

writers *Space*

Empowering African Writers

Africa
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November 2017
EDITION

Inside...

Run Child Run
Pressilla Evelyn Nanyange
(UGANDA)

Godchild
Kofi Konadu Berko
(GHANA)

Together, We Cry
Rufaro Tafa
(ZIMBABWE)

Owning Your Growth
Nyambura Gitonga
(KENYA)

Some Time Ago
Ajani Oyindamola
(NIGERIA)

And many more...

Nonhlanhla Radebe

PRINCESS NONNY

South African writer, actor, photographer,
model, mentor and leadership trainer.

EDITORIAL

Writers Space Africa welcomes, you to November in style. Meet our own Princess Nonny, a stunning model from South Africa who says writing is bae.

Its not your everyday occurrence that you meet a 20 year old, who not only has discovered her star but is following it. Adding spice to that, allow us to serve you indigenous literary dishes from Uganda, Ghana, Kenya, South Africa and Nigeria. For this and much more, do flip over the pages.

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

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THE CREW

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Gerald I. Egeonu, Nigeria 10

Akalonu Paul Chibuzor, Nigeria 11

Awuah Mainoo Gabriel, Ghana 12

Gabriel Owino Junior, Kenya 13

Nyambura Gitonga - Kenya 14

Pressilla Evelyn Nanyange, Uganda 15

Ajani Oyindamola, Nigeria 17

Oyebade Adeleke Charles Nigeria 18

Kiberly Chirodzero, Nigeria 19

Saka Dbosz Junior, Nigeria 21

Christine Anikpeh, Nigeria 22

Interview 23

Shittu Aisha Adetoun, Nigeria 26

Oluwatomisin Akinbode 27

Nwaokolo Faith Chineyen, Nigeria 28

Omemu Esther, Nigeria 29

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GODCHILD

Kofi Konadu Berko

Ghana



You are slowly drawing away from the physical realm and towards the spiritual realm but not quite getting there. Your mind is merging and splitting, into one and many. Your body feels weird . Its evolving, shifting, morphing, adapting like when you mother was pregnant with you. You've been having strange visions , the moon bursting and the sun turning blood red, People screaming and rushing past you, as you lift your hands, an over-powering anger coursing through your body.

Last week, when you touched Mrs. Yayra's fingers you saw the answers to that quiz you were going to write and studied for it. Then your teacher invited your Pa. You weren't the most brilliant student, even your Pa thought so. You didn't even attempt to tell the truth, you let them speak, then you just stomped out of the headmaster's office.

For some time, your skin has been slowly peeling off, revealing intricate glassy scales beneath. Your irises are now beginning to glow a faint red. So when you sit in the trotro you wrap your clothes more closely around yourself and look out through the window. And you've taken to wearing your red tinted glasses like you used to, before, you moved to this godforsaken village. It's great you don't have friends, it makes it easier, sitting alone, not speaking to anyone leaves you sane but still wonder whether they see the monstrosity you are becoming. You've tried to hide it from your Pa. So you hide out in your room and avoid him. He attributes it to teen angst so he leaves you alone. You don't know that this is your transcendence, a separation from the physical towards the spiritual, you don't know, that right now you are in-between-neither human nor god. You have no idea that you are a godchild.

Together, We Cry



The quick movement of a small brown figure stirs her awake from her relatively short slumber, rubbing her eyes to remove the glazed over feeling of lingering sleepiness. Standing, she runs a hand through her mid-length hair before quickly pulling it back into its usual messy bun. The pungent odour of aged detergent and dried over body fluids stabs at her nostrils and stings her eyes, threatening to make her regurgitate whatever is left over in her almost empty stomach.

Nothing else fills the silence but the faint sound of metal being dragged against the cracked cement floor. Another prisoner walking by, offering her a friendly smile or rather an attempt of one to which she turns away from, she knows not to give into the delusional concept that she can make friends here, she knows the punishment for it. There's a reason why she was in a secluded cell, it was hers and hers only, not for sharing with prisoners who were just passing by, on-lookers who wouldn't understand why she was in there, who would ask too many questions she couldn't answer or didn't want to answer.

It was just another day, a cycle of torturous mental and physical exhaustion, a struggle to maintain sanity and dignity. It became routine, breathing in the dusty air of this confined space, straining to see through the drenched darkness, considering death as becoming a favourable option, drifting between being alive and just living.

Oh, the joys of being a lone prisoner. Getting to watch your soul die, being fed on by cunning vultures. These thoughts had eventually led to unwarranted past times to try and escape time, carving drawings and shapes into the dilapidated prison walls, only for them to quietly scream in protest.

It was all a routine she had become accustomed to, until an uneventful morning, where she woke up to something entirely different.

Its crumpled form is the first thing she sees when she turns around. It is barely breathing as she can tell from the slow rise and fall of its caved in chest, reflecting as the only sign of life. She blinks blinks again and yet this apparition before her does not disappear. It must be her mind again, playing tricks with her, testing the limits of her sanity or what was left of it. But it stirs to life, lifting its shaggy mop of stringy hair, stretching its neck before casually sitting up and sighing aloud. It redirects its gaze, settling it on her form.

“Come here often?” it drawls casually, to which she merely shrugs.

The irony was not lost, it become a part of this confined prison and stayed longer than intended, waiting for its prosecution it had told her to fill the silence she preferred. It attempted interaction to which she hardly replied to, or turned away from, repeating the words silently in her head,

“No good can come from trying to make homes out of people. Live in your own prison, don’t try and share it with others.”

She remembered Mr Jailer’s words with an emotion she would not allow herself to feel, it was not Mr Jailer’s fault she was in here, she reasoned and yet Mr Jailer held the keys that could unlock the chains that weighed her down daily, the Mr Jailer did not see her, the Mr Jailer saw through her, mistaking her chests movement for breathing, when really she was suffocating, choking on her own existence.

At times the walls would whisper for only her to hear, she wasn’t going to make it, they told her. It was a hard world out there, it was better for her to endure the one in here. Sometimes she would look at it in awe; it didn’t seem to give up trying to engage her in meaningless conversation, facing pointless rejection and shrugs. It made her almost smile if she could allow herself to, she knew what would happen if Mr Jailer saw that smile. She remembered, she always remembered

“What do we have here? A smile?” he had barked in boisterous laughter,

“Well a smile is a beautiful thing is it not little bird?” Naive naïve she had nodded yes, only then did Mr Jailer’s smile morph into a disgusted grimace,

“Listen here you piece of desecrated crap. We don’t smile around here. Smiles are for the weak and stupid, the crazy people that try and sell themselves dreams of things like happiness and joy. What are you? A worthless prisoner! Remember that dear Ari.”

She was always drifting between now and the past and depressing predictions of the future. That was until it would break the silence again

“What’s your name?” he asked her.

Yes, he. After a while she had been forced to observe this person that she was going to share her prison cell with and had stopped referring to him as it, as he exhibited similar functions only more masculine and aggravated, she could tell from the look in his he had his own internal battle so who was she to add onto that turmoil? She would give him a few of her words at least; it would help fill the long stretches of their dreary lives.

“I have too many names.” she told him.

“You know that makes you cool by default. , saying cool stuff like that. I’m Calvin Barnes by the way.”

She decided against telling him she already knew name, simply nodding and re- turning to her past time of wall carving.

“What do you carve? I’ve always wondered since you do it often.”

“Clears my head, and he doesn’t come in here often so he doesn’t see what I carve.”

“He?”

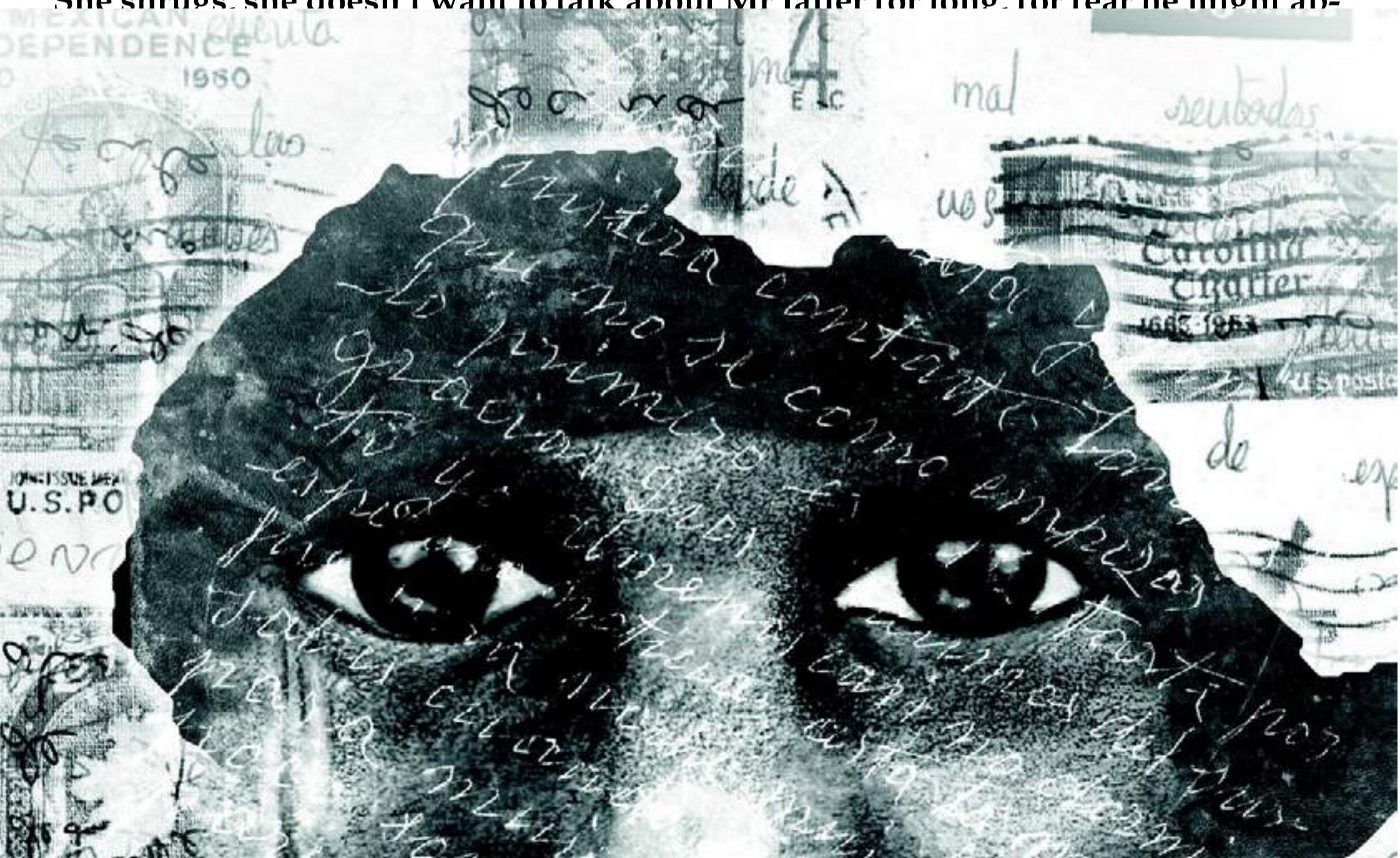
“Mr Jailer.”

“Mr Jailer? What a weird name. I’d like to see him, see if he lives up to his scary name.”

“But he passes by every morning, don’t you hear him?”

“I don’t hear a lot of things, but I’m sure I would’ve heard him.”

She shrugs. she doesn’t want to talk about Mr Tailer for long. for fear he might an-



pear.

Sensing her discomfort he asks, "So, what do people do for fun around here?"

She turns around to look at him quizzically, he's smiling again.

"Why do you smile so much?"

"So I can see the faint hint of a smile that you get when I do it."

Every night became a repetitive process, a little carving and a little chat, but sometimes the chains weighed too much and she would sit in silence rubbing her wrists to ease the pain. The clinching feeling of the cold metal would tighten sometimes, often after she had a good conversation with Calvin, digging into her flesh, seeping slowly into her soft skin becoming unbearable. He quietly slid over, taking her hands in his trying to massage out whatever pain she felt from her wrists.

"You don't have to," she would say.

"I don't but I want to," he would reply simply as if they were discussing trivial things like the weather.

It continues like that for what seemed to be a long stretch of forever, until the day of his prosecution came. Never a day had a frown adorned his rugged features but this day seemed to be his exception. He howled in pain, twisting and turning, fighting a monster she could not see, but she wanted to protect him, to shield him from whatever seemed to torment him. Straining against her own chains, she clambers, gravels at the cement, dragging her weight with her in strained effort but the gasp of pain that escapes his chapped lips gives her the propelling force to crawl over to him, not sure what she would do to help him.

"I'm... I'm okay," he told her, looking up at her through hooded eyes, but she knew otherwise, she knew that familiar movement that could be mistaken for breathing. She could feel his anguish as it radiated off of him in perpetual waves, hard enough to make her lose balance if she were standing. The walls that surrounded them, the ones that once shielded them from other prisoners now shifted, moving in and reducing the space in the already miniature version of a prison cell.

So they did the only thing they could do, the only thing people can do, they held each other. As the chains rattled beneath them, as the locks threatened to give away, as the bars widened and narrowed, as the chipped paint crumbled and peeled off of the walls, as Mr Jailer shouted words that were sure to spark war and set alight a fire if they could, they held each other.

The Earth beneath them shook as if its core was about to erupt and spill over the terrain, spilling out all its contents onto the dust stained air they were struggling to exchange as each other's inhale and exhale, through the shallow stream of light pouring into the cell through the small square placed beyond reach, they held

onto each other, trying to see if the other was still alive.

Nothing else mattered more in that moment than the movement of his chest, this time not suffocating, she knew he was breathing, so was she.

Even when everything settled, the calm after the storm, she looked at him and then she knew in that moment she could never be free and she felt remorseful all of a sudden. A weight settled over her, she was sad, now she made him suffer with her in this prison cell, to toil with her in this confined prison. It filled her lungs with something that wasn't air, only a toxic replica that filled her cells with darkness and a hatred that consumed her from within, not directed at anything in particular besides her.

"You have no chains, why don't you leave? There are other prisons, better ones."

"I have them, you just don't see them. Besides, who would be here when this jailer guy shows up? I told you I really want to see him," he would reply every time, his tone laced with amusement.

It was always funny to her; he said he had chains, ones she couldn't see. How could he have chains? He didn't have wrist marks to show their presence or that they had once bound him.

It was only at night, one night where she swore she heard the loud thud of his boot punctuating the silence, his hoarse voice singing in the prison passages, a sweat breaks out on her forehead, perspiration feverishly tracing every inch of her body. She knows he is here, so she does what Calvin told her to do when he comes; she nudges him awake and asks,

"Hey there prisoner, seen Mr Jailer lately?" she whispered to him out of fear, in need of primal reassurance and comfort.

He looks around, searching for any signs of movement from another figure beyond their reach.

"I believe I have."

This only makes her eyes widen, she clamps her hands together in an attempt to keep anxiety at bay, trying to retain the warmth that seems to be running away from her body, waiting for his next words.

"I'm looking right at her."

Just so all this makes sense, remember,

Prisons are not reality, they are the truth we are willing to accept. We don't escape our version of reality, sometimes the other person helps us to just accept it.

Written by Rufaro Tafa, Zimbabwe

King On A Cross III

The crown grew a thorn,
and the thorn became a tree.

As the blood fed the earth,
the tree became a man!

When he died in the air,
that man became a seed.

And as the room became dark,
the seed grew a blade!

Thus, the blade saw the sun,
and the seed became sons.

As time plays its orchestra,
that thorn will become a crown!

Gerald I. Egeonu, Nigeria



FALLEN

Little little did I know,
That this heart will never glow,
But this heart I wish you knew,
For it belongs to you old or new.

Forgive this weary heart,
For I know things aren't alright,
Am to blame for things that fall apart,
Forgive this heart for it falls apart.

Shattered into tiny pieces,
Is the heart with so much feelings,
But mistakes of this flesh gives it no meaning,
It becomes a heart with little reasons.

Like a glass shattered by the angry ground,
This heart has fallen on your battle ground.

- Akalonu Paul Chibuzor
Nigeria



AWAY AWAY

Damn you Nightingale!
Must thee plaint ev'ry darling morn?
Hush Hush Away!
Mi son still snore by six upon mi chest
Away away Migrate!
Flee far o'er mi window
For mi son's pleasure grows height in sport
Nay! Not in music!
Away Away Flee!
Hath is it been thee
Thou wilt murmur with thy awful beak
Away!
Sing along the whistling air
Or seek Apollo and be servant
For music thy glorious boon.

Awuah Mainoo Gabriel
(African-spear)
Ghana

Seasons and Hope

I plead with every season that follow
Every sun & dawn
Be the hallmark of memories,
Moments applaud
Whence newfound love set anchor
Let me drown in the blue but bold
Bold & brewed, that love be
Not-tasted wine
Untouched lips
And the infinity short-lived
Ceased, by our imperfect hearts
Let it be of coloured pages in my anthology

Gabriel Owino Junior
Kenya

OWNING YOUR GROWTH



- Nyambura Gitonga – Kenya

Growth is personal. This is the most important thing I have learnt in 2017. Life is all about creating oneself rather than finding oneself. We build the person we want to be. It is a personal initiative. Growth doesn't come to you. You make the initiative to seek it. I believe we are only a decision away from a totally different life.

The fastest way to change is to hang out with people who are already where you want to be. Associate yourself with people who have been where you are headed. People who can attest to your challenges and encourage you. They say we are an average of the 5 people we hang around with. Show me your friends and I'll tell you, your character. Makes sense now huh? We are all about the books we read, people and experiences. Changing circles especially friends can prove to be a really daunting task. One would be dining on the diet of rejection, isolation, self-doubt, despair, contempt and humiliation.

Fear and distractions are the main hindrances, making personal growth remain just a concept in theory. We fear a lot of things; stepping into the path of growth (not making the first move), we fear trying (only conforming to a set opin-

ion or concept.) Nothing else matters apart from trying. I saw a WhatsApp status that read 'It's better to have tried and failed rather than not trying at all.'

Distractions lead to self-sabotage. They divert our attention from our areas of focus. They offer themselves on a golden platter. Our addictions too, are a major setback in personal growth. Addictions can be anything: substances, things or even activities. If we are constantly inclined to our addictions, then we are missing out big time!

It's often told that, if an artist is committing to his calling, then he has volunteered for hell whether he knows it or not. So, find your path, walk in it, find your teacher and follow them. Never give up. Do your thing and don't mind if they like it or not. Don't let them see that they get to you. **BE UNAPOLOGETIC!**

Lastly, old ways won't open new doors. Take that step towards your dreams and goals. It will feel awkward and uncomfortable trying something new but that's the only way you can grow. If you don't go after what you want, you'll never have it.

“RUN CHILD RUN!”



- Pressilla Evelyn Nanyange
Uganda

“Run child run, run little girl run,” my grandfather’s voice echoes in my mind. “On your mark,” the starter calls. I make my stance, left leg in front, right leg back. The starting gun goes and off we go. I let my body lead me into a rhythm corresponding with that of the pace maker, she’s going fast. I push a little faster to stay with the leading pack of four. Keeping at their back but not too far behind to let them go. “Run child run, run little girl run,” my grandfather’s voice rhymes with each stride I take. I follow this rhyme knowing he is running with me. He’d gotten me to this point and I knew he’d see me through to the end.

Growing up, my grandfather was my only family. His old age wrinkled face was the only friendly face I’d known for most of my early years. They all hated me, but not him, he loved and cared for me. My aunties, cousins, uncles all never wanted me around and a few weeks after starting school my classmates never wanted me around too. The moment classes ended for the day my torment would begin. They’d chase and throw stones at me. The first time this happened a stone caught the back of my neck, it hurt so badly. I climbed a mango tree and hid in the branches until night fall. I only got down when all the voices that had been taunting me faded away.

Running in front of me is Cheptei, one of the highest contenders for the championship. She trips after jumping over a hurdle hitting the ground with full force and almost taking me with her, I jump over her legs in the nick time. If I had been any second slower I would have kissed the stadium floor too. This throws my pace off for a few seconds and I struggle to close the increasing gap between myself and the leading three. I’ve now slowed down slightly, running alone a few meters behind the leading pack. I look back to see the chasing group closing in on me. ‘Run child run, run little girl run,’ my grandfather’s voice urges. I push my chest forward and press my legs on harder.

Today is the day, these moments, these minutes are all that matters right now. I’ve worked

so hard to get here to this stadium with this crowd. Running with the best of the best from around the world. Until a few months ago, I had never been anywhere outside Africa. I'd mostly competed with the Kenyans and when it comes to long distance running they're the best. I've been training with them for the past two years and I must say, they are well deserving of all the medals they've won in long distance running for the past decades.

Eight year old Chelangat running from bullies would never have dreamed of this moment, here on this stage at the world championships. Eight year old Chelangat would never have believed she'd travel the world over representing her country. From Berlin, to Tokyo, to Istanbul, to Portland, to London. Little Chelangat the outcast of her village, denied respect and love from her family all because her father was from the other side. Her mother had conceived out of wedlock by a man of a rival tribe. She'd later gotten married, dumping her baby girl to her father and moving away to a far away place.

The bell for the final lap goes. This is it, it's do or die but am still in no man's land, I haven't been quite able to close this gap between myself and the leading pack. Elongot makes an early sprint for the finish line. I push my legs harder and catch up to Aga, flank to flank we run. She's holding on, not letting me past her. "Run child run, run little girl run," my grandfather barks. I will my legs to go faster, running past Aga. "Run child run, run little girl run," grandfather roars at a faster rhythm, I push my legs forward and follow the pacing of his voice. I'm closing in on Elongot, she's holding on thinly. And with all my strength I sprint past her and throw my whole being across the finish line. The crowd bellows, their screams are deafening. I lay stretched out on the ground breathing hard and look up to the sky. "We did it grandpa," I whisper. "If only you'd lived another week to see me now." Sweat and tears of joy run down my face. The first gold medal for Uganda in the world championships for the women's 3000m steeplechase and little old me had made it happen. "Thank you grandpa," I breathe.

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Some Time Ago

AJANI OYINDAMOLA
NIGERIA

The night dragged by while I prayed earnestly in fear. It was only a few seconds wait. The pregnancy test marked two pink lines. My heart burned as tears streamed from my red swollen eyes. Memories rushed back to me as I cuddled myself and sobbed into my blue pillow.

He swore by heaven that he loved me as he quietly tore my panties aside. With seductive looks which sent butterfly flutters into my stomach, his touches burnt my skin as I moaned when his soft lips melted into mine, and plunged himself deep into me! My scream echoed around his empty flat. He cooed me gently, then emptied his seeds in me.

Tears leaked from my eyes and he kissed them softly away. A perfect gentleman, he pulled me into the roughness of his skin and showered me with so much love. That night, I drifted into sleep with whispers of sweet words flowing into naive ears.

He said he loved me. I was his world. He adored my body with his eyeballs, sang sonorous songs of love and planted kisses on my trusting lips. My 17-year-old mind told me I would marry Adio, the son of our lay reader. I remembered the quick kisses under the moonlight, the smile on his face and the love spark on his fingertips. That was some time ago.

The glow on his face disappeared when I told him I was carrying his child.

DEATH

Death; A phenomenon so abstract
Yet so sudden, swift and deadly
Always accompanied with 'funeral'
The saddest word known to man

Death; With cold hands,
hardened wings and strong claws
It doesn't care if you're rich or poor
Oh so disrespectful!
Just wait till it snatches life from you

Death! A brutal monster
Who takes a day old baby from the mother
Or the mother from a day old baby
Leaving despair behind for all

Death; We will never understand you
Yet we surely revere you
We can only cling to life
Which is what you hate the most.

Oyebade Adeleke Charles
Nigeria

STAR-CROSSED LOVERS



KIBERLY CHIRODZERO
Nigeria

Pauline looked herself over in the full length mirror and smoothed her long braids over her shoulders. She supposed it really didn't matter what she looked like tonight. It wasn't as if she would meet him. She was in love with a man she might never meet. It had started innocently enough. Four months ago a friend invited her out to Selene's. Selene's turned out to be a posh café tucked in an out of the way alcove in Borrowdale. The owner had eccentric tastes, from the oriental and somewhat safari interior décor of the café to the hordes of poetic patrons he catered to. He had boards everywhere where selected poets would write and on weekends it was open mic night. Pauline loved weekends at Selene's as she was just getting comfortable with her own poetry herself.

One afternoon Pauline had found herself at the café by herself. One of the waitresses saw her eyeing a board by the kitchen door and asked Pauline if she wanted to write some poetry. Feeling brave, Pauline did. Days later she came back in to find someone had added to her poetry. Intrigued, she read it twice and was shocked. The poet had described Pauline's loneliness as if it were his own. His, because he'd signed off as WordKing so she knew it was a guy. She took up one of the markers and her hand flew across the board adding to his piece. It fit together well, like two souls describing a shared life.

Two days later Pauline went back to find their poems still there but now he had added another and it seemed he had picked up from where she left off. A week later, their board was generating massive interest. The crowd loved it, photos were snapped but

Pauline had yet to meet the illusive WordKing himself. She became obsessed with meeting him but she would walk in and the waitress from that fateful day would smile at her sadly and say, “You just missed him.” It was annoying but Pauline also enjoyed it. She supposed she could have asked for his number on the board but it seemed awfully romantic this way especially when his poetry changed and took on the tone of a lover. Then two months ago Pauline walked in and he hadn’t added a new poem. The waitress, whose name Pauline now knew to be Rumbi handed her a letter. With her heart clutched in the same hands as the letter, the girl sat down and tore open the envelope. The letter was short.

Dearest Pauline

I’ve had to go away. It is my greatest sorrow that I never got to meet the lady who pens such iridescent words. I know there is something special between our poet hearts. Perhaps it is better we never met since I could not stay. Never stop writing.

Love

WordKing

For days afterwards, Pauline found herself physically shaking herself to stop from wondering what if. Obviously it had never been meant to be. She knew nothing about the guy. How could she miss someone whose real name she didn’t even know? Today Pauline was meeting her best friend, Rudo who had been away working in South Africa. Pauline found Rudo waiting outside at the car. The two girls hugged. “It’s so good to have you back,” Pauline told her friend. “I have lots to tell you. But first, have you met someone yet?” Rudo asked getting back in the car. Pauline rolled her eyes as she got in the car. “I think I love a guy I’ve never met,” she laughed. Rudo sighed dramatically as she eased out of Pauline’s driveway. “This is what I get for leaving you alone,” she said jokingly. “What about you? You didn’t meet a hot Xhosa boy, did you?” Pauline was only half joking. Rudo was gorgeous and was bound to have left a trail of broken hearts in her wake.

“I did meet someone; in fact we’re meeting him tonight. I wanted to surprise you.” Rudo confessed with a guilty smile. Pauline wasn’t surprised, it was to be expected. She was however surprised when Rudo turned into Selene’s parking lot but she couldn’t bring herself to say anything. When they entered the café, Pauline stopped breathing. A guy was at her board scribbling away. No one but her had touched that board since the mysterious WordKing left. Her feet carried her to him of their own volition. He turned at her approach. He was tall, with dark brown pools for eyes and a singular dimple that was now showing as he smiled. He simply was the most handsome guy she had ever seen.

Rudo was shaking her gently. She turned to her friend who seemed to have followed her. Rudo was saying something. “Paulie, meet Tawana my boyfriend. We met two months ago in SA. He writes poetry here as the WordKing. Pauline is also a poet, Tawa...”

TALKING L.O.V.E

With

SAKA DBOSZ JUNIOR

EPISODE 8:

LOVE: IN THE HOUR OF WHISPERS

Love. Sweet love! But excuse me, how much of your love is the product of runaway libido and your inclination to change what you know is your truth to what you wish to sell to the generality of the people. My dear, sometimes what we call, I love you is simply, let's gbadu and our I love you too is simply, what do you have for your girl. Okay, you are going to tell me your own is not like that abi, shuooo, na today?

Abeg, make man no talk plenty today jare but sure say you sabi the gist wey follow:

1. Those who love well swear by that love.
2. Some people say love lived in William Shakespeare's imagination and died with Romeo and Juliet.
3. Love is a sentimental episode, but to love well, you must make firm decisions.
4. Love is the first totem of the mind.
5. Love is something that is natural. Natural in the sense that it lives in you.
6. There is much to love than sex, falling in love and getting married.
7. Like heaven, love can no longer be forced on any one. Those who desire love

must work at it then earn it.

8. Love has over time shown the way to the banks.
9. Love is a mind's game, are you ready?
10. If you don't plant the seed of love you will never reap its fruit.
11. Some love has got songs and others pains.
12. Good loving gives a wider range of happy – joyous alternative to living.
13. Love is like the Russian roulette. You don't just know what will come out of it.
14. Love makes hard demand and true love make sacrifices.
15. True love goes round.
16. Every one of good love has enough love to go round and obliged to spread the joy of love.
17. Experience has shown that love without hope for a better reward ahead is like a slow death. It's even better not to love at all and drop dead than endure the slow painful death ahead – Anonymous.
18. Love is blind but the heart can see.

The Way She Lives

Christine Anikpeh,
Nigeria

I have a way of life, an interesting way of life. I dream differently because I am different. I do not just dream to exist, I dream to live, after all its just one life, so why not live it well. To live is the rarest thing in the world, most people just exist. Sometimes I close my eyes and realize that if I die today, the world won't stop, people will adjust and carry on without you, with time you become nothing but a memory.

From a very tender age, I have always wanted to do things my way, it was mostly my way or no other way. I have always been the black sheep, I remember my mother always comparing me to my brother "why can't you be more like your brother" she would say. She tried to tame me in lots of ways. Not that I was wild or overly crazy, I realized she just different, I was not like the others, I thought differently and being different as we know is not typically a good thing to some people.

As soon as I had the chance, I left home; I left home in pursuit of happiness. I met people, different kinds of people; the judging kind, the normal, the carefree, the observers, the opinionated that had a say in how you should live your life, the crazy-about-life and even the monitoring spirits. I met them all. I tried to fit in. For a long time, I just floated and dabbled, till I realized it was all about happiness. I didn't change so that people will like me, I stuck to being myself and the right people loved me for me. Though I lost some people, I gained awesome ones. All of them shaped me.

This is what I want and how I have decided to live. I will live as if every day might be my last. I want to be independent. I want to feel everything life has to offer, I want to know what it's like to fall in love and fall out of love. I want to know what it feels like to get heartbroken, have rebound sex, love again, I want to feel it all. I want to travel and swim with the Dolphins, I want to get married and have a baby or two. Now, this only happens if I meet that man that can tolerate all my craziness and still stay. I have learned not to kill myself over things I can't control. If they don't happen, I won't be a sad spinster because I believe marriage is not meant for everyone, I will be equally happy to have a baby because I believe I will be a great mother. Now don't get this wrong, I do not want to be a 'baby mama' I would rather be a single mother.

I want people to stop judging, life is not that serious. Don't be stuck within the boundaries of traditions, values, and norms that were here before you came, most that don't even make any sense but we can't seem to let go. Do things differently, never say never. Its only one life, live it well and live it to the fullest. At the end of the day all that matters is your happiness and when asked you can boldly say, "Yes. I Lived."



OF RUNWAYS AND JOURNALISM
The Life of Nonhlanhla Radebe

Who is Princess Nonny?

I was born Nonhlanhla Intombi Yakwa Radebe, UMthimkhulu, Ubhungane, UMashiy'mahle Njengawenyamazane. A whole mouthful so I am simply Princess Nonny. A twenty years old model born in Soweto but has travelled all over South Africa and beyond.

What was it like growing up?

I am the lastborn of three daughters raised by a single mum, who made sure that none of us ever went to bed on an empty stomach. She has always been the man of the house as I came to later meet my dad in my teens.

I grew up quite an introvert with almost no one to call a friend. It was until my senior year in high school that I developed interests in theatre.

Luck was with me. I auditioned for a French themed play at school and was selected and flew to Paris for the play. It was indeed a thrilling experience for me as it was the first time I was stepping not just outside my country but my continent too.

Returning from Paris, I became an instant celebrity. However, the friendships did not last long. I have one friend now. Her name is Michelle.

Why the long wait to pursuing journalism?

Financial constraints. As I had expressed earlier, I was not exactly born in a well off family. Growing up in a one room shack and always struggling to make ends meet, be it with school or just everyday needs, I couldn't afford to go to varsity straight away. But by the Grace of God, I managed to rise above all that and be the woman I am today and still aiming higher.

Your source of inspiration?

I am a firm believer of God and the power of prayers. Through my mum's prayers, I have gained strength and even realized I can do so many things if I just put my mind on it.

Through all her teachings, I am the woman I am today. She has taught me to

persevere and have persistence in everything I do. She taught me to always believe in my dreams.

About gracing the runway...

It all started when a friend asked me to help out by being his model for his school project. This, I gladly did. Later, when I saw how amazing I looked in the photos I decided to pursue modelling professionally. I have since modelled for startup clothing brands and a few ad agencies.

How do you balance between modelling and writing?

Modelling will never make me neglect writing. I have an interest in black women empowerment. Growing up, I was often bullied for being darker than other children all the way to high school. As a result, I started a blog that celebrates dark skinned women and encourages them to love and embrace the colour of their skin. I branded it Melanin Monroe Market.

What is Writers Space Africa (WSA) WhatsApp group to you?

Writers Space Africa has helped me in making some of my dreams come true. I have met amazing people on the platform and I am immensely grateful at the chance they gave me to better my future.

What are your other engagements?

There is the Youth Managers Foundation, an NGO that helps high school children with Career Guidance, Mentorship and Leadership Skills. I am a leader and a mentor today because of their guidance and teachings.

Do you have mentors?

Yes. Mr. Jacob Ssali and Mashudu Malema who together have made my dreams become a reality.

Your parting shot?

I didn't go out looking for journalism, journalism found me! So Watch out world Princess Nonny is coming for you!

THAT NIGHT

That night the stars lost their shine,
and the sky felt like it was wrapped around us,
squeezing us tight.

That night the moon was awfully shaped in a quarter,
well, that was quite ominous.

That night the fire was bigger,
and the coals glowed red hot.

That night their number was larger,
and I knew this was going to hurt.

That night they took them one by one,
and by dawn, they were all gone.

I didn't know if it was fate or luck.

But I knew whatever it was,
it sure wasn't a curse.

For I was left untouched,
still in one piece.

But then, they just couldn't bear to have me untouched,
so they left several marks on me, just to ensure their mind was in peace.

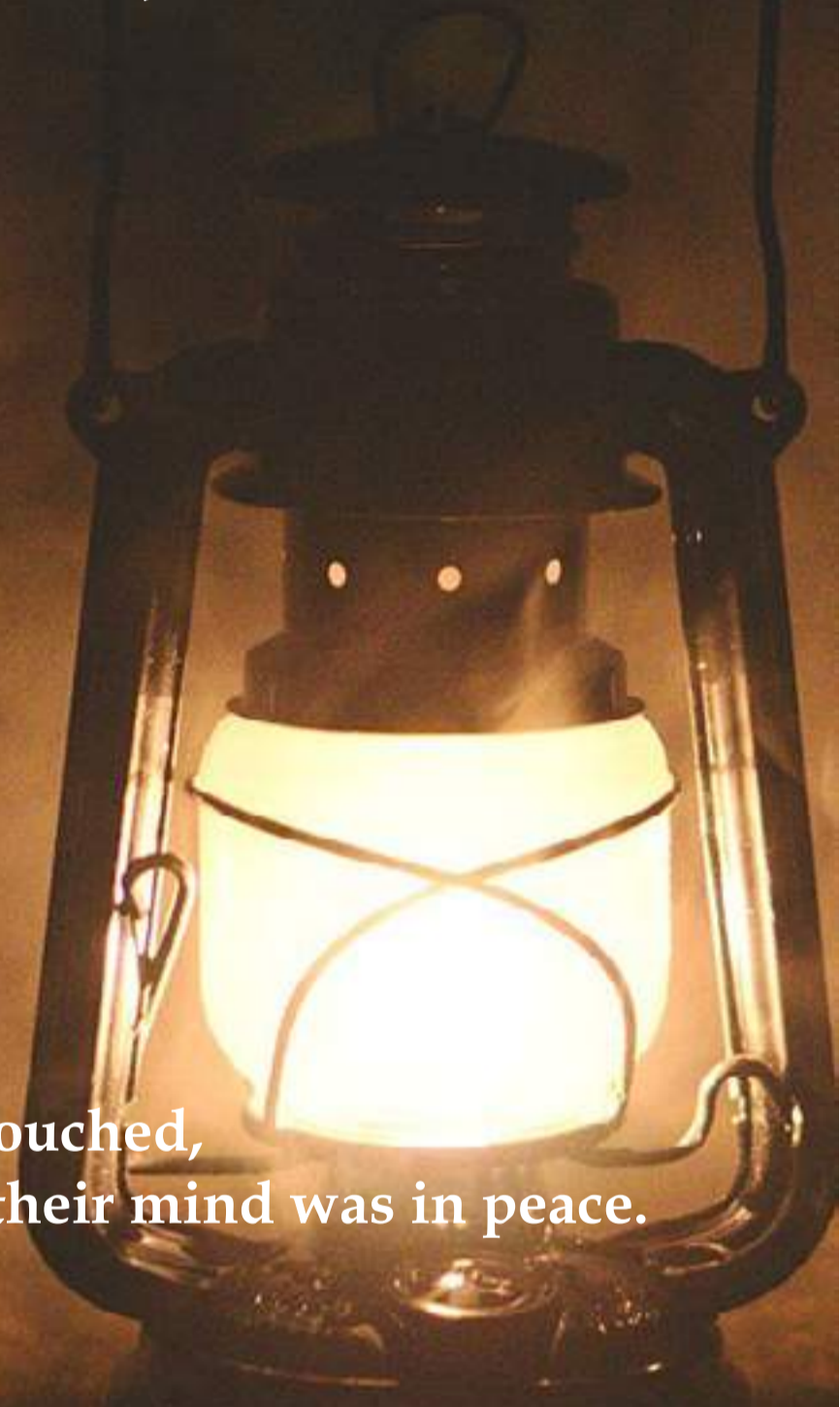
This night that I look at my scars,
afresh, the feelings come back.

This night that I see and feel the stars,
adorning the sky, indeed a successful comeback!

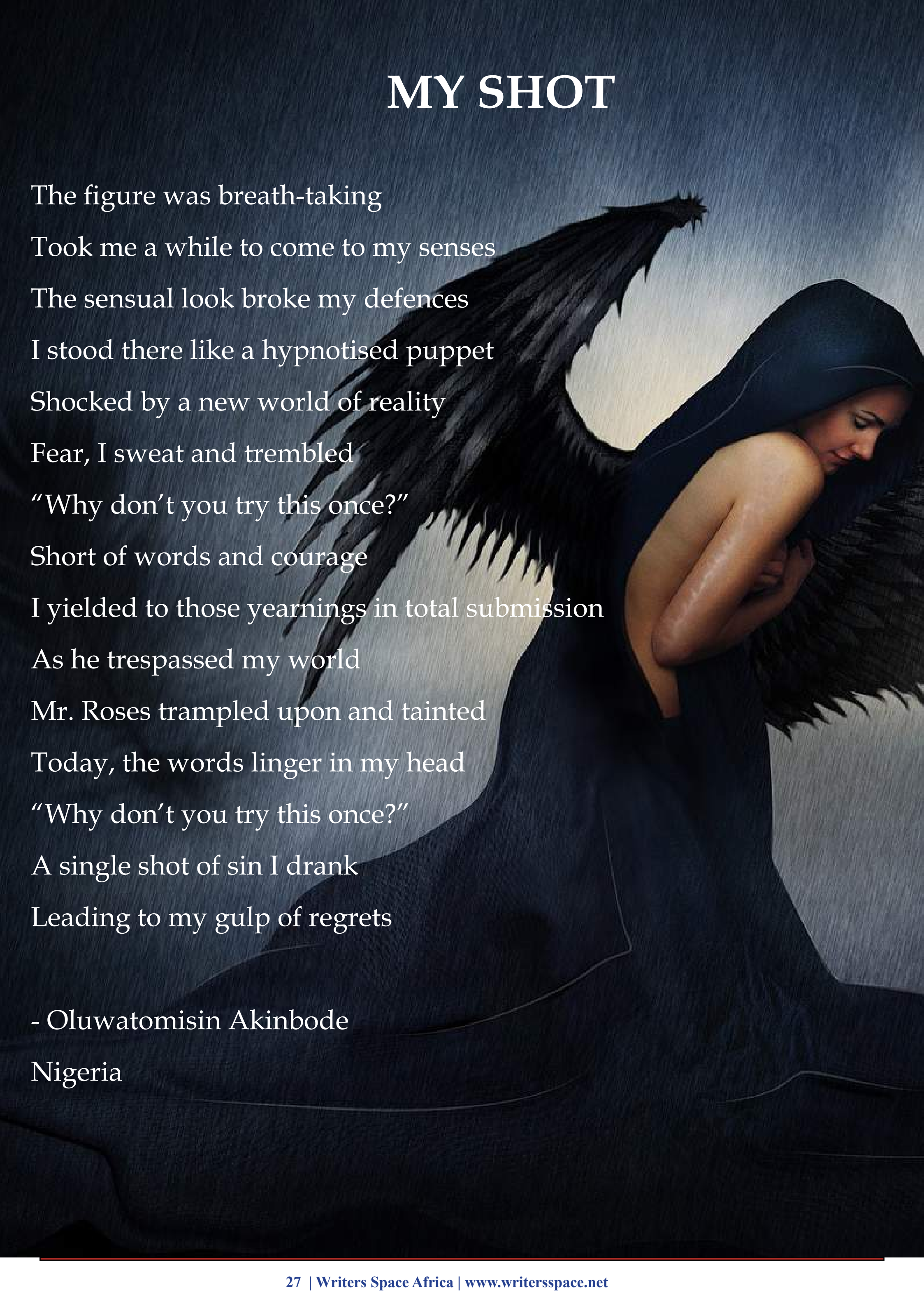
This night that I stay laid back,
I remember clearly, that night.

This was one not to forget.

Shittu Aisha Adetoun
Nigeria



MY SHOT




The figure was breath-taking
Took me a while to come to my senses
The sensual look broke my defences
I stood there like a hypnotised puppet
Shocked by a new world of reality
Fear, I sweat and trembled
“Why don’t you try this once?”
Short of words and courage
I yielded to those yearnings in total submission
As he trespassed my world
Mr. Roses trampled upon and tainted
Today, the words linger in my head
“Why don’t you try this once?”
A single shot of sin I drank
Leading to my gulp of regrets

- Oluwatomisin Akinbode

Nigeria

DARKLINGS OF EMPATHY

Nwaokolo Faith Chineyen



Those ten minutes of nerve-cracking anxiety mixed nicely with jealousy built a tornado inside me as I read those words,

“Please leave me in peace, I have a lover”

For once, I thought I was the one, those few days of childhood fantasy suddenly drifted away as my feathery belly-butterfly episode came to an abrupt end. This had to be the devil in fair-black skin. But it was a kind of devil you’d develop passion for. The one that whispers words of wisdom when you’re lost, and the kind that cracks you up so bad till you feel better. All I could do was just sit there bewildered, on the edge of my two-sized inch bed, like I was watching an intriguing horror movie as I fidgeted up and down my tab, reading previous messages that had had me spell bound in smiles and fantasies. The messages, those words, the killer look, and those dazzling eyes that were such a beauty to behold. It felt like a romantic “girl next door” meets “church boy” movie. But in that sole moment of salver blackness and disappointment came a wake up call.

“Hey, you look absolutely stunning. What would you like to have?”

This dare-devil dressed in ravishing blue and black tuxedo, and a red bow tie was seated right across me. There they were, those gorgeous eyes and lush dimpled smile.

“I’ll have whatever you have”.

Trying not to sound modest, I felt at ease and peaceful, sure, I wasn’t princess Diana herself, but you had to admit I pulled it together in this red hot tube gown, dazzling silver pearl earrings and of course, a touch of red lip colour, and long lashes that could save a life, just at a blink.

“So I’ve been thinking...”

“Mhmm”

Looking at the menu list trying not to appear interested, this was my trait, let the ball come rolling towards you, don’t go trying to get it.

“uhmm”

Every time those spotless teeth paved way for that killer smile, it was a sign for me to blink those lashes and well, smile in return.

“You’re a wonderful person, I really like you, but I think we should stay friends for now, cos, you know, I have a lover.”

That did it for me. All my hopes and expectations flowed down the drain of pity and rejection. The night passed away but left lingering thoughts in my head. Maybe I should have said something or maybe not. It was just like I’d imagined, Rylie Susan was probably the lucky girl here. As Dylan my chauffeur packed right in front of my pent house, adjacent to my door step, I felt that insane feeling again, that sent chills down my spine and left me feeling like pebbles on a seashore, this time it wasn’t passion, it was loneliness.

Woe Unto You

Spurned by cheap desires
And lustful pleasures
Your fingers sought to caress
Gingerly against will and lawful measures
Her cocoa skin and lush curves
Your eyes traced her fancy buttocks
Lips itching to trail your soulless kisses
Against soft skin and unwilling lips
You ignored her embellished innocence
And moved upon carnality and your vile nympholepsy
A tug at our pants, a pat on your back
You smile to you, a job well-done
Woe unto you!
Woe unto your untamable ardor
Your reward lies in Hell
Castration and dismemberment!
Surrounded by darkness and an eternity of pain and despair

Omemu Esther
Nigeria

writers Space

Christmas Edition

We are now accepting submissions from 1st to 15th November, 2017.

Published every month, Writers Space Africa is an international literary magazine, which features rich diversity of writings from African writers to a global audience.

For the December edition, It's ALL ABOUT CHRISTMAS. Please send 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:

1. You can write about anything so far it has a christmas touch. It can be Death at Christmas, Love at Christmas, Heartbreaks at Christmas, Essays on the disappearance of Father Christmas, etc.
2. Due to the number of entries we receive, only the selected authors will be contacted by November 25th. Before you catch a stroke if you don't hear from us, remember to check your spam box.
3. 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.
4. Your work must not have been published anywhere and please submit in one genre only.
5. You retain copyright. Sounds good right?
6. Some selected published works will be featured on our website.

Phew! With all that out of the way, simply visit our website at www.writersspace.net to upload your work.

In case of difficulty, contact editorial@writersspace.net. We always reply our emails.

November 2017
EDITION