



WSA
Writers Space Africa

Unfulfilling Dream Jobs

Masemola Rebone
South Africa

Midnight Rain

Lwanda Alex
Kenya

Fulfillment

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Writers Space Africa - South Africa
Empowering South African Writers

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Editor's Note

The sudden feeling of accomplishment that overwhelms one after reading a rather satisfactory piece of art, the November edition is here to serve you that fulfillment feeling.

The 2021 African Writers Conference just came to an end, which was a success, all thanks to the founder, Anthony Onugba, WSA Tanzania, and all the participants. A big congratulations to the AWA winners, you all fulfilled your goals of writing for a purpose, for the African and international audience.

In this edition, you will be privileged to have a glimpse at the AWC, as well as the fine fulfilling African literature. Enjoy.

Neo Space-Poet Masetlane

Botswana

Acting Chief Editor





WSA
Writers Space Africa

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

WSA, a monthly literary magazine, is calling for its 61st Edition (January 2022 Edition)

We accept submissions in the following categories;

- **Articles/ Essays** - 1,200 words maximum
- **Flash Fiction** - 300 words maximum
- **Poetry** - 1 poem, a maximum of 24 lines
- **Children's Literature** - 700 words maximum (illustrations may be attached)
- **Short Stories** - 1,500 words maximum

For this Edition, writers can write on any theme. Submission opens from October 20 and closes November 15, 2021

To submit, please visit
www.writersspace.net/submissions

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Your Life, Your Canvas

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In a few months I shall be turning thirty. Dirty thirty. Third floor, as many call it. Looking back at the last couple of years (say post twenty-five), I realize that my perspective on so many things has changed. If you asked me what fulfillment in the work place/in my career looks like back then, I'd have probably painted a mental picture of me working at a certain company, in a certain role, and earning a very specific amount of money. Over time however, my idea of fulfillment in the workplace has grown into more than earnings and the entity. The nature of the work environment for example is a crucial aspect for me now. Is it healthy or is it one of those organizations that has great remuneration but will drive you to the verge of insanity with its toxic work culture? Don't get me wrong, I am not implying that I do not appreciate a healthy cheque. No sir mister! I mean, how else will I pay for the trip to go shake what my mama gave me on a yacht in Dubai in a you-know-what.

Another area of my life in which the visualization of fulfillment has morphed is relationships. A younger

version of me would probably imagine the ideal relationship to be one where I spend quality time with my person, gallivanting across the country, him spoiling me and I him, just good vibes, good times and all things rainbows and unicorns. My current self though, would choose peace, faithfulness, respect, and security over all other flowery, heart-melting deeds. Much as I was privy to the importance of these values back then, they did not carry the same weight they do now. We could probably attribute their rise in the ranks to the premium tears shed in the course of life's school of character development but that's a story for another day. Either way, at this point in my life, if the road trips, quality time, and love bombing are accompanied by disrespect, gas lighting, manipulation, and abuse of any form then give me zero ma'am because I am not the one!

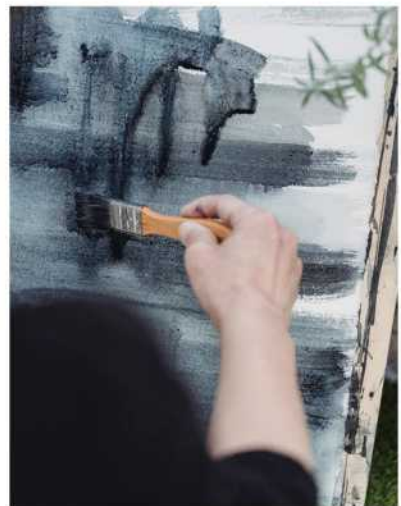
If you look at social media platforms, everybody seems to be living a very accomplished life. On Instagram for example, people are on vacations every weekend. Those not vacationing are either getting engaged, married or welcoming their bundles of

joy. Heck, there are some who are even getting engaged and going on vacations! Families are growing, friendships are thriving, partnerships are being forged and nobody is struggling. And that's just Instagram. We have not even gotten to LinkedIn, the Instagram for professionals where everyone is a boss and the owner of one company or another. In an age where there is so much visibility of other people's lives - even if just the highlights - it is very easy to get caught up in the rut of playing catch up, trying to emulate the seemingly perfect lives of others.

The Cambridge dictionary defines fulfillment as a feeling of pleasure and satisfaction because you are happy with your life. Question is, what does that look like for you? Is it living in a huge mansion built with your sweat and blood in the leafy suburbs of the city or in a decent, sizeable house with basic amenities, nothing lush or bourgeois? Is it a lifestyle of opulence, what many call the soft life, or one of simplicity and ease, not keeping up with the latest trends and scents? See, each person's concept of fulfillment is determined by a myriad of things - one's value system, their upbringing, past experiences and traumas, among others. Someone who comes from lack for example, may envisage a fulfilling life to be one in which they live in abundance, never being in lack. Someone who

comes from a background of abuse on the other hand, may imagine a fulfilling space to be one in which love, grace, and peace abound. Fulfillment looks different to different people.

As a society we need to understand that just because the other person's idea of fulfillment does not align with ours does not mean that they are wrong. Where one's idea of fulfillment may be based on their financial status, for others it may be defined by their quality of life, money or lack of it notwithstanding. We often hear stories of people looking down on others, mostly because of different financial status, those with less being deemed less ambitious or complacent. Truth is, there is a very thin line between fulfillment and complacency. It is easy for one to be comfortable





with being an under-achiever in the name of being fulfilled, which in my opinion, is a very sad way to live one's life. Sadly, at the end of the day, it's a personal call. Only you can introspect and honestly figure out whether you are fulfilled or being complacent.

In the same breath, only you can decide what fulfillment looks like for you. Once you do, you have to stand by your truth. You have to be willing and ready to live by it unapologetically, whether or not it makes sense to society. In today's society, people will constantly have unsolicited viewpoints on whatever decision you make. People who want riches will still be maligned by those who consider riches materialistic. Those who are pro simplicity will also be spurned by those who consider wealth essential. Despite the unwelcome voices in our lives, we have to be bold enough to live in our fulfillment and be at peace.

Also, virtual and physical society should extend grace to others, let people be. Maybe then it will be easier for social media influencers and those in the limelight to live life on their standards, within their budgets, and not bow down to societal pressure to put up facades of certain lifestyles. Maybe then more people will come home to themselves and embrace the reality and beauty of their lives, much as it may be different from what society paints as ideal.

As you go through life today, decide what fulfillment looks like for you, pursue it and live it out. Do not get caught up in the vicious cycle of comparison and competition lest yours be anything but a fulfilled stay on earth.

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Fulfillment

According to St. Augustine, our hearts are restless until they rest in God. This implies that our hearts will only rest when they rest in God. Moreover, as long as one is alive, it is not possible to be in a complete restful situation. The Cambridge Dictionary defines the word 'fulfill' as to do something that is expected, hoped for, or promised, or to cause it to happen. This definition does not in its entirety refer to the positive accomplishment of one's purpose or goals, instead it gives room for the ongoing process of striving to achieve those goals.

Since time immemorial, human beings have been striving to fulfill their life goals and missions. When people embark on specific tasks and their results match their expectations, they tend to be fulfilled. However, does that really define or equal the term fulfillment? If otherwise, can a person really be fulfilled or attain fulfillment? This article attempts to offer an explanation in a layman's way.

It is in every human's nature to fulfill his or her ambitions in life, but due to the different life situations we face,

things do not usually go our way. This has continued to be a struggle especially in today's cruel world. For many people, fulfillment simply means happiness; this implies that when one is happy, regardless of their experiences or situations, they are fulfilled. Having said this, it makes way for the question, what makes someone happy? This question is very important because we know how temporal happiness can be sometimes. However, it is good to be positive as there are a number of genuine reasons to be happy. When asked what fulfillment means to her, one of my social media friends simply said, 'being happily married and enjoying life.' For her, fulfillment means finding a good husband and the rest follows. This makes it all the more obvious how we all have relative approaches toward fulfillment.

In all that people go through, we all hope for better results and so it is very important to wish everyone you meet well because people go through a lot in life. You may never know how your good wishes can transform someone's life. Due to different life strata and the differences in

how we approach life, we cannot have one way towards fulfillment. It is also a sad reality to note that some people are rich and others poor and that is why when speaking of fulfillment it generates so many questions.

As kids, we looked up to completion of our high school studies as fulfillment of our life. Having reached there, we began another academic journey at institutions of higher learning and so here, graduation was seen as fulfillment. Well, what comes after graduation? I know a number of people who have been seeking for employment for many years while some have already given up; but, where they are now is what they once thought of as fulfillment. Another example is a woman who after getting married realizes that life is not all about having a husband or being married, her experiences wound her, she gets frustrated and decides to quit marriage. Meanwhile this same woman equated fulfillment to marriage. There are a number of practical examples that can be listed, however, it is important to note that we do not all the time see things as they are but as we see them. Our expectations do not always come out as we imagine and this frustrates our desired fulfillment plans.

Psychologists say that life is not a straight jacket, this means there are



ups and downs to be encountered as one moves along. Certain things cannot be avoided. No matter what approach one chooses, they will meet challenges, but this should not discourage anyone from attaining fulfillment. This calls for determination and a hardworking spirit to be able to strive for the better. There are a number of hidden things in life that are yet to be discovered and that is by hope because it is not guaranteed. It is important to realize that every day is an opportunity for us to go back to the drawing board and begin anew or modify our plans as we journey towards fulfillment. This is very important to note especially in this fast changing world where everything can change any day, any time. W

need to be more flexible and open minded to welcome new challenges that we may encounter along the way. Fulfillment can be in simple and small things in life, often times the things we overlook.

Fulfillment does not just happen anyhow, something must be done and hoped for. More effort must be put into attaining the desired results. One cannot just sleep all day and night and expect to fulfill his or her life goals, maybe if for that person, fulfillment means sleeping, then they have been fulfilled, but what about others? Will those who once said they were fulfilled in life still say the same today if we are to ask them the same question? We may not be sure of their responses but we hope they would be able to give a positive response because we delight in people's achievements and not in their failures.



If fulfillment has to do with something we expect, hope for, or wish to happen, then we all at some point have attained fulfillment in one way or the other. However, as human beings we should never be remiss in doing well. Our aim should always be of higher caliber. We need to enjoy the process as we move along, even as we work hard and put in our best in order to achieve fulfillment. Let us always remember that hard work pays.

Unfulfilling Dream Jobs

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It's true what they say, not everything that glitters is gold. More often than not, it's just party glitter that's blurring your vision. This is usually the case for big international organizations with a 'cult-like' public brand image that lures us all into wanting to be associated with what from the outside looks like an amazing dream place to work. I believed I would find fulfilment in the role.

In my case, it wasn't even a place I had dreamed I'd work. It felt more like a detour along the way that even I knew I couldn't refuse. It offered the opportunity to travel, exclusivity and access to events I didn't even have an interest in, a chance to interact with celebrities and other important people, and an exciting possibility to work in a place I assumed would be an authentically creative work environment because it was full of young and black creatives. But, what they sold me in those final interviews was the chance to work in a place that is run predominantly by black directors and managers. This was a novelty for someone who's only ever worked in agencies and companies that were spearheaded by white founders

and creative directors, where black creatives had very limited room for growth within those hierarchies unless they were unicorns. So, I thought this place was going to be different because the people at the helm looked like me, and therefore understood the struggle of being young and black.

The best thing about it was also that the opportunity came at a time when I was feeling restless and looking for something disruptive to get me out of my comfort zone. And this was definitely going to do just that since I wasn't going to be confined to my desk all the time – but I should have guessed that if it sounds too good to be true, then it probably is. In my defense, the company has such an allure and glamour about it. It's a nostalgic and iconic brand that still reminds me of my childhood, but it also embodies the signs of a brand that has all the flash but none of the essence on the inside, including an attractive leader with a charismatic personality.

I was so excited to join them, even more so when I realized that during



my first week the team was going away for a weekend for the end of year function and team building – not a bad week to start. I love traveling so this got me excited about all the free work travels that were coming. Admittedly though, even on that first trip, the red flags were starting to rear their ugly heads but I dismissed them with, “what company doesn’t have its flaws” and “you can’t please everyone all the time.” This was because employees were asked to send their leadership questions anonymously so they can be addressed and issues around misogyny and a lack of gender diversity within the leadership team were raised. True to the cause, the charismatic leader gave answers that allayed my fears and promised that they have plans to make changes – as a feminist, I wouldn’t want to work in a place that doesn’t prioritize gender equality. In retrospect, I was blinded by the excitement of FINALLY getting to work in a company that was led by Black and Brown people (unfortunately, they were mostly men).

The first 5 months felt like a dream, I literally couldn’t believe I got paid to do the job I did. Until the exhaustion started to hit and I woke up to the reality that I worked a 9 to 5 job (sometimes did evening events after work), 5 days a week and was expected to attend events on weekends and still function at full capacity. I was doing a job that was meant for more than one person. Those parties and the allure of access and exclusivity wore off very quickly for me, with the realization that my weekends were not mine. Other stuff also started to creep up, being hit by the reality that I worked in a toxic work environment where colleagues couldn’t even trust the person next to them to not throw them under the bus. I even began to experience anxiety because I’d often wake to a million WhatsApp messages every morning because another “urgent” thing happened and everyone was in a panic at 11 pm while I slept. Having to constantly be on edge because now I might be in trouble for being asleep instead of being responsive at an ungodly hour. At some point, it felt like we had “urgent” meetings every day because another thing that could have been prevented with better leadership and planning wasn’t. All of the stress was compounded by the fact that our team had a manager who wasn’t managing. Under her leadership, the team was always in a crisis due to her poor planning and inability

lity to execute the work she was hired for. So to avert her failure, she treated her team of grown-ass adults like children that needed to be scolded because she was failing.

When did I know I needed to walk away?

Well 10 months in, I wasn't able to see my family for extended amounts of time. If I wasn't working on weekends, I would be too burned out to exist. At this point the mere thought of going to the office filled me with crippling anxiety. I was doubting my own capacity to deliver work, questioning everything I did and making mistakes I shouldn't have made.

The most sobering part of that experience was that my manager was both young, Black and a woman. It was difficult to understand how she could treat the team so dismissively with her autocratic style of leadership. Up to that point, I had always thought having someone who looked like me as the lead would be life-changing (for the better), but she turned out to be the worst manager I've ever had. Even just writing this brings back to the surface those awful feelings.

I was discouraged by a few people about leaving 10 months into a job, cautioning that it would look bad on my resume. They advised me to



finish the year at least but I didn't even care at that point. I resigned without a backup plan after exhausting other options like bringing up the issue with her, talking to HR and going over our manager to talk to our MD. I exhausted all the options that were available to me, to no avail. When we complained, we were asked to be patient with her while she found her feet since she was a few months into the job. This meant us doing her job in addition to ours while she treated us like we did nothing all day. In the end though, I chose my peace of mind. She did ask me to stay when I resigned and even offered to move me to a different department, but I knew she was a symptom of a much bigger cultural problem within the business. I couldn't be a part of a place that enabled and rewarded behaviors like hers, because in reality, she wasn't the only manager who treated her team with such little disregard.

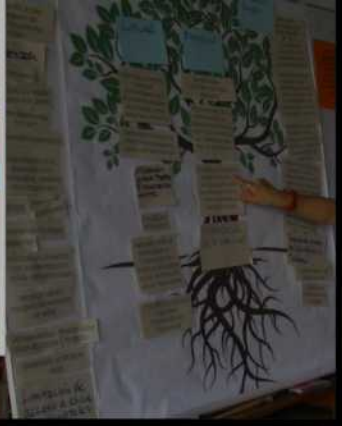
For a long time after I left, I didn't want to say out loud that my manager was actually a bully because I know how hard it is to find Black women in managerial roles in big companies like that. I cringed at the thought of describing another Black woman that way, but the reality was glaring. She was a BULLY.

I learnt from that experience that jobs will come and go, but my wellbeing should always be a priority. In the end, I was in a fortunate position to leave my job and take a few months to recover while doing freelance work for a while. Eventually, I was lucky enough to find a permanent place in another organization where I don't feel like work needs to be my whole life. I learnt a lot from that experience and kept it moving. Now I appreciate just how important it is to have a leader whose style of leadership fits with your needs as a person, as much as the job description.

Coming to terms with the fact that what I thought was a dream job, was just a job that haunted my dreams. Realizing that in reality, the idea of the job was more exciting than the job itself. There was such a big divide between what the job role promised, and the actual day-to-day experience of it. It wasn't my dream job, it was just the allure of a cult-like brand that got me. In the end, my perception of the place and the culture it promised

didn't materialize. I didn't feel any more empowered there than I did at those predominantly white agencies. What they promised was a marketing ploy – because although it ticked the right boxes as an organization that was Black and run with women managers, it wasn't that much different. It was a wolf in sheep's clothing. I didn't take the time to really interrogate whether what I was told about the organization was really representative, I wanted to believe, so I went in blindly. All the external glitter turned out to be broken glass shatters on the inside. Finally, I am at a place in my life where I found fulfilment. I now understand that I can't outsource my peace of mind and that no job can give me that. My feeling of fulfilment now comes from the inside.

neuroscience may yet cr
neuroscientists Joshua Greene and Jo
increasingly sophisticated
neuroscience
will that
sense
after all
s you inherited
gave you
brains
We will grow up
is a thoroughly
it is completely
we may



El amor es lo
el sexo, sólo ace



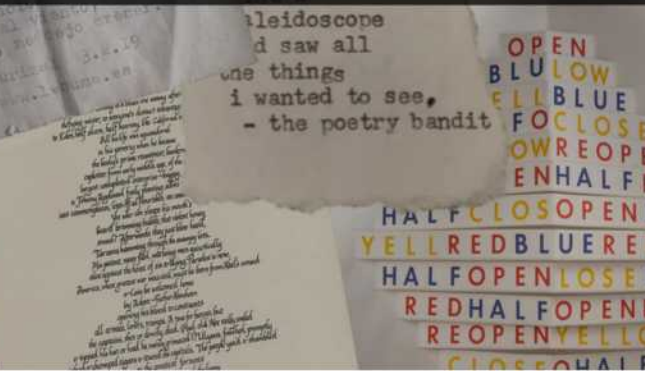
Human Rights Defenders Poetry Challenge

Why do you defend human rights?

- All levels of poetry experience welcome
- All styles of poetry accepted
- Multimedia submissions and creativity encouraged
- Poems accepted in English, Spanish, French, Swahili, Thai and Portuguese
- Top 3 poetry submissions win cash prizes



Deadline for Submissions: 30th November 2021



Our Brief Heavenly Hour

Kendi Karimi

Kenya

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I am trying to love myself through your eyes because every time you call me sexy, it feels like a lie. This lie does not come from your lips but from my mind. You are like a wishing well, like a good dream on a bad day, so when I feel I am in pain, from your well I draw all thoughts that turn the remaining hours into a happy day.

My hand is on your chest, and so are the sun's rays. The gods are looking at us all perplexed for what we have seems like a play, but all our hearts are at rest on this morning of an April day. They can't predict what next we'll do but they know what is mine is yours too. They can't guess the words that will come running out of my mouth, but they know the words will come directly from my heart an

into yours.

Lying on this bed, you call me sexy again, and first I think about the stretch marks between my thighs before my mind reminds me of the extra fat flapping above my pelvic arch. You raise your head to kiss my neck as I sink in yours. My bed will smell like your body today, enough for me to sleep as if I'm in your arms. You ask me about my plan for the day but I'm still thinking about fat and stretch marks.

You meet and hold my gaze as we cherish our brief heavenly hour. You know about my insecurities but you don't point them out by name, instead, you show me how they hold no weight to you by kissing them over and over again. A cry from me is a call to you

that I should come collapse in your arms like the way a whale finds its mate when it sends its cries through the ocean waves.

I'm trying to love myself through the smile you paint when you look my way. When you call me sexy, I smile, say thank you, then look away. I am as happy as a bee in a giant flower field. Today it's my breast that's heaped upon your chest, six years after you first pressed your lips against them. And then it's seven, and then it's eight, and then it's ten years of you looking my way. What my lips can't say is that I'm still shy about my breasts weight. When you cup them in your palms as I press my skin closer to yours, I forget about their weight as my shyness fades away. But when



you release them from their happy day, they are met by the gravity of the earth, and the only way they can look is down at what's pulling them under.

My hand is on your chest where your hairs are now gray. I remember when I first feared to call you babe and now I do it every day. I remember my fat and my stretch marks, still present on me today in my winter days. When we were up and about like spring and her many colors, we were busy bees who still made time for each other. Now we lounge

on the couch with our eyes closed, my hip in pain, your lungs in strain, but we're young in the deep of our hearts. The children say, when asked by friends, 'we want a love like our parents'.

Strangers come and go when we're seated on a bench in the park and say, would you look at that! They want what we have but they don't know that it's your magic powers that have seen us through the seasons of our life. They don't know that you grew a field of flowers in my mind, and out of the dark, my shyness was dissolved like a candle in

the daylight. They should know that a good man is not the one who buys you flowers but one who comes with a water can to irrigate what seeds of flowers you already have growing in your heart. Love gives birth to love as pollen does to flower.

Lying in our bed, you call me sexy again, and first I think about how true that is and how silly yet lucky I have been to have a man like you with me. I think about the flat chested girl who wishes she had my heavy chest, then about the barren woman who wishes her



stretch marked hips had been where mine have been, then about the virgin girl who's too shy to let her stomach be seen as I'm pinned under the love of my life like a mattress is pinned under the sheets. I have loved myself through the smiles you have painted all along our days and though we have had our gray moments, we have never let the day sleep in the height of anger.

You meet and hold my gaze as we cherish our brief love making hour before my hip and your lungs launch a complaint.

You have known about my insecurities but you have never pointed them out by name, instead, you've shown me how they hold no weight to you by kissing them over and over again. A cry from me is a call to you that I should come collapse in your arms, like the way a whale finds its mate when it sends its cries through the ocean waves.

You meet and hold my gaze as we're lying on this bed. My hand is on your chest, and I have fallen in love with myself.

African Writers Awards



With gratitude to Writers Space Africa Foundation, African Writers Development Trust, and Writers Space Africa (Tanzania Chapter), I present the winners of both the 2021 African Writers Awards (AWA) and the Wakini Kuria Prize for Children's Literature. This was announced on the 2nd and final day of the 2021 African Writers Conference held at the University of Dar es Salaam on the 9th of October, 2021.

Special thanks go to the panel of judges; Nahida Esmail (Tanzania), Gankhanani Moffat Moyo (Zambia), Sabah Carrim (Mauritius), Nabilah Usman (Nigeria), Comfort Nyati, SDB (Zimbabwe), Temani Nkalolang (Botswana), Halieo Motanyane (Lesotho) and Namshe Udosen (Nigeria).

Below are the winners.

African Writers Awards for Creative Non-Fiction (\$100)

Adetutu by Adedoyin Adetutu (Nigeria)

African Writers Awards for Drama (\$100)

Eating With Chopsticks by Gordon, B. Aywa Anjili (Kenya)

African Writers Awards for Poetry (\$100)

In The Grave Of The Brave by Clara Wanjira Kariuki (Kenya)

Wakini Kuria Award for Children's Literature (1st place \$150, 2nd place \$100, and 3rd place \$75)

The Millionaire Orphan by Makhago Peter (Uganda)

Tea time with Tito by Stephanie Chizoba Odili (Nigeria)

The Enchanted Pen by Nathaniel Z Mpofu (Zimbabwe)

Congratulations to all the winners. Please visit www.africanwritersconference.com to read the stories

Anthony Onugba,

Chief Judge,

African Writers Awards

Call for Submission

Poetic Africa, a quarterly online poetry magazine published by Writers Space Africa, calls for submissions from poets for her February 2022 edition.

*An African country's anthem ends with "peace and unity". Can African countries boast of being peaceful and united? Have we (not) lost the humanity in us? Write and submit your poem under the theme **UBUNTU**.*

The editorial team is looking for poems of a maximum of 24 lines, creativity and originality. Please note that the poem titles should not have the word "Ubuntu".

The submission window is from November 10th until December 10th 2021. The edition will be released on **February 10th 2022**. Only poets of selected entries will receive feedback due the huge volumes of submissions.

To submit, please visit <https://writersspace.net/poeticafrica>. Submissions in French or Swahili are accepted but must be accompanied by equivalent translations in English.





Wistful Wishes

Jewo Oghenetega
Nigeria
oghenetegafaith59@gmail.com

The labours of my past are seedlings I gave to the present
To sow into my future; so as to reap a harvest of fulfilment

For years I have wandered the earth, searching for answers
Whether or not destiny has anything in store for my life

Mother used to say "dawn is the colour of an inferno
Called 'the future' who rages unchecked in heaven's chambers"

She'd say "dusk is the colour of wistful wishes birthed
In the deepest crevices of mortal hearts", but even though

The sky takes on the colour of a fire long dead; yet these
Tendrils of golden light still bear tales of hope & fulfilment

So, I'll exfoliate these ignorant idealisms that hold me bound
In fetters of mediocrity and in the isolation of primitiveness

I choose to believe that my future was impregnated by my past
And has now conceived all the outcomes that elude the present

So, one day, I'll stare through tomorrow's eyes and glimpse
Sneak-peeks of today's elusive possibilities, getting fulfilled.

Artistic Bubbles

Odirle Odirle
Botswana.
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A cloud of ideas hovering before your eyes
Writing it with haste before it disappears
Poets, novelists, playwrights must find fulfillment in ink and words, right?
Or do they get envious when a painter holds a brush?

A silhouette memory glued to the back of your head
Detailing it with a confetti of colors on your canvas;
Drawers, painters, find their happiness in pencils and brushes, huh?
I really doubt they ever wish it was them when a singer holds a mic.

An angelic voice that captures many hearts and souls;
Eyes closed, mouth opened to let the melody hypnotize the audience
Singers must find their joy in do re mi... I bet
I don't think they desire to shake a leg the way dancers do.

Flowing to the beat of the drum is mesmerizing;
Legs, hands, head, willingly bending to every note
Dancers find satisfaction in moving to the beat, eh?
No way they dream about holding a mallet to be a sculptor.

Carved fretwork, molded clay
An adze in the right hand, a chisel in the left
Sculptors probably feel whole when they play with clay and stone and metal
They probably can't even imagine about being a writer; holding a pen.



Small Steps

Hangiriza Benedict
Uganda.

hangithechampion@gmail.com

Small Steps

Months thicken through
the baby, with each dusk,
limbs are frosted with dust.

From clay, bones seamed by
practice climb out of a polar
dream like meerkats, align

In a body rolling,
arched over
shadows.

Of walls and furniture
with backbones,
of stories the
feet will tell,
every step unlocks with
tenderness,
flint smiles slide
with patience at
the small animal's face.



Saviour

At last, you came,
Ropes you untied
Undressed all the pain,
Hope you fulfilled.

You took long,
Then was May
Your time was due,
I held on all the way.

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Yesterday's Tomorrow

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Go back inside and open a book,
You will play when the exam is done
The Mother insists in her tenth year,
The child obeys.

Stay away from boys,
You will but tire of their advances...
After you hold that prideful degree
She tells her teenage daughter.

Get a job that pays the bills,
Your dreams are not going anywhere
At this point, it's not just the mother's
But a society's song.

She's thirty, behind a paperwork filled desk
And realization strikes her worn out mind,
They were all wrong, dreams do not wait
They get further with time.

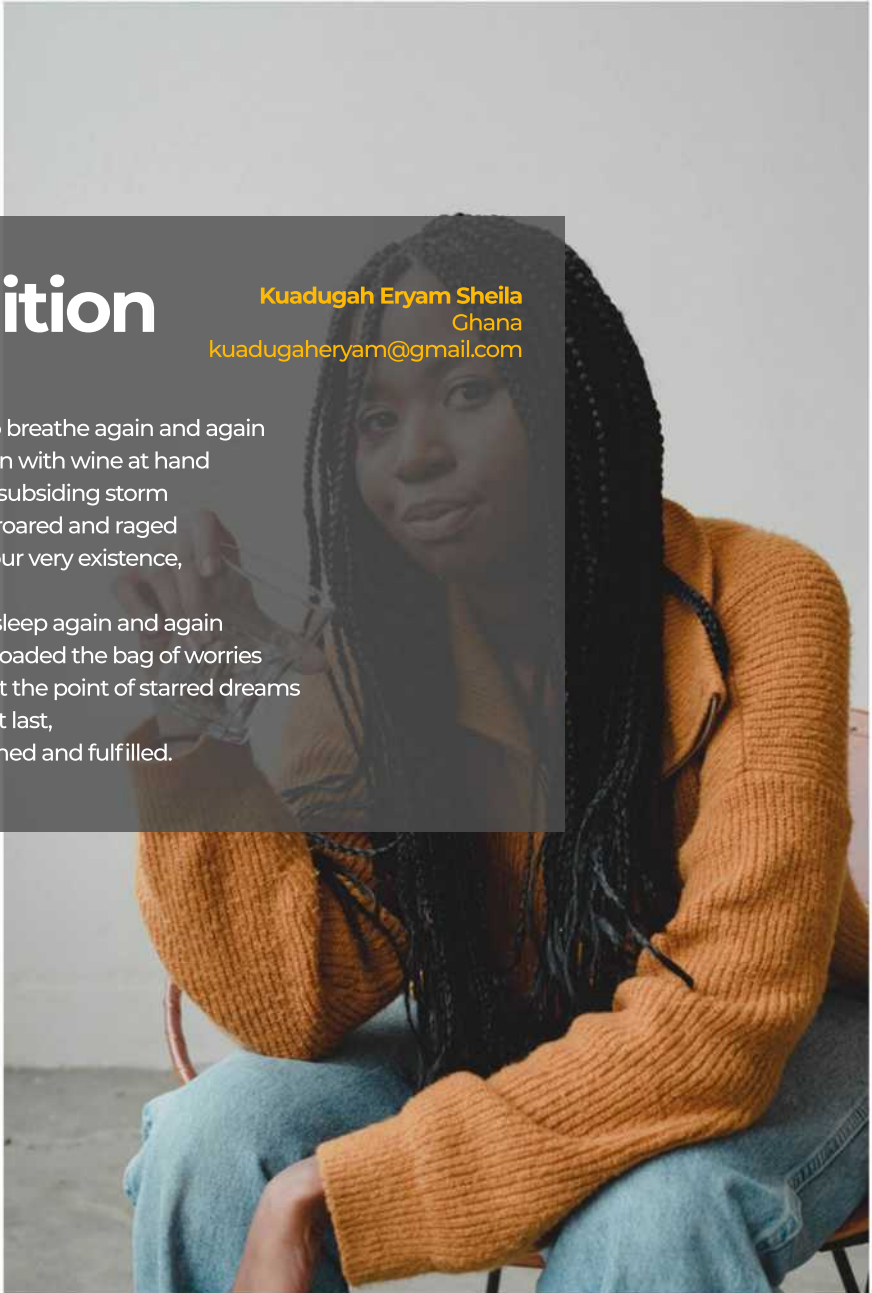
As a soft sigh leaves her lips, she vows
To teach her daughter different,
That a chance grabbed now
Frees the heart from the pain of regret.

Fruition

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A breath to breathe again and again
In relaxation with wine at hand
Sighting a subsiding storm
That once roared and raged
Shaking your very existence,

A sleep to sleep again and again
Having unloaded the bag of worries
Standing at the point of starred dreams
Knowing at last,
Accomplished and fulfilled.





Midnight Rain

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It is the pain
we are yet to heal from
which lingers,
finding sanctuary in the chambers of our beating hearts.

It is the feelings
we are yet to uproot
which spread,
piercing the emotional barrier beneath the armor
Of our constricting chests.

It is the words
we left unsaid,
which build up,
forming layers of silence on tongues
bequeathed with salient words.

We now hate the way the warmth of our blanket reminds us
of their hands wrapped around us,
we hate the sound of a neighbor knocking to ask
whether we need salt again.

We hate the way sunsets remind us
of the memory of kisses planted on our lips,
we switch off the radio whenever what used to be our song comes on.

So we let our tears escape the custody of our misty eyes,
perhaps to find fulfillment in the pouring of the midnight rain.

A million ways to the top

Bokang Moshoeshoe

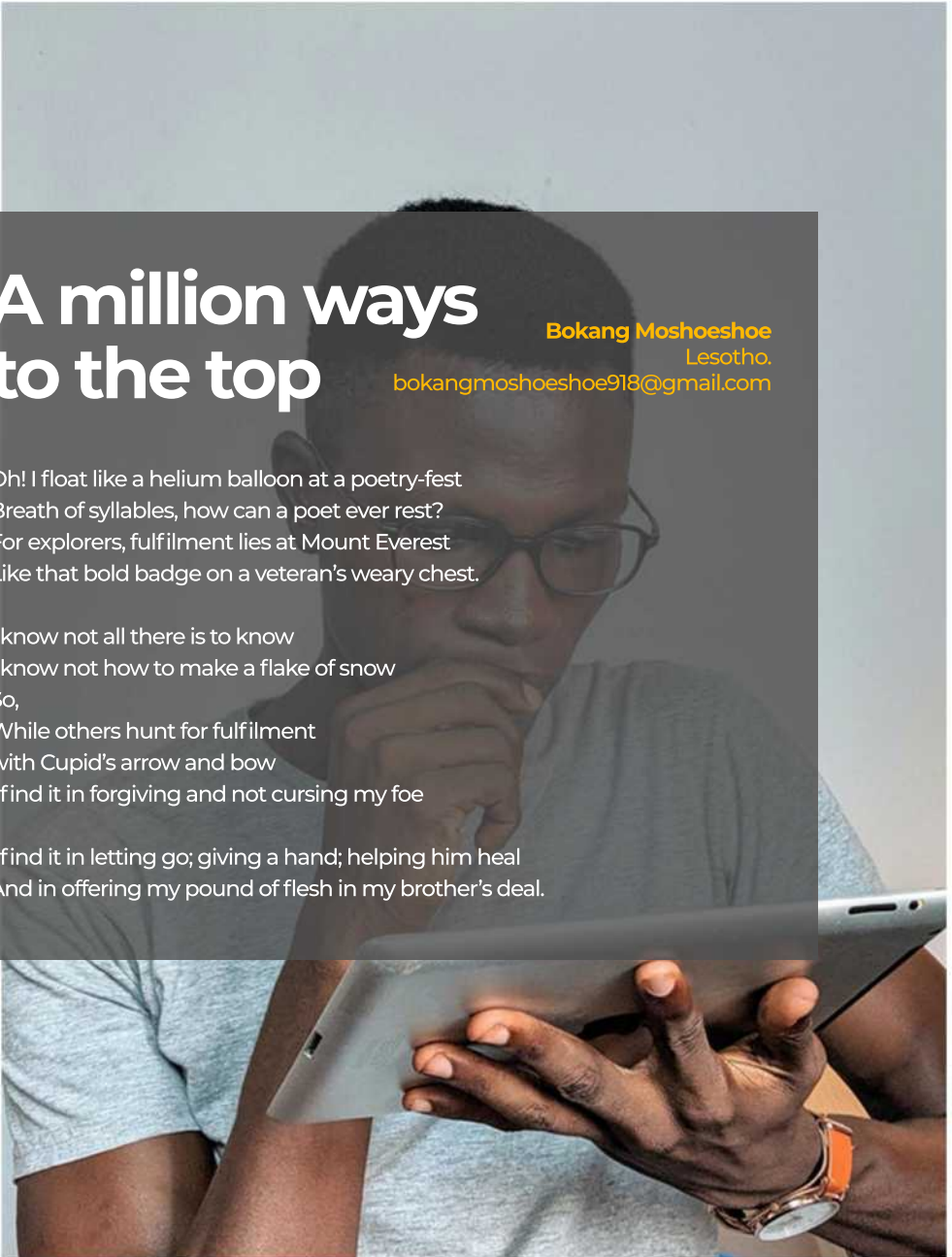
Lesotho.

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Oh! I float like a helium balloon at a poetry-fest
Breath of syllables, how can a poet ever rest?
For explorers, fulfilment lies at Mount Everest
Like that bold badge on a veteran's weary chest.

I know not all there is to know
I know not how to make a flake of snow
So,
While others hunt for fulfilment
with Cupid's arrow and bow
I find it in forgiving and not cursing my foe

I find it in letting go; giving a hand; helping him heal
And in offering my pound of flesh in my brother's deal.



GENRE: SHORT STORY**TITLE: A COLD NIGHT IN AKRON****AUTHOR: OKWUASABA EBUBE; NIGERIA****REVIEWER: YOLANDA KUEI P. MACUEI; SOUTH SUDAN**

It's said that thinking about it and how is what kills; not the actual disease. A reflection of your image in the mirror is what you often believe to be the reality, not knowing that mirrors are manufactured distinctively to appeal to its sight. Similarly to the mindset, your thoughts, reflection, and perception of what the mind projects are the definition of your physical strength or weakness.

"Insomnia? Tobi asked. But what is the problem really? He further asked." Clinical depression- Dr Sam called it MDD; Major Depressive Disorder. As one starts to read through the epic short story "A Cold night in Akron" by Okwuasaba Ebube; "what is the root cause of all the problems to the point of MDD?" is the question that will pop up in one's mind as it relatively becomes answerable through deep thoughtful reflections of the past negative events that occurred in the life experience of the character 'You'.

The writer uses the second-person point of view "You". As a student at Ohio State University, through his life story of battling a mental health disease, MDD, which he got when he first lost his aunt and stress from academics. In this narrative, the writer applies simple language to help the readers explore the depths and explains the events in a realistic and relatable way.

The story relates to most African students' life, especially those studying overseas. The economic crisis back home is enough to traumatize a poor citizen. Academic stress that prevents one to keep their grades up. There's a devaluation of home currency, which ensures the need to spend huge sums of money for tuition. Tuition fees increase at times and can force one to drop out. On campus, a student might suffer from cultural shock and battle racism.

In addition, at some points, one might have no medical bill and so they have to self-medicate with painkillers or other pills.

All these contribute to Omo's mental trauma which later results in high blood pressure. In a nutshell, "A Cold Night in Akron" is a story that resonates with many struggling youths that are striving to make it in any phase of their life; within and across Africa. Without a choice left, they opt for thoughtful ignorance as a first-hand solution to the challenges until it's too late to be assisted accordingly. Major Depressive Disorder is real. It can be you, I or anyone.



GENRE: ARTICLE**TITLE: TOO LATE TO REGRET****WRITER: TINASHE MUZONDO, ZIMBABWE****REVIEWER: JOSEPH ODURO, GHANA**

The glitters beyond this continent have lured many young Africans into great misfortunes in their search for greener pastures. Most end up in gang-related crimes while others depend on jobs that come with menial wages. "Too late to Regret," tells us the story of one of the many young Africans who sought for any means possible to leave the continent, only to be countenanced with series of misfortunate circumstances.

This narrative article reflects the contemporary phenomenon of our continent while signifying the deplorable conditions that young African men of today have to endure outside their homes. It kicks off with the most daunting question, which is why most Zimbabweans who travel abroad barely return home. Most of the time we are geared to believe this happening is mainly due to their refusal to return to the lives they longed to escape from. We only get to know in this article that it is a result of their inability to face the shame they would have to endure as they have nothing to show from their travels.

Greener pastures are said to be wherever we find ourselves and our chances of becoming better than we are today, are relative to our efforts and hard work. It is indisputable that the stakes are high elsewhere but without conscious strategic plans and relentless efforts, we are bound to fail and end up worse than before. Having had to endure hardships abroad and our refusal to return to our roots, push us into succumbing to any means that may fulfil our aspirations

No matter how far we may be from home and how worse our situation may be, resorting to crime and illegal activities would only accentuate and delay the shame we refuse to face today. It's not too late when we accept the reality of the stakes present to us. It's only late when we live on while ignoring reality in pursuing our goals.



GENRE: POETRY**TITLE: TRUE DECORATION****WRITER: JAINABA DANSO, GAMBIA****REVIEWER: CHIDIEBERE UDEOKECHUKWU, NIGERIA**

The skin is a divine ornamental relic, and so nothing is left for wonderment at the title that Gambian poet, Jainaba Danso had picked for her beautiful poem. Her proclamations in the poem have not strayed from the notion that there is no better substitute for the God-given colour of one's skin. In her own words, it is a "True Decoration".

Think thus of the first 2 lines:

What could be older than time and even shine in the darkest?

The answer is much closer than you may have thought. If the October edition of WSA – ROOTS implies beginning, source of existence or life, then it is easy to understand that Jainaba's poem eulogises the black race—in the ensuing beautiful ways:

First and foremost, the poet appreciates the black identity from the literal perspective of Colouration. Begin to imagine the nature of the Black hue—how it is the absorption of all colours of light. Perhaps, to entertain this conception will inspire a bold realisation that speaks to the dominance of this peculiar colour. Black matches any other colour, without exceptions. Doesn't this imagination inspire the notion that "Black" is the mother of colours? If you have not laboured in understanding the points afore portrayed, you will thus find it seamless in appreciating the first 2 lines of Jainab's poem. What could be older than time? "Nothingness" perhaps—which glows even in the darkest. There is no better way to extol the immortality of the black race.

The understanding above gets better because this poem is an uncanny allusion to Yolanda Mabuto's "My Black is Beautiful". To boldly emphasise the points aimed here, the first stanza of this magical poem by the Zimbabwean poet is reproduced below:

Ebony haze shimmers over my body --- over my bones
Distant ancestors speak of__past and future birthstones
My roots whisper through my veins, through my hair
My lips, my eyes, my hips -- secrets from my African heir

As a matter of corroboration, anthropologists generally agree that humans first evolved in Africa—and much of human evolution occurred there. Does this not speak highly of the truth that the "Root" of all races of humanity is the Negro? Maybe, these utterances above, form the core of Jainaba's contemplations as far as this poem is concerned.



Yet another way through which she has extolled the black race is through a trinity of dazzling metaphors.

Consider line 3: "Beauty is my signature"

Line 6: "Love is my Mother,"

And the very last line: "I'm her black muse".

There is a conscious attempt to make the reader aware of what being black ideally embodies. These beautiful metaphors have a compelling effect of proving the points that the poet persona portrays in these aforementioned instances. Is there a need for better analogies here?

In line 10, there is once more, a beautiful allusion to the age-old idea that the black race is humanity's origin.

Consider the line: for all men are born black

Meditate on line 8: "Don't measure my worth"

And line 9: "with mere colours"

Here the poet dissuades society's vice of prejudice based on colour — perhaps alluding subtly to a poem titled KALI by Heme G, published via Facebook on the 10th of April 2018. The poem x-rays the struggles of dark-skinned people (women) in the (Indian) society. The first stanza is particularly didactic:

It was my mother's fault that she birthed
Me on the banks of Kaveri
For try as they did they could not wash the black
Alluvial soil off my skin

The poem above eventually ends on a high note, as it extolls the beauty and bravery of being dark-skinned.

Perhaps, lines 12 to 19 refers to the human race as a forest where there are trees of different kinds. These trees can only symbolise the different races that comprise humanity. Perhaps, the actual identity of the giantess whose reflections brighten the gloomy forest can be gleaned from this piece. The shadow of the behemoth shrub dulls the gloom in the forest. The poet persona makes a witty allusion again to the quality of "darkness" and proudly identifies with her race as being the true dark muse of the Negro.

Is there a better way of inspiring more contemplations on the African Heritage? This review draws to a close by surmising that there is probably no better way that exists other than this beautiful gospel that has been proclaimed by Jainaba Danso's True Decoration.





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Creativity is a Journey

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destination in **class and style**

