- like an emotion.

You are an adult now. You understand that to survive in the streets, one must be mad. At least, I must get through the day in one piece mad. You have seen this madness on the smiling lips of sellers calling out to the people in the streets, 'fine customer', a honeyed, persuasive call to buy their goods. The 'finer' you are, the higher the price for it takes money to maintain beauty. You have heard madness in the voices of bus conductors calling out to passengers, sometimes pushing and fighting and cursing in raw, acerbic pidgin. You remember you had been mad once as you sat in a bus, praying the conductor mistakenly skips you while collecting the bus fare.

You look in the mirror and you cannot believe how much you have changed. You cannot believe this story you are writing is about you, your life. But you must write it, anyway. You must tell the world that your story changed because you met a man who knew another man who also knew another man. That your name was once Uchenna, then Tijani, and now Zikora; tell the world. That your skin wasn't as bright as it is now, that you never knew something like coconut oil exists. You must write of your most treasured property as a child; a pen with different colours of ink and how you wrote about a cat who went to visit the Queen; that the estates you own now didn't matter then.

As you sit at the board meeting surrounded by men smelling of crude oil money- none of them cross-eyed nor wealthier than you-you imagine their lives and wonder if they know that reggae could be just as therapeutic as yoga; that bread moistened by morning dew tastes like scrambled eggs.



COLUMNS

Conversations with Nonny



So, when I was asked that I write on the 2018 African Writers Conference and Awards held in Abuja, Nigeria, last month. I was a bit apprehensive. I mean I had already suffered the pain of seeing pictures of everyone arriving in Nigeria and meeting, for the first time, all the people they had been talking to on the space [On the Writers Space Africa WhatsApp Group], everyone looking nice and all dressed up for the conference and being in Nigeria! Like, I mean it was a lot. I think you would agree with me when I say I had already suffered enough FOMO (Fear Of Missing Out).

However, following the conference online, I was introduced to the theme of the day. The theme was: Re-imagining African Literature; New Voices, New Narrative in The Fight for The Girl Child. I fell in love with this theme immediately and I think you would agree with me when I say that this was more than just a theme, it was a revolution.

Did you know that, according to UIS data, 15 million African girls of primary-school age will never get the chance to learn to read or write in primary school as opposed to 10 million boys?

Also, over 9 million of these girls are from sub-Saharan Africa. These are girls in our countries and our communities.

At the Conference, Her Excellency Hadiza El-rufai, The First Lady of Kaduna State, highlighted that educating the girl child is more important than climate change. She also said that the problem with the girl child being left behind is a result of her not being given the education she deserves. What stood out for me the most was when she said, “Education is what allows social mobility, it gives you the ability to change your situation and this is what the girl child is not getting”.

In continuing her talk she said that as writers, what we can do is to write more stories show casing women in positions of authority, this way we give our young girls role models they can relate with.

As a black woman who supports women empowerment, young girls’ literacy empowerment, I completely agree with Her Excellency.

We need to get rid of the stereotype that girls need not get education. Every young girl in Africa should be given a chance to go to school and learn alongside her brothers. A young girl’s only purpose in life should not be reduced to just being a wife, a mother and a daughter. She should be educated on how to be all that and still be a teacher, a nurse, a doctor, a pilot, an engineer, an author and so much more.



BLUNTNESS IS BRUTAL



All Hands on Deck

“Our writing shouldn’t only focus on the girl but also those involved in her upbringing,” says Sandra Etubiebi, founder and CEO of Billionaire Writer. I heard those words live at the maiden edition of the African Writers Conference 2018 which held in Abuja, Nigeria. Being a writer, feminist, journalist, and one with huge interest in children (both the girl child and boy child), I ‘book-marked’ on my Evernote app this statement that struck a chord in my head. For me, the statement should be directed to every individual in every profession and not just writers.

Often times, when we try to deal with issues revolving around the girl child, we leave out those who are pivotal in her upbringing. These people include her mother, father, brother, teachers, religious leaders, and numerous others. We cannot downplay their importance because like they say, ‘no man is an island.’ It’s not enough to teach the girl to uphold her self esteem, be bold and outspoken, go for what she wants regardless of what society would say, see herself beyond the kitchen and the bedroom; there’s also the need to re-orient the people in her life because these people are the ones who would equip her with life skills in one way or the other.

Giving your son the go-ahead to hit his sister for a wrong she committed is encouraging violence in him; telling your congregation as a religious leader, when counseling members on marital issues, that the way to a man’s heart is through his stomach is simply downplaying the value of the female as nothing more than a mere cook; allocating household chores to daughters leaving

the sons out is encouraging laziness and irresponsibility which will go a long way in affecting his attitude towards his spouse in the future.

Let's take a look at this situation: before my elder sister got married, she has always been a goal getter- very hardworking and diligent. She has an unflinching drive to achieving a set goal. When she bought her first car and moved into her first apartment at a young age, people, including a few relatives, told her to soft pedal on her dreams and ambitions in order not to scare away potential suitors. It sounded funny that a man would be scared of a lady just because she's quite successful. It felt like an attempt to make her pull down her self esteem so that men without self esteem could approach her. The problem here lies in the fact that boys grow up with the mentality that successful women don't make good wives; and girls grow up with the mindset that they shouldn't aim for much until married. These mindsets didn't form themselves anonymously. The people in their lives from childhood inculcated it in them.

'New Voices, New Narratives in the Fight for the girl child' which was the theme of the 2018 edition of the African Writers Conference brought to light the necessity in enlightening the community in which the girl finds herself. By doing so, the girl doesn't only benefit but the boy also.

Michael Ian Black, American Comedian and Author, said in his opinion essay, *The Boys Are Not All Right*, that "Boys, though, have been left behind..." which might seem true; however, on a closer look, we find that it is the girl who has been left behind up to the point that even in the fight to rescue her from obscurity, she's often isolated. She cannot be strong no matter how hard she tries in a world where she's constantly reminded of her limitations because she's female. She can't aim high academically in a world where she's told that no matter how far she goes, she can only end up in a man's kitchen and bedroom. She needs every hand on deck to lift her up from obscurity. And do not forget that we rise by lifting others. This simply means that no one ends up a loser if they get involved in the fight to change the narrative of the girl child. The boys, parents, teachers and every one else involved in her upbringing would benefit in the long run. And though we might never have a happy-ever-after world, we would definitely have a better and more secure world.

About the Columnist

Gabrielina Gabriel-Abhie is a writer, editor, blogger, and broadcast journalist; a columnist with Writers Space Africa online magazine.

She is the CEO of The Roaring Writer which renders book editing, ghostwriting and social media management services.

She was shortlisted among the finalists for Homevida 2017 scriptwriting competition, as well as the winner of Writers Space Africa season two flashfiction contest.

She uses her writing, often times, to address nature or preach her propaganda. She believes that writers can and have the responsibility to effect change in their world through writing.

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WRITERS SPACE AFRICA

PRESENTS

Love in Africa

A CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

We are calling for submissions for the February edition of WSA under the theme 'Love in Africa'. We accept submissions in the following categories:

- Articles/Essays - 1,200 Words maximum
- Flash Fiction - 300 words maximum
- Poetry - 1 poem, maximum of 24 lines
- Children's Literature - 700 words maximum
- Short Stories - 1,500 words maximum
- Jokes
- Artworks
- Personalised quotation

Deadline - January 12, 2019

Visit - www.writersspace.net/submissions