



**WSA**  
Writers Space Africa  
M a g a z i n e  
September 2023 / ISSUE 81

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# Autricia Timti

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This edition presents an inspiring conversation with Autricia Timti, an exceptional wordsmith from Cameroon who won the 2021 Young English Cameroonian Writers Awards (YECWA)





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# Editorial

**Scholar Akinyi (Kenya)**

Growing up, I was instilled with the value of always speaking the truth, regardless of the consequences it may bring. There was an underlying understanding that truth often led to trouble, yet it was regarded as a virtue. I believed that even if honesty resulted in challenges, the liberation that followed was its own reward.

But as time passed, my perspective on truth evolved. I began to question whether truth was limited to mere disclosure. Was there more to truth than meets the eye? What does truth truly mean?

It is often said that truth sets us free, but how accurate is that assertion? How reli-

able are the commonly accepted truths, and how does the realm of creativity comprehend and convey truth?

In this issue, we embark on a captivating journey into the creative minds of writers from across Africa as they courageously share their personal truths through the power of the written word.

I can assure you that this edition is nothing short of thrilling. It is an authentic exploration of truth. And as September unfolds, may it bring you an abundance of summer goodness—a truth that resonates with your heart and fills your days with joy.



## On the cover

→ This edition presents an inspiring conversation with Autricia Timti, an exceptional wordsmith from Cameroon. With her remarkable talent and accolades, be prepared to be completely captivated by her story.

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## WSA Awards

- **Monthly Digital Literary Magazine of the Year - 2022/2023**  
(The Corporate LiveWire Global Awards 2022/23)
- **Best Monthly Digital Literary Magazine (Africa) - 2022**  
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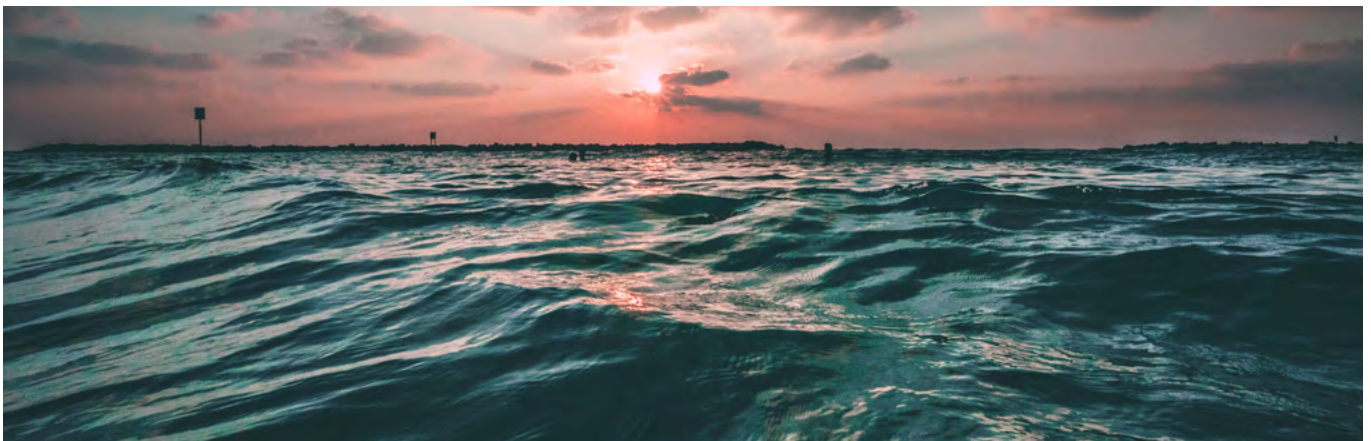
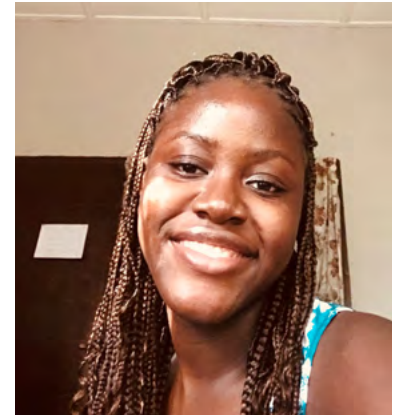
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# African Writers Conference

# MY TRUTH

Maureen Allandi  
*Ghana*



I remember my firsts: my first friend, my first enemy, my first loss.

We were at Kokrobite; Efe, Mama, Dada and I. The sun had made itself comfortable above us casting an uncomfortable heat; heat that could only be soothed by the cool of water.

Efe and I trudged along the lone path, the chatter of our voices I believed could be heard from far.

With each step, the beach house which held our parents seemed to draw back and we were at the beach.

We splashed about tossing our beach ball between ourselves.

Then it came, red hot anger.

Efe had stolen my first love.

“Hey!”

Back to the present with an expectant Efe

waiting for me to make my throw.

I tossed with renewed vigor from my memory field trip.

I took in the vastness of the ocean and wondered why on earth Efe was so close.

Upon receiving the ball, the wave came rushing through.

Efe was too perfect to be real

“Kuks focus!”

I did..

I tossed the ball as far as I could, completely missing her.

Fueled with adrenaline, she swam after the ball, except swimming was not her forte.

I would like to correct myself.

I remember my first riddance.



# Creative Spotlight



Step into the enchanting realm of the Writers Space Africa (WSA) Literary Magazine, where I had the privilege of engaging in an inspiring conversation with Autricia Timti, an exceptional wordsmith from Cameroon. With her remarkable talent and accolades, be prepared to be completely captivated by her story.

- PPBlessing

**PPBlessing: What are your favorite activities?**

**AT:** I love reading, writing, travelling and being useful for my community.

**PPBlessing: How have you been useful to your community?**

**AT:** I do a lot of volunteering in actions related towards development, environment preservation, education and youth mentoring. I mentor students in career orientation, job search, and run programs which aim in empowering young girls.

**PPBlessing: Such commendable efforts. How has this been so far and why mentoring young girls in particular?**

**AT:** Awesome. Through service I discovered my essence, my Ikigai or purpose as others will say. I believe in the power of strong communities and the responsibility we all have in participating towards building sustainable societies for future generations.

Young girls particularly because I know how hard it is in our African context to be a young woman with dreams. Women are the pillars of our communities, forebears and educators of the next generation. If we want to have sustainable societies, then investing in the dreams and future of our young girls is primordial. As a young woman today, I more than understand the need of grooming and helping our girls in forging their way through life despite the challenges.

**PPBlessing: What are some of the challenges and how are you guiding your mentees through them?**

**AT:** Growing up in a developing country requires a lot of effort and determination to succeed. We aren't exposed to opportunities, social and educational facilities like other young people in other parts of the world. Before any external work is done, a mental break-through is required. Most young people have lost hope in what the future holds for them. There's much counseling done at this level. Equally, poverty, lack of job opportunities, corruption, crisis, wars, etc.... make the whole show even more complicated. With my mentees, I challenge them to use what they perceive as obstacle to fuel their engagement towards succeeding. Through trainings, skill acquisition, and counseling, I believe they will be armed enough to face these challenges.

**PPBlessing: Why do you write?**

**AT:** Writing is an escape route for me. It's liberty! Freedom. I write because I know words heal. To see the world through the lenses of words is communicating in a language accessible to everyone and giving the opportunity to people to appropriate these words, without imposing a way of understanding.

**PPBlessing: An escape route from what?**

**AT:** For me, it's an escape route from the cruelty that sometimes characterises our world. It's a place where love and hope

abounds. It's an escape route from the restriction society imposes on the liberty of being.

**PPBlessing: How long have you been writing?**

**AT:** I identified the writer in me since my primary school. That will make it almost ten years today I actively write.

**PPBlessing: Seeing how long you've been writing, how come you haven't published a book nor have a website?**

**AT:** I'll say I am gathering the momentum to go on solo-publishing. It is such an important subject to me that I am putting together all my resources to release a blockbuster. I co-authored a poetry anthology in 2021: "Inside the Beyonds," which was a great experience. I am currently working on the publication of another poetry anthology with some young African writers which we plan to publish latest October 2023.

**PPBlessing: When should we expect this blockbuster and how do you intend publishing it?**

**AT:** Well, I started working on this already and I think next year will be good for a release. I'll work with a publishing company. I am in contact with some publishers already.

**PPBlessing: What inspires your writing?**

**AT:** I will say people and experiences, be they mine or others.

**PPBlessing: Which writers have influenced your writing the most?**

**AT:** Mme Ndjokeng Rose. She was a tutor in my secondary school and an award winning author. She inspired the young girl I was to believing that no matter the little part of the world I came from, I had a voice which ought to be heard.

**PPBlessing: That's awesome, and you have become an award winning writer too.**

**Tell us about Blackout, your winning poem for the Young English Cameroonian Writers Award (YECWA) in 2021**

**AT:** Well, when I wrote I had no idea I was going to win. I didn't even expect it. Like I always say, muse spoke to me. I remember sitting at the veranda of our house, the evening breeze blowing the words to me as I wrote about missing home, which was that year's theme for the contest. I simply poured my heart onto the paper. I was pleasantly surprised as I made it to the long list and finally the shortlist as the winner.

As I wrote wrote Blackout, I thought of all the people who were forced out of their homes, away from their loved ones and their landmarks, because of one reason or the other. I just let the emotions flow on.

Since childhood, I have always dreamt of winning the Pulitzer prize. Winning YECWA comforts me I am on the right track as a writer, surrounded by people who be-

lieve in this amazing skill.

**PPBlessing: Have you won other awards after YECWA?**

**AT:** Not yet! I got published into magazines, notably WSA Magazine. Hopefully, I wish to win this year's African Writer's Awards.

**PPBlessing: Is it only poems you write?**

**AT:** No! I write short stories as well.

**PPBlessing: How many stories and poems have you written so far?**

**AT:** I can't count. They're numerous.

**PPBlessing: Are you still in contact with Mme Ndjokeng Rose? Does she still write?**

**AT:** Unfortunately, I lost track of her when she was transferred to another school. My efforts there on to reconnect with her remain fruitless. As to whether she still writes, I can't tell, but I hope she does.

**PPBlessing: Could you share titles of some of her works?**

**AT:** The one I remember and which rings with me always is, I wrote my name. In this poem, she talks about the waves sweeping away her name when she wrote it on the shore, of the wind blowing it away when she wrote it in dust, but how it was preserved when she wrote it in a book.

**PPBlessing: Part of your LinkedIn in about stated that you go by the saying,**

**“let's create the world we want to live in” why this?**

**AT:** I believe we have the power of making the world better. We have full power over our actions and our words. We have the possibility to choose love instead of hate, peace in place of wars and to fully devoting our skills and resources in uplifting others around us and our communities. We can make that ultimate decision!



**PPBlessing: What's the most memorable book you've ever read?**

**AT:** I am divided between Jane Eyre of Charlotte Bronte, J.K Rowling's Harry Potter and Olivier Twist by Charles Dickens. More to this, my list is long.

**PPBlessing: What makes these books memorable?**

**AT:** What's peculiar about the books are the main characters. We see them grow from childhood to adulthood, facing challenges and still finding ways to thrive through.

**PPBlessing: I saw a Tony Elumelu Foundation certificate on your Instagram, could you shed some light on it?**

**AT:** Oh yea! Entrepreneurship happens to be of great interest to me. I am a financial consultant and most times work with start-ups and business owners. With some friends, we applied for the TEF Entrepreneurship program aiming to win the grant for our agricultural project. Though we weren't awarded the grant, we completed the training and got certified. It was a thrilling experience!

**PPBlessing: Quite a lot on your plate. How do you manage to handle being a mentor, financial consultant, entrepreneur, and writer?**

**AT:** I'll say I make use of my organisational skills. It necessitates a lot of focus and organisation. It is not a smooth journey, but for the objectives I set for myself, I try to outperform at every level.

**PPBlessing: What other language do you speak aside English and French?**

**AT:** My vernacular, Bikom.

**PPBlessing: What do you look forward to achieving as a writer?**

**AT:** My ultimate life goal is to impact the lives of people I come in touch with. As a writer, I wish to speak to people through my works, to inspire, revive hopes and broken dreams. I will love my works to travel across geographical, social, and cultural borders, to speak to people's souls.

**PPBlessing: What has been your most challenging experience so far as an individual, in writing and your current career.**

**AT:** One of my most challenging experience was to find myself in a toxic environment where I was brought to doubt myself and my capabilities. It was a challenging moment as I lost track of my purpose and my Why! Luckily, I had family and friends who were present and more than willing to help me through.

**PPBlessing: How has being a part of the Writers Space Africa-Cameroon helped you as a writer?**

**AT:** Being part of WSA-C has helped me enormously as a writer. I have a writing community I belong to and identify with. I have had the opportunity to meet inspiring authors in and out of Cameroon, who are open to sharing their experiences and guiding the next generation of writers. Equally, meeting such writers constant-

ly challenge me to be better. I can't thank WSA enough for this.

**PPBlessing:** If you were to have an opportunity to meet your favorite authors in person, what 2 questions would you ask?

**AT:** Wow! If I had the opportunity to meet J.K Rowling, I'll ask her how she did it? How did travelling in a train inspire her to think about ever writing Harry Potter, weaving the story out to what it became. Equally I'll ask her where she found the strength to keep on sending out her manuscripts to publishing houses despite the different rejections she received. A last question will be how she feels today knowing her works have impacted the world.

**PPBlessing:** Do you have a writing routine?

**AT:** I have a routine, even though I often fall out of it.

**PPBlessing:** How has it aided your writing?

**AT:** Having a routine helps me improve my skill. Like every other art, practice makes perfect, and so is writing.

**Thank you for reading through this edition's interview, until next month, keep reading the Writers Space Africa magazine.**



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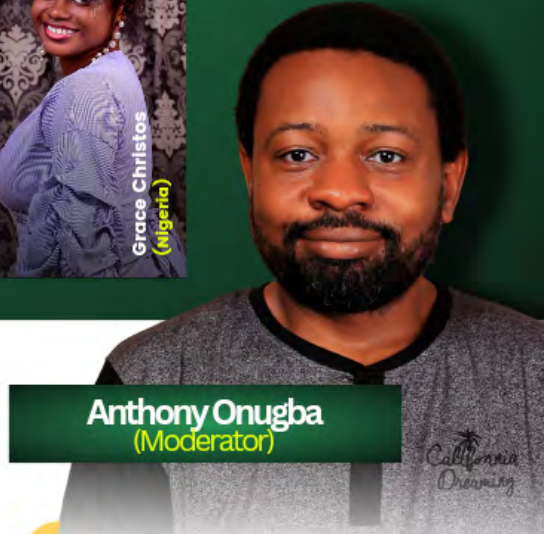
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# IN PLAIN SIGHT

**Rebaone K. Motsumi**  
*Botswana*



Children gallivant in near nakedness  
Makgabe and ditshega covering the barest of necessities.  
I am Botswana  
Adorned in a culture unparalleled.  
Woven intricately; sun-burnt fingers.  
These beautiful coils need not leave you desiring more,  
Halos never looked good on the fiends of hell.  
I will not force my tenacious African coils  
into submission by all means possible.  
Balking at salves and oils  
Burnt scabs will not be my normal.  
Caucasian hair will not adorn my proud head,  
A head on which we (I) take pride.  
Pride once proudly given to straightened hair,  
Beauty thrown out the window; shameless.  
Let the 'fro flourish  
Dare I plant dreads?  
Dare I keep the afro?  
African belle?  
'How utterly uncouth!'  
Hold my head high  
Show off my slow-sun-burnt awesomeness  
For all to see...



You threw my name on a dirty floor  
 With the phrase "you disgust me".  
 Not a single thought  
 That I could possibly be the water  
 That should cleanse your sins.  
 Now a burst of the placenta,  
 A whole lineage at risk of drowning.  
 You let our crystal memories  
 Swim in your spit.  
 Sweet words have turned sour,  
 Not even a fly can kiss them now.  
 You still continue in my invisibility  
 That I have built around you.  
 To look no further than the room  
 Filled with the love we both left.  
 You find my lonely shadow there.  
 Still hopeful  
 That the square has become more a circle now;  
 Smooth and honest  
 It revolves and returns  
 But the corners are still as sharp as they have been;  
 Competitive, which one is sharper and effective in  
 these times  
 Than the other.  
 We forgot to pack our whole lineages from each other  
 I have been longing for the awakening of this day  
 I have come back to collect myself from you  
 From the umbilical of your feminine  
 So I may fully return home.

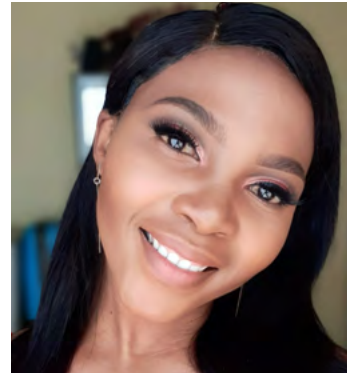
# CLOSURE

**Luleka Mhlanzi**  
*South Africa*



# BLUES OF DEATH

**Motshidisi Pitso**  
*South Africa*



Losing someone to the hands of death  
will make you want to charge God for murder.

I've learnt to speak in one of the most complicated languages, forgiveness.  
But how do I write about the truth when it has not set us free?  
We have mastered to seek our brokenness in each other's sorrows.

The truth is, this poem is a collection of synonyms that describe the word agony.  
And how obituaries have made it obvious  
that some of us will no longer get to experience the sun rise.

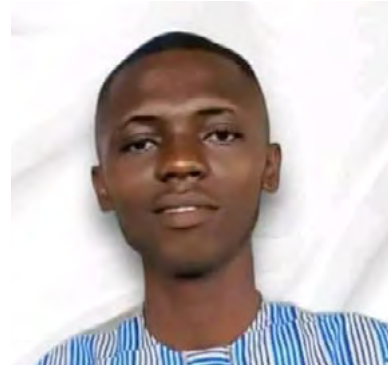
We listen to sermons in church  
About the gospel of God and how heaven smells like roses,  
How hell has thorns, how the devil dances to the tune of our sins  
Yet there is no truth on how exactly we can get hold of God  
except through prayer.  
Am I the only one that wishes Heaven had a landline  
or a hotline number for cases of emergency?

How many deaths of young people do we witness every day?  
How many young bodies do we lay to rest every week?  
Parents are no longer buried by their children, they bury their children.

In honest truth, rest in peace has become our new congratulations.

# THE RANCH HOUSE

**Nkegbe Chukwuemeka Joshua**  
*Nigeria*



Sanity scurried far from the ranch house.  
 Sanctity followed suit in a haste.  
 Inhabitants scampered about like the chicks without  
 their mother-hens.  
 Aggression and disagreement hovered the roofs in zest  
 as its paramount features.  
 Although the surrounding was repleted with assorted rubies,  
 it was built with woods.

In the age of Adam, the ranch was distinct mud structures  
 standing sovereigns in divine geographies with the natives  
 in their golden jubilee.  
 And not unsatisfied with the leads of their unanimous leaders.

Age the dreads of the gods jolted people to consciousness  
 that they did not eat the meats of vultures as edibles. Culture  
 wielded great powers across the lands.  
 Tradition paid no respect to status nor age. Sanity lived  
 amicably within the people. Sanctity was idolized.

But came the foreign vampires with their super arsenals  
 and pawned off the natives' lions; mowed down the mud  
 structures. The distinct lands they conjoined, shoving aside the  
 security of the natives. And raised an extreme ranch house.  
 Lo! There commercial center. Wasn't the die casted?

Then went away the vampires leaving behind a conglomerate  
 ranch of Cat and Dog inhabitants who created bloody scenes  
 in every blink of the sun's eye.

# HER MOTHER'S DAUGHTER

**Neba Terry-Phebe Ngum**  
*Cameroon*

Under the moonlit sky she parted her hair,  
Bamboo brush in her hand, trying to redesign the “mess”  
A few strands desecrated the cozy air,  
But it is “Afro”, what do you expect?

Around the bonfire many stories were heard  
Of black hair history and how to wear your hair;  
Motoboh, long long, Bakala, Dada  
With pride, flaunt your hair, pass the culture to your heirs!!

So, with fingers maneuvering her scalp,  
She tilted her head to the back  
Reminiscing the aura of the “Middle passage”  
She let her braids as beautiful  
as her school grades pass on the message;  
“Afro” is our heritage, no need trying to have it caged!!  
With its locs made of black pearl and diamond curls  
Suitable for every ebony....brown skin girl,  
Wear it like a glory and never feel sorry!!

For I am my mother’s daughter  
and I let my “Afro” grow like the eucalyptus tree;  
Untamed, unafraid, ferocious, free!!  
And just like a Lion’s mane,  
My “Afro” brings me fame!!



# NEO-COLONIALISM

Esther Koros

*Kenya*

There is a new colonization, just wait let me tell you, enthusiasts.  
Chills and spasms and sometimes, open curious chasms  
I fret at times at the looming impotence, Alas!  
When the inventor is held ransom by the inventee, gasp!  
I worry, shall the creature colonize the creator?

My lover- soldier, dreadful of the front at war,  
Lost to the infallible robot, devoid of a heart.  
In the guise of shame praised the bot, suppressing a curse.  
And now with no wages, he engages in livid living.  
I worry, shall the creature colonize the creator?

Did I tell you of my pal, Crazy Tracy? Let me tell you...  
She walked in on his man, satisfying his carnal impulses,  
With the apathetic ruse, Sophia; how the unruly muse broke her heart  
She could just kill her yet she was semi- dead, quasi- human.  
I worry, shall the creature colonize the creator?

A clerical duty, been holding couple of years,  
Came to a halt recently, when the ogress of a boss, citing my imperfections  
Found a finer replacement, superior in every way but emotions.  
The robot went to work, a model of perfection, flattering the inventor  
I worry, shall the creature colonize the creator?

Make no mistake, no prejudice, this is my take.  
Inventions wrought civilizations; from the Galileo to Boromeo  
It lit the world, adorned homes, villagized the globe.  
But beware! It wrought the Titanic too, and all there was to die for.  
So, I worry, shall the creature colonize the creator?

# BEACON OF HONESTY

Maapile Adelina Moliepe  
*Lesotho*

In a world embroiled by falsehood's grasp,  
Where shadows dance and truth is clasped,  
Let us seek the light that pierces through a beacon of honesty,  
In a tapestry of life, where truth weaves its thread,  
Untangling the lies clearing the paths where darkness spread.

For truth is not a fleeting illusion  
But a timeless force beyond confusion.  
It outstrips the whispers of deceit,  
Guiding us to a path pure and complete.  
As truth is not just a reflecting mirror of our souls  
But a pursuit to salvation.

Like a compass guiding lost souls astray,  
Truth unveils darkness casting doubts away,  
It stands tall resolute in its might,  
A sanctuary of trust and brilliant light.  
Much as may be a bitter pill to swallow,  
Disassembling illusions leaving us hollow,  
Yet in its wake a new dawn arises.

Let us all seek this liberation,  
For it is not a foe to be feared,  
Rather a friend leading us as we veer,  
A steadfast companion that we should embrace,  
Just as our flaws forging new boundaries.

# THE DANCE OF THE NERVES

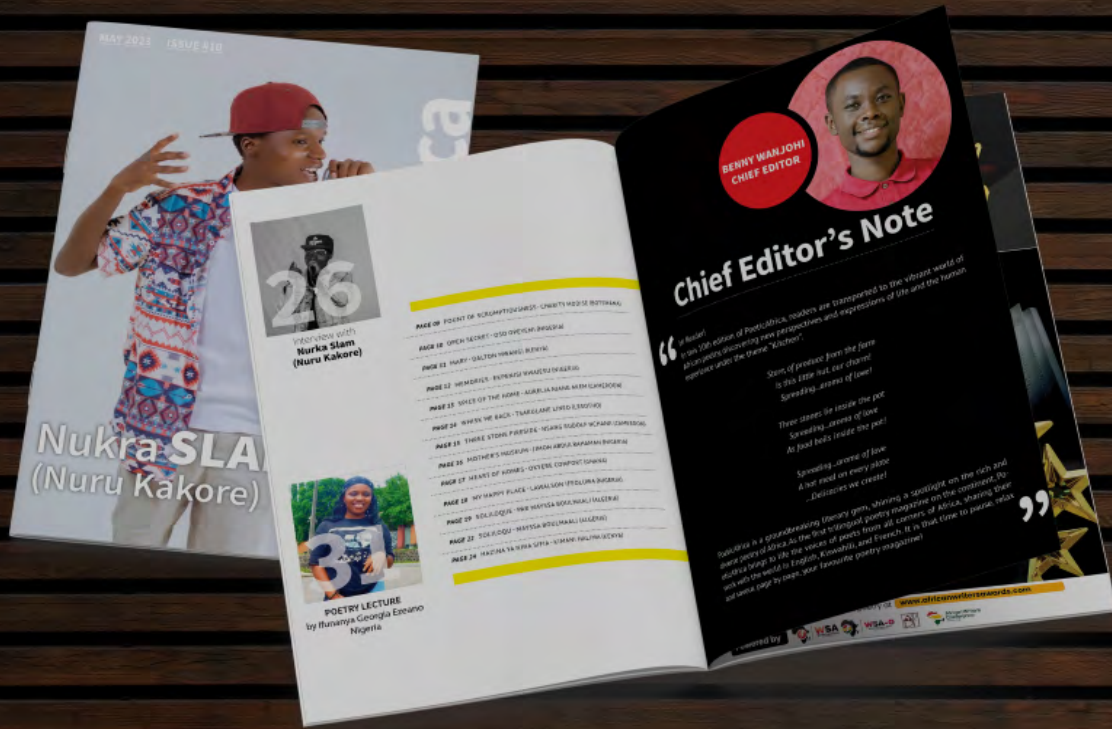
Fleur de Bondt  
South Africa

I am the Pretzel  
A  
Con/tor/tion/ist  
My veins in a seige, do not welcome the saviour  
The neeedle shrills for a line

They dance. The dance of the nerves  
Swarming.....;  
circling cheeks and shoulders and face  
How they stampppppeed  
with  
the  
pressure of mice feet alight with alacrity  
A shoal of fire'lit fish

I try to become small enough to insert myself back into that crevice  
No. I don't.  
My body has become BULBous

We do grow  
even when ensnared by immobility  
from  
different places  
sprouting roots and shoots  
from  
our eyes and ears and heads.



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# THE MURDER

Ikhenoba, Marcel Joseph  
*Nigeria*



The tragic cries following the death of Ulobe and his family woke the people of Evbiamen. Ulobe's only child, Osaro, and his wife had both been murdered.

The sky was clear as the morning sun rose. Bits of intestine and blood had been splattered all over his hut because of the extreme brutality of the attack. Nobody understood why Ulobe drank himself into a stupor the night before he passed away and was unable to go hunting. He was a skilled hunter and a formidable wrestler.

"Why did he kill himself and his family?" Everyone kept asking.

He adored his family and put in a lot of

effort to support them. He taught his son compassion and resilience. Ulobe always took his son, Osaro along when he went hunting, telling him tales about the village as they travelled.

Osaro frequently relishes the tales. On one occasion, Ulobe spoke to him about the Owan River. According to the hand-down oral tradition, she was an Ora woman who married in the village of Otuo and amassed considerable wealth because of her grit and determination before passing away childless. She died following a protracted illness and her body was not brought back to the hamlet of her father as custom demanded. As the body decayed,

it transformed into a spring that travelled through the proper lowlands, was washed spiritually, and returned to her father's hamlet in Uhonmora.

Owan was worshipped by the residents of Uhonmora village, and no one was allowed to consume any kind of fish from her river. The villagers made sacrifices to her whenever they were faced with a challenge. They looked up to her as their mother and relied on her for safety.

Ulobe's wife, Esosa, cherished their marriage. She would make delicious meals for her husband once he got back from his hunt, and they would talk about what happened while he was gone. Ulobe also had unrivalled affection for his wife. He encountered her during one of his wrestling matches.

Esosa's shoulders were covered in black hair. Her body was incredibly beautiful; amorously shaped and well-proportioned.

After ten years of marrying Ulobe, Esosa had not conceived. Just like his mother, Ulobe impatiently awaited the birth of his son. His mother reminded Esosa of her childlessness with her frequent visits. No matter what Esosa did to win her over, she constantly grumbled.

"You sold the river goddess your womb. My son cannot be married to another male. Let your family return our bride price. I'll give him another woman who can become pregnant for him."

"But, mama, what did I do to earn all these slurs?" She asked.

"Are you questioning me?" I believe you ought to inquire from your mother who gave birth to a male and called him a female." She retorted furiously.

"Mama, don't belittle my mother, please. It's been an issue or the other since you moved into this place." Esosa complained bitterly.

She fixed her gaze on her mother-in-law's.

"Beat me! I am aware of your lack of regard for seniors. You can beat your parents in this manner. My sole regret is that my child wed a male." She spat on the floor.

Esosa worried about her childlessness every day. "Could her husband possibly be impotent?" He feels upset every time she tells him to have a medical examination. One afternoon, as she was leaving the market, she overheard two women chatting about her.

"I don't know why that young, attractive Ulobe is still living with his barren wife. Does he intend to pass away childless? One of the rumour mongers stated.

"Does Ulobe want to tell us that he can't locate a lovely lady in this village who will bear him children? Take a good look at me; am I not fertile enough to carry him an entire village?"

"You're hilarious. You desire to give him a village. When your kids take over the entire village, where do you want people like us to live?" The other lady responded.

"Fifteen children were born to my mother. She could have given birth to a village had

my father lived.” She boasted.

“I believe she possessed him. How is it that a man can go years without taking a second wife?” The lady added.

“She is a witch! In fact, I would expel her if I were her mother-in-law.” One of them said as Esosa approached nearer.

“Let’s move quickly. She is on her way.”

Esosa would sob by herself until she was unable to. She had become a laughing-stock. Things became worse after her husband went hunting for several days. While her husband was away, she kept a covert relationship with Agbuza, the spouse of one of her friends. She didn’t want to keep an affair with him, instead, she wanted to test her fertility because her husband wouldn’t cooperate. She then wooed him. Agbuza assumed her husband’s position covertly while he was absent.

Esosa broke off her connection with him after she found out she was pregnant after they had become intimate. Ulobe was cheerful. He smiled wider than he had done in the last decade. He came alive. That was Ulobe, the strong-willed and lively man. The happiness of Ulobe following the birth of Osaro was indescribable. Like wildfire, the news quickly travelled across the community.

Osaro always carried Ulobe’s waistbands whenever he participated in a wrestling match. It was believed that the waistbands would increase his strength. He received them from his father. He frequently warned him against ever playing a villain.

A few years later, Agbuza threatened to tell her husband the truth about Osaro if she didn’t stay with him. She offered him money and gifts, but he refused. Ulobe observed that his wife was no longer joyful. She started to withdraw. She refused to answer his questions despite numerous attempts to make her do so. She attempted to speak but, tears prevented her from doing so. She summoned courage and proclaimed it with a heavy heart; “Osaro isn’t your child,” she said.

At that moment, Ulobe felt like strangulating her. His eyes grew stern and slit-like. He was perplexed, frequently got drunk, and kept Osaro at a distance. The defenceless child was also powerless and emotionally broken. Because of their closeness, he believed no other father could show him the same kind of affection.

For weeks, Ulobe stayed awake all night due to his gnawing anguish. His face was covered with agony, as he sat alone in his palm wine house. He was in a terrible state of sorrow. Esosa had an extramarital affair to keep their union intact. She was aware that the truth is blinding, much like light, and that man is always a victim of it. She would only be in the middle of her consciousness if she confirmed what appeared to be the truth while contradicting it.

Ulobe didn’t speak to anyone on the night of the murder. With his arms behind him and a dead conscience, he paced repeatedly. He waited for his wife and Osaro to fall asleep that fateful night before he fired the shots. Then, he shot himself.



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# WSA Magazine

# REVIEW

*August 2023 Edition*



# THE ILLUSION OF ABSOLUTE SIGHT

**A Creative Non-fiction by Jamie Isaacoed Buchi, Nigeria**  
**Reviewer: Blessing Emmanuel Amatemeso, Nigeria**

The ability to read people's thoughts and see the future was a gift that many people sought to possess. Anyone who possessed such was set apart and revered, just like the Obinagu-uwani tribe. People with such power have been known by many names in different circles; clairvoyants, seers, prophets, kahin, and Rishi, to mention but a few.

The writer describes this gift with a sense of reverence, pride, and responsibility. To the people, this gift was their religion. They underwent rigorous training to hone this sight.

This gift granted them a revered status amongst neighbouring towns enabling them to influence choices and provide insight. The people enjoyed dominance, but they made a grave mistake. They didn't evolve with changing times. That has been the downfall of many great people.

Certainty in one's strength and complacency makes one blind to the rise of the underdogs. This section of the story underscores the danger of overreliance on a single skill, reminding readers of the importance of adaptability and balance.

The world superpowers have always been those who have used evolving knowledge technology to control trade, literature, art, and security, above all others.

The people of Obinagu-uwani's staunch belief in their power made them myopic about the other things happening around them. Delusion is a belief that one holds against all evidence contrary to it and is not in keeping with one's religious or ed-

ucational background. This definition recognises the power that a people's collective belief has on the thoughts of the people. So, while they were not deluded, they had become narrow-minded.

The downfall of the people moved them to introspection. The writer's journey led to new insights and self-discovery. I believe that Khalil Gibran's quote, "Out of suffering have emerged the strongest souls; the most massive characters are seared with scars," holds for the persona. However, we do not have to wait for extenuating circumstances to analyse our beliefs and practices critically.

This piece beautifully portrays the unique perspective and abilities of the Obinagu-uwani tribe, emphasizing the significance of the special gift and its connection to the community. The story, from the initial reverence for the gift to the realization of its limitation and subsequent understanding of true vision, is well-crafted and thought-provoking. The piece explores perceptions, judgement, identity, adaptation, and growth.

The use of descriptive language and metaphors enhances the depth of the narration allowing the readers to journey alongside you through the evolution of your tribe's perspective.

This narrative conveys the importance of embracing a holistic view of the world. I recommend it to all and sundry. Kudos to JAMIE ISAACOED BUCHI for creating this masterpiece.

# FINDING MY FAITH

A Flash Fiction by Nkiruka Daria Ojukwu, Nigeria  
 Reviewer: Mathew Daniel, Nigeria



‘Finding my faith’ is a retrospective flash fiction that evokes introspection with pulsating induced questions from the persona’s experience, stimulating questions like ‘What is faith to a woman afflicted by the necessity of childbearing, and more so, a male child?’

The story touched on the theme of religion in quite unusual way. It shows a woman going through familial ordeals and reemphasizes the throes of women in an Emechata-esque way. It reminds one of a summary of Nnu Ego’s ‘Life in Joys of Motherhood.’

Nkiruka brings the reader closer to the story of a woman who has been subjected to ridicule for not having a child, and even when she did have one—a female child—suffered rejection for not giving birth to a

male child, through the use of the first-person narrative technique.

The story draws a parallel between religion and what the persona would eventually decide on because what is religion if not faith? And what is faith if not belief in what is yet to come? Faith, in fact, is the courage to act with a strong belief regardless of the unknown unknowns. In this story, the persona believes in the invaluable worth of her child and, as shown in the succinct narration, acts on it unfazed.

Nkiruka seemingly makes the reader ponder on this subject while bringing the reader closer by asking rhetorical questions and using imagism that spirals this comparison between religion and the persona’s ordeals into an unforgettable loop. Striking!

# THE ATHEIST'S GRACE

**A Poem by Mookodi Sesame, Botswana**  
**Reviewer: Akuei M. Adol, South Sudan**

"The Atheist's Grace" by Mookodi Sesame is a deeply compelling poem that scrutinizes themes of skepticism, spirituality, and individuality. It challenges the blind adherence to religious dogma and calls for exploring free thought. The piece opens with a command to keep one's eyes closed and hands together to submit to a higher power, but the sharpness of religious doctrine can still inflict damage on the soul.

For instance, the phrase "if the words are sharp enough, you won't feel them cut out of your soul" captures the idea that religious teachings can be hurtful and disconnected from our personal experiences. Despite this, the writer also touches on giving up free will to conform to religious traditions.

Sesame encourages readers to keep their hands together, implying the act of praying but also suggesting the idea of being tied down and unable to escape the confines of religious expectations. However, the poem ends with an ironic twist, as the title "The Atheist's Grace" challenges the belief that grace and spirituality are only attainable through religious institutions.

The poem's structure is consistent with its thematic content, using a free verse format that lends itself to the raw and unfiltered exploration of deep-seated emotions and philosophical questions. The absence of a regular

rhyming scheme or meter suggests a deliberate departure from traditional poetic norms, paralleling the author's critical view of societal expectations and religious norms.

The language used in the poem is simple yet potent, filled with vivid imagery and metaphorical language that provokes thought and stimulates the senses. Phrases like "sharp words," "tongues are loud enough," and "anguish is deep enough" create a stark contrast between the physical and abstract, effectively capturing the internal conflict within the persona's mind. The poem's tone is introspective, contemplative, and somewhat cynical, reflecting the persona's struggle to reconcile their skepticism with the societal pressures.

In conclusion, Mookodi's poem is a powerful commentary on the dangers of mindlessly following religious leaders and the need for individuals to question their beliefs and find their path. Through brilliant poetic devices employed by the author, the poem, therefore, inspires readers to embrace the freedom of thought and reject the limitations of religious tenets in a society where individual autonomy is prized above all else. I would, therefore, summarize the poem in the words of Galileo Galilei, "I do not feel obliged to believe that the same God who has endowed us with sense, reason, and intellect has intended us to forgo their use."



# OUR FATHER

A Short Story by Siphwokuhle Mavundla, Eswatini  
 Reviewer: *Rose Wangari, Kenya*



The willpower is adrenaline packed with- in the folds of a soul searching for penance and redemption from corrupt living, thus the relentless engagement with the deity.

The poor unfortunate soul pledges allegiance to charlatans, who have crafted their beguiled confession to a generation that is clueless, oftentimes, falling into snares.

While the former drains their veins from every drop of life, the latter fans the fire of folly.

Siphwokuhle uses imagery to reveal the very truths that we fear to address. Crimes of passion, tucked under the hems of the cassocks we revere, are more of idiomatic expressions applied therein.

This is a relatable piece of work. The events unfold in a flawless chronology.

Well done, Siphwokuhle Mavundla.



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**"The face is the soul of the body."  
~ Ludwig Wittgenstein**

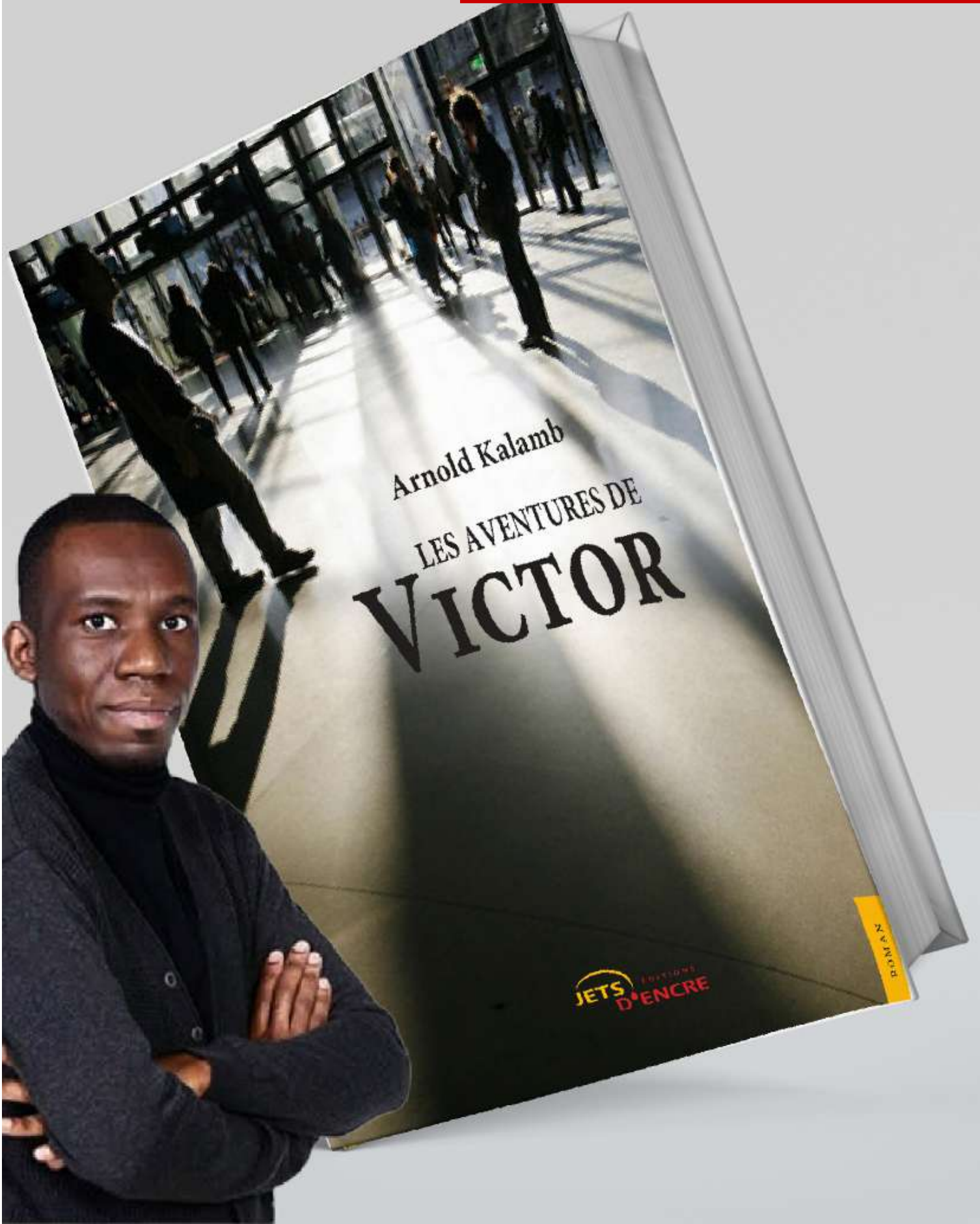
Poetic Africa, Africa's first trilingual (English, French, Kiswahili) poetry magazine, calls for submissions from poets for her November 2023 edition.

*The face is not only an image but a bedrock of many battles, aspirations, fears, vulnerabilities, resilience, etc. It is a surface that covers, uncovers, tracks and transports.  
Write and submit your poem on the theme **FACES**.*

The editorial team is looking for poems of a maximum of 24 lines, creativity and originality, use of poetic devices and economy of words. Please present well-arranged poetry and note that the poem titles should not have the word 'Faces'.

The submission window is from August 11th until September 10th, 2023.  
The edition will be released on **November 10th, 2023**.

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