

# KwEE

Liberian Literary Magazine

Oct Issue

*Authors of  
the Month*

Cher  
Antoinette

New Books  
Kuluba's  
Korner

**Book  
Reviews**



**K. Moses  
Nagbe**

Stories  
& Poems

Pre. Sirleaf  
@ UNGA @70

**Featured Poets:**  
Lekpele Nyamalon  
Matanneh Rose Dunbar  
Varney Gean  
Richard Wilson Moss  
Jack Kolkmeier  
Darlington Ifeanyi  
Nana Arhin Tswiwah



Liberian Literary Magazine

# KWEE



*Liberian*

*Literary*

*Magazine*

### *Overview:*

#### *New Look*

Hurray! You noticed the new design as well right. Well thanks to you all, we are here today. We are most grateful to start our print issue. This would not have happened without your dedicated patronage, encouragement and of course, the belief you placed in our establishment. We look forward to your continual support as we strive to improve on the content we provide you.

#### *Our Commitment*

We at Liberian Literature Review believe that change is good, especially, the planned ones. We take seriously the chance to improve, adopt and grow with time. That said we still endeavor to maintain the highest standard and quality despite any changes we make. We can comfortably make this

commitment; *the quality of our content will not be sacrificed in the name of change.* In short, we are a fast growing publisher determined to keep the tradition of providing you, our readers, subscribers and clients with the best literature possible.

#### *What to Expect*

You can continue to expect the highest quality of Liberian literary materials from us. The services that we provided that endeared us to you and made you select us as the foremost Liberian literary magazine will only improve. Each issue, we will diversify our publication to ensure that there is something for everyone; as a nation with diverse culture, this is the least we can do. We thank you for your continual support.

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#### *Overview*

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**Liberian  
Literature  
Review**

## Segment Contents

### *Editorial*

In our editorial, one should expect topics that are controversial in the least. We will shy away from nothing that is deemed important enough. The catch theme here is addressing the tough issues

### *Risqué Speak*

This new segment to our print covers the magical language of the soul, music. It will go from musical history, to lyrics of meaning to the inner workings of the rhythm, beats, rhyme, the way pieces connect and importantly, the people who make the magic happen.

Our host and or his guests will delve into the personal life of our favorite musicians, bands and groups like those that we have not seen. This is more than their stories; it is more like the stories behind the stories. They'd shine the spotlight on the many people that come together to make it all happen on and off stage. Watch out for this segment.

### *Kuluba's Korner*

The owl spills out wisdom like no one else; won't you agree? Our own KLM hosts this corner and she shies away from nothing or no one with her whip- the **truth**. They say fewer things hurt more than the honest, uncoated truth. Well, she does that but with spices of humor and light-heartedness like only her can.

### *Authors of the Month Profile*

This is one of our oldest segments. In fact, we started

off with showcasing authors. It is dear to us. Each month, we highlight two authors. In here we do a brief profile of our selected authors.

### *Authors of the Month Interview*

This is the complimentary segment to the Authors of the Month Profile one of our oldest segments. In here, we interview our showcased authors. We let them tell us about their books, characters and how they came to life. Most importantly, we try to know their story; how they make our lives easier with their words. In short, we find out what makes them thick.

### *Articles*

Our articles are just that, a series of major articles addressing critical issues. A staffer or a contributor often writes it.

### *Book Review*

One of our senior or junior reviewers picks a book and take us on a tour. They tell us the good, not-so-good and why they believe we would be better of grabbing a copy for ourselves or not. Occasionally, we print reviews by freelancers or other publications that grab our interests.

### *Education Spotlight*

Our commitment and love to education is primary. In fact, our major goal here is to educate. We strive for educating people about our culture through the many talented writers- previous and present. In this segment, we identify any success story, meaningful event or entity

that is making change to the national education system. We help spread the news of the work they are doing as a way to get more people on board or interested enough to help their efforts. Remember, together, we can do more.

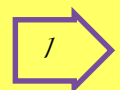
### *Artist of the Month*

We highlight some of the brilliant artists, photographers, designers etc. We go out of the box here. Don't mistake us to have limits on what we consider arty. If it is creative, flashy, mind-blowing or simply different, we may just showcase it.

We do not neglect our artist as has been traditional. We support them, we promote them and we believe it is time more people did the same. Arts have always form part of our culture. We have to change the story. We bring notice to our best and let the world know what they are capable of doing. We are 100% in favor of Liberian Arts and Artists; you should get on board.

### *Poem of the Month*

Our desire to constantly find literary talent remains a pillar of our purpose. We know the talent is there; we look for it and let you enjoy it. We find them from all over the country or diaspora and we take particular care to find emerging talents and give them a chance to prove themselves. Of course, we bring you experienced poets to dazzle your mind!.





## *Riqué Speaks*

### **West Point Calypso:**

*Henrique Hopkins*

One of the unique facets of Liberian culture and history is its status as a meeting point for Africans of many ethnicities and origins. This has been reflected in Liberia's musical tastes. Soul music, Afro Beat, Big band Highlife, Reggae, Hip Hop, and even Country and Western music, popular during Liberian wakes, have all been enjoyed by Liberian music lovers. Liberia itself has also added much in this exchange, including the "Guitar band Highlife" style, originating in Liberia and carried up and down the coast of West Africa by Kru sailors, as well as the currently fashionable Liberian Hip Hop style "Hipco."

One such foreign musical style that was once widespread is the Afro-Caribbean music known as Calypso, originating from the African descendants of Trinidad and Tobago. Being a product of Oral African culture, there is some confusion as to Calypso's origins. However, most ethnographers and historians agree it stems from an African style called Kaiso, which still exists in Trinidad to this day. Some feel the word "Kaiso" originates from a Hausa word that has been translated by some as an equivalent to "Bravo" and to others as more of an

admonishment. Others say it comes from the Ibibio tribe, also from Nigeria, and the interjection in their language, "Kaa iso", which encourages a performer to "continue" or "go on!" A very familiar interjection to those familiar with the Black church.

The most interesting thing for me about Calypso music is the super topical nature of its songs. The lyrics of Calypso, sung on top of its jaunty dance beats, were used to spread news, debate issues, and for years were considered the most reliable news source in Trinidad and Tobago. The rapper Chuck D of Public Enemy once referred to Hip Hop music as "Black America's CNN." Calypso music served the same purpose as Hip Hop music did at its peak, or the Afro Beat of Fela Anikulapo Kuti, a music that transmitted real social news and information.

It is that social information function that makes the song we're covering here, "West Point Calypso", such an interesting Liberian artifact from both historical and musical standpoints. Calypso was apparently a very popular style as well in Liberia in the '50s and '60s. The music broke out in the U.S with Harry Belafonte's "Calypso" LP, which is reputed to be the first full length LP to sell one million copies, though the style on the album is actually another Caribbean style called Mento. Belafonte's "Brown Skin Girl" is a song I can remember my mother singing fondly. Many years

later Nina Simone would sing a song entitled "Liberian Calypso" that she said was based on Calypso tunes she'd heard in Liberia.

So it was fascinating for me when I came across J. Richard Snetter's Melody 8 Dance Band recording of "West Point Calypso" on a Voice of America archival site. It was a song I'd grown up hearing, as my father was once a Disc Jockey for the Voice of America in Liberia, doing a broadcast entitled "The Sound of Jazz" while also documenting the local music scene in Monrovia. I re-discovered this song a short time after he passed away, so I was unable to ask him more about the group, who I still hope to discover more about.

I do however recall the song very strongly. The Melody 8 Dance Band were one. Of the pioneering Liberian groups, playing at places such as the famed "Mama Rena Dancehall." The vocalist for this selection is Abrom Richardson.

In the topical style of Calypso, the tune tells a tale of Monrovia's West Point neighborhood. West Point is an interesting historical marker for Liberia, a neighborhood that represents the migration to Monrovia of people from the rural counties to the capital, especially people of the Kru ethnicity. This has been the cause of much of the urban sprawl seen in Africa over much of the past 50 years, as big cities come to represent progress, development, and the concentration of resources, and farmlands

begin to go neglected. This has often had disastrous effects on food security in African countries. As far as West Point in particular, my Mother definitely told me it was an area you didn't want to get caught in at the wrong time. The strong fighting spirit of the neighborhood was on tragic display during the 2014 Ebola crisis, when government troops had to forcibly keep an Ebola clinic open there, with residents of the hood resolutely insisting the epidemic was a government hoax.

The song begins with the horn section riffing on top of a classic Calypso arpeggiated bass line. The Calypso bass is reminiscent of a figure you would hear at another point in the African diaspora, the bass lines of traditional New Orleans rock and roll or R&B arrangements. The song also features a sweet guitar solo that plays in the same territory as the vocal melody.

Our Calypsonian, or "Griot" in Calypso terms, Abrom Richardson, begins his tale, "Down near the bridge/is the marketplace/where the people living all on their own." The line "all on their own" tells us of the lack of urban planning, infrastructure, and governmental services the people of West Point faced, way back in the 1960s and in many cases today.

The picture Richardson paints is hard times, singing "Listen to me/as you Calypso along/a story that's interesting/but dreadful too/ O down this area/is the

mixture of tribes/living in confusion from day to day." After which the arrangement makes way for a guitar solo reminiscent of early rock and roll with an African melodic flavor.

"West Point Calypso" is very intriguing for mixing the easy going Afro-Caribbean dance beat with a story of a rough and tumble West Point. I must admit when I was younger I thought of Calypso as the music of Caribbean vacations, unaware of the social purpose it's lyrics served. A song like this serves the same purpose for Liberia songs such as "Inner City Blues", "Straight Outta Compton", "Lady", and any other songs in the Black world serve, as first hand reportage of the conditions many people are forced to exist under. Which makes it a valuable piece of Liberian history indeed.

Those who want to hear "West Point Calypso", along with many other Liberian singles can do so at this VOA web link:

<http://blogs.voanews.com/music-time-in-africa/2008/03/04/lost-liberian-45s-from-the-1960s/>

### Lyrics to West Point Calypso

Down near the bridge/  
Is the marketplace/  
Where the people living all  
on their own

Woman/Woman/Pekin and  
all/  
Everybody living by the  
Mercy of God

Woman/Woman/Pekin and  
all/  
Everybody living by the  
Mercy of God

Listen to me/  
As you Calypso along/  
A story that's interesting/  
But Dreadful too/  
O down this area/  
Is the mixture of Tribes/  
Living in confusion from  
day to day/

Woman/Woman/Pekin and  
all/  
Everybody living by the  
Mercy of God (Repeat)

When things corrupt/  
So that the cops can't  
stand/  
They find their way/  
They like everybody  
else.....

I tell you for sure/  
Grebe fighting Kru's/  
All living in Hell/  
Don't go there, Boy/  
I beg you don't/  
But this is the area they  
call the West Point



*By Henrique Hopkins  
Hosts Rique Speaks  
His experience and  
knowledge in music is  
extensive.*

**LIBERIA**

**PUZZLE: CITIES**

**AND TOWNS**

I G G P K H Q U C A K N I Y L N H C Y L B O J C B G G S N R  
 A A G R O U C T A L R A U D E L L I V N O S N E B R E A A J  
 K L N B E P L E N L O I H F E T I Q Q K K S N V U E G C H X  
 X K L A J E D C T A L D V N T W C K K U O D D B L F N L P T  
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 N T R N U X S S R E A B E J X E K L I G K U H F C U H A N H  
 L X X T A S C I A R D Z G P P L V Y Z D R T N R F H X U F K  
 N F U L R Y G N V N Z F F G L H Z Y D A Y I S Z D P L K O L  
 S O O O K B Y K J G G R W A N I U W D I K M E J M U U K E O  
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 E J H R T U B J S V E O V S Y A F L P Z V S O T S S E C G H

BABU  
 BARCLAYVILLE  
 BASSA TOWN  
 BELEFUANAI  
 BELLEYALLA  
 BENDAJA  
 BENSONVILLE  
 BOKOA  
 BOPOLU  
 BUCHANAN  
 BUTUO  
 CAPE MESURADO  
 CAREYSBURG

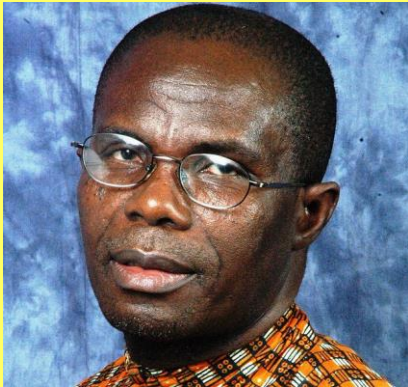
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 GELAHUN  
 GONGLEE  
 GRANDGEDEH  
 GREENVILLE  
 HARBEL  
 HARPER  
 HARTFORD  
 JALLAHTOWN

JUAZOHN  
 KAHNPLE  
 KRUTOWN  
 MARSHALL  
 MARYLAND  
 MONROVIA  
 MOUNT NIMBA  
 RIVERCESS  
 RIVERGEE  
 SACLEPEA  
 TOE TOWN  
 YELLA



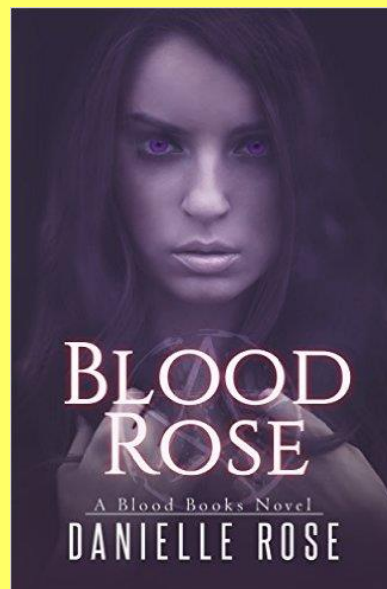
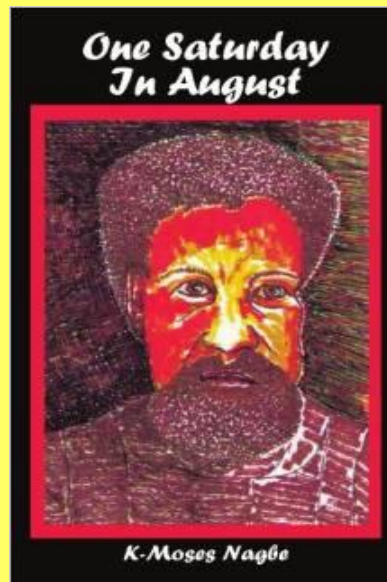
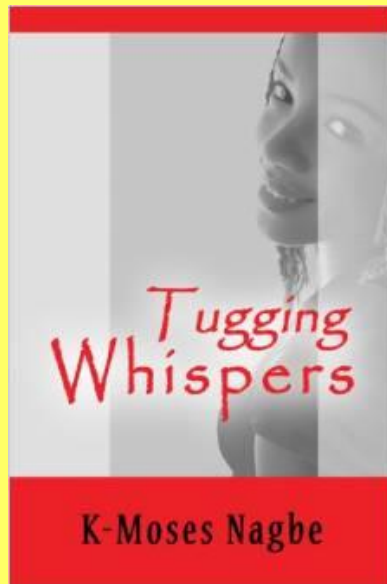
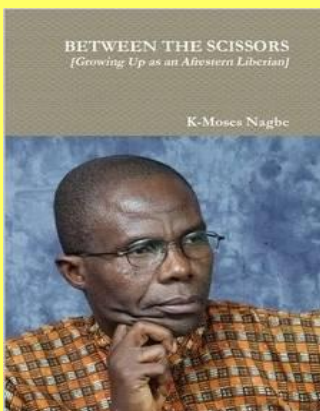
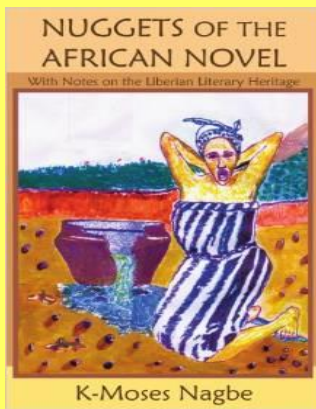
## Authors of the Month Profiles

**K. MOSES NAGBE**



**Prof. Moses Nagbe**, is an educator and one of Liberia's most published authors in the last decade. Mr. Nagbe currently resides in the United States of America where he is doing his post graduate studies.

Some titles include:



**Danielle Rose**



**Danielle Rose** is writer of fiction and travel, as well as the owner of [Narrative Ink Editing LLC](http://NarrativeInkEditingLLC.com). Danielle currently resides in the Midwest, where she spends her days at a local coffee shop planning her next vacation or plotting her next novel.

Danielle holds a Master of Fine Arts in creative writing from the University of Southern Maine's Stonecoast program. In addition to her Master of Fine Arts, she also holds a Bachelor of Arts in English and certification in professional writing from the University of Wisconsin-Parkside.

When not writing, traveling, or writing about traveling, Danielle enjoys being outdoors, cheering for her favorite football team (Go Packers!), and spending time with her husband and their furbabies: two dogs and a cat. For more information about Danielle Rose, visit her website:

**Website:**

[www.danielle-rose.com](http://www.danielle-rose.com)

**Blog:**

[www.danielles-destinations.com](http://www.danielles-destinations.com)

**Amazon:**

[www.amazon.com/author/daniellerose](http://www.amazon.com/author/daniellerose)



*In the Spotlight of this issue is K. Moses Nagbe, a career educator.*

### *Author Interview*

#### **K. MOSES NAGBE**



*Liberian Literature Review conducted an interview with K. Moses Nagbe, an educator and one of Liberia's most published authors in the last decade. Mr. Nagbe currently resides in the United States of America.*

*LLR: First, we would like to thank you for granting this interview. Let us kick off this interview with you telling us a little about you- your early childhood, upbringing, education.*

I was born in Bishop Brooks, central Monrovia (Liberia, West Africa). I began early schooling in Sasstown, then a territory—sub political division—under Sinoe County. Dad had completed the University of Liberia (esp. William V.S. Tubman

Teachers College), got an educational leadership assignment, and moved the entire family back home. I completed Sasstown Government School; went on to Sinoe High School; Modern Commercial Institute for business studies; University of Liberia for English and Accounting, Glassboro (now Rowan State) University for graduate education—combined studies in supervision & curriculum, media, and literature & linguistics; ended with the Louis A. Grimes School of Law. Presently completing a PhD in Education (esp. Instructional and Curriculum Leadership) at the Northcentral University—interested in influences on teacher support system. Rowan and Northcentral are based in America.

*LLR: What inspires you to write generally?*

I grew up in a home of books and a reading culture, and a community fascinated with human-interest stories.

*LLR: Who are some of the people/things that influence you?*

My dad for hard work, keen attention to intellectual life, generosity, and a God-sense of the world. My mom and her mother for empathizing with diverse

groups, for taking keen interest in womanhood, and education for all. American Peace Corps Volunteers for strengthening my reading and writing skills, and for expanding my worldview.

*LLR: Can you talk a bit about the inspiration for your first book?*

PCV Maryann Caraboolad saw my first poem, loved it, and guided me to expand on my interest in writing; PCV Dennis Ryan read my first essay question assignment, took tremendous interest in me and offered me several opportunities to strengthen my critical thinking skills; Professor Robert H. Brown took me under his wing in my undergrad work at the University of Liberia, constantly honing my editing skills. By publishing his *After Long Silence* and other Short Stories from Liberia, Professor Brown inspired me very much. Professor F. F. K. Gbedemah groomed my interest in linguistics. His book on language issues in Ghana also made me take interest in writing.

*LLR: What is your writing process? How do you do it? How do you pick your topics?*

I carry a “mental desk.” Words or phrases spark my interest and I work and

rework ideas in my mind. When I become a little more restive about such ideas, then I hit the computer keyboard. In that way, I really take comparatively lesser time to complete key bodies of work. There's no solid pattern of choosing a topic. The selection of each topic is driven by time and circumstances.

*LLR: Let's talk books. What are your favorite Liberian books? Why do you love them?*

I won't attempt naming any. But let me speak in generic terms. I simply love books that attempt a balanced interpretation of the cultural chemistry that exists in the West African nation. In addition, I love books by Liberians in which a significant attention is paid to language use. If sentences are mangled, punctuation marks are loose, word forms are confused, and the logic is mishandled, I rarely take any interest—except of course I want to use such work as a material for teaching editing skills.

*LLR: As a Liberian author, what advantages or disadvantages are there?*

Liberian writers have a virgin territory for writing materials, but they need to be very observant; they need to keep a focus.

Continuous exposure and therefore the need to create or strengthen a reading and awareness culture in the country and communities of Liberians around the world remain the challenge.

*LLR: How has Liberia influenced your works, and what do you think of the future of writing in Liberia? Where do you think it is headed?*

(A) Most writers draw materials and emotional and psychological energy from the countries and cultures of their nativity. I am no exception. Liberia has influenced me particularly in terms of thematic interests—diversity, issues of poverty and bigotry, work ethics, God-sense of the world, lotto mentality (e.g., expecting more for less), the insanity of political and economic amnesia, etc.

(B) The future of writing in Liberia should be bright, considering the many more Liberians that aspire to authorship, considering the few persistent Liberians bent on showcasing Liberian writings, and considering the rise of information technology.

(C) Of course, not all authorship is good authorship. Themes, the skillful handling of content and language, etc. are determinants, which can

create a significant fan base. A writer without a fan base needs to think twice. Or, let me put it this way: One who writes without concern for the quality of what's written has a serious problem.

*LLR: What are the greatest challenges for a modern Liberian writer especially in terms of publishing, distributing and promotion, in just getting out there?*

Quick self-adulation—the idea of thinking that whatever lands on paper is immediately good to hit the public eye. Quick satisfaction and celebration are the worms that easily consume the greenery of our dreams. Surmounting such psychological weaknesses, leads to better writing skills, better distribution and promotion opportunities, etc.

*LLR: What do you think of the future of writing and publishing in Liberia?*

It should get better when the immediate goal is really not for attention but for satisfactory performance. Indeed, in any activity when someone puts adulation before the strong ability of performance, grave humiliation and depression will lie in ambush. Seek ye first the capacity of quality performance and all

amenities of adulation will be added unto you. The future is out there waiting.

**LLR: What do you think of digital media in general?**

It has an empowering effect. Hardly any gatekeeping hurdles. But therein lies the danger. The “everybody for himself, God for all” opportunity, which digital media has created, may lead to complacency and reduce the need to produce good quality work.

**LLR: What is your view on E-books and self-publishing? Have you used either?**

(A) Both concepts are fascinating. But without the appropriate guidance and expertise, the hope they hold out for many people may become a disappointment. For example, self-publishing without knowledge and skills of editing can become frustrating. Many of these self-publishing entities do not really publish; they simply print, thereby producing a product that demonstrates the catch phrase of “garbage in, garbage out.”

(B) e-books are handy and convenient. Anyone always on the go should find e-books satisfying.

**LLR: Would you advise writers [published**

***[aspiring] to use E-book or Self-publish?***

Yes, but with caution.

**LLR: What advice would you give aspiring writers?**

Write, write, and write. Partner, partner, and partner. Consult, consult, and consult—networking increases quality performance.

**LLR: What are you currently working on? What are some of your future projects?**

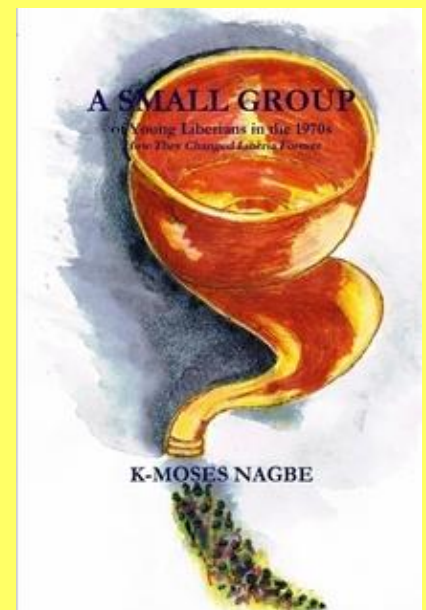
As a writer, I am working on three projects—a second major autobiographical account documenting my life in the Diaspora; a third book of poems in the millennium; and a sort of textbook for secondary school writing for Liberian students; as a publisher, I am working with two authors—one doing a book of folktales, the other doing a book of a sociopolitical context.

On behalf of our team, here at LLR and your fans, we would like to take this time to thank you for your kind consideration in sparing time for this interview. It is most appreciated. We wish you well in your endeavors and we anxiously await your next book.

***Thank you and have a great day.***

You can find the authors' titles on any major book website. Here are some of his works:

- Between the Scissors [Growing Up as an Afrestern Liberian] (2012)
- Tugging Whispers (2008)
- One Saturday In August (2007)
- A Mall Group of Young People in the 1970's (How They Changed Liberia Forever) (MS-05-1) (2008)
- NUGGETS OF THE AFRICAN NOVEL: With Notes on the Liberian Literary Heritage (2005)
- A Scream in the Storm (2004)
- The Road to Romeo (Junior Readers Series, 14, 14) (Apr 2001)
- Bulk Challenge (1996)
- Books on Liberia by nationals and foreign nationals: (with a panorama on writing in Liberia) (1992)
- Thinking through the times (1991)
- The Liberian literary voices: A guide to Liberian literature (1988)





**President Sirleaf  
Addresses the 70<sup>th</sup>  
Session of UN  
General Assembly**

**Executive Mansion  
Press Release**

**Tuesday, September 29, 2015**



**President Sirleaf addresses the UNGA**

**STATEMENT**

**BY**

**HER EXCELLENCY MADAM  
ELLEN JOHNSON SIRLEAF  
PRESIDENT OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA  
TO THE 70TH SESSION  
OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
NEW YORK**

**(As Delivered)**

Mr. President;  
Excellencies, Heads of State and Government and Heads of Delegations  
Distinguished delegates  
Ladies and Gentlemen:  
On this auspicious occasion, the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations, I am honored to address this august assembly on behalf of the Government and people of Liberia. I congratulate you on your election as President of the Assembly and appreciate the stewardship of your predecessor, H.E. Mr. Sam Kutesa who ably conducted

the affairs of the 69th session.

Mr. President,  
This year has registered ground breaking developments. After 50 years, the United States and Cuba have decided to resolve differences by establishing diplomatic relations.

Another milestone was the adoption here a few days ago of the Post 2015 Development Agenda: Transforming the world: 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by which we committed to implement measures to transform the lives of our peoples - to lift them from poverty to prosperity and to preserve the planet.

It was this same vision, which, seventy years ago, motivated the founding of this global organization to promote peaceful coexistence, economic and social advancement of all peoples, respect for human dignity and equal rights of men and women, and nations large and small.

I am proud to say that Liberia was among the founding members of the United Nations.

The creation of the United Nations was a realization that only a global organization, through the support and cooperation of the comity of nations, would be suitable to grapple with the many challenges faced by humanity.

Today, a reduction in interstate conflict, cooperation in the

protection and promotion of human rights, and in alleviating global poverty, disease and hunger have been the hallmark of this body.

On the other hand, increased intra-state conflicts and international terrorism are seeking to undermine the gains made in reducing human suffering. Protracted and intense conflicts in various parts of the world pose serious threat to global peace and security.

Mr. President,  
The United Nations is thus called to action by new and emerging challenges. Despite commendable efforts, Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Europe still have vortexes of conflict.

Migrants and people seeking refuge from conflicts and economic hardships are swirling across Europe.

We are haunted by the growing threats of destabilizing forces such as Boko Haram and ISIS as well as attempts to reverse democratic initiatives such as in Burkina Faso which invoked an immediate and decisive ECOWAS response.

Climate conditions are changing and so must we. In many countries of the world, women are still being treated as second-class citizens.

And as Liberia bears painful witness, weak public health systems in individual countries threaten global health and wellbeing. It is not beyond this body to find answers and to respond as we know that we must.

At seventy, we feel compelled to ask: Is our world organization hindered today by inflexible structures and overburdened by bureaucracies? Is the current structure of the UN fit for purpose - to play its role in the global transformation processes over the next 15 years? We are encouraged by the introspection which is taking place at the UN around these questions.

We commend the foresight of the Secretary-General in directing a comprehensive review of peace operations, which is complemented by a review of the organization's peace building architecture and a global study on the implementation of Resolution 1325 on women participation in peace processes.

After the completion of these reviews, we expect implementation to bring further improvements.

Liberia can attest, with gratitude, to the critical and indispensable nature of the UN's peacekeeping and peace building functions for post-conflict countries.

Mr. President,

This year we marked the twentieth anniversary of the historic Beijing Conference and its Plan of Action for Women's empowerment and gender equality. We are also marking the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of resolution 1325 on women's participation in peace processes. And while improvements have been made in the status of women, much more is still to

be done. We must therefore all "step-up" and take further measures beyond moralizing gender equality to tangible actions. At seventy, only three women have served as President of the General Assembly, one of them being our compatriot many years ago, Mrs. Angie Brooks Randolph. Only a few women continue to serve as special representative of the Secretary General and not a single woman has ever served as Secretary-General.

Excellencies, As we ponder, in Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone, three countries worst-hit by the deadly Ebola virus disease, we bear witness to the foundational creed of the United Nations - that we can always find it within our humanity to respond even to unknown enemies to our collective progress. Accordingly, we remain grateful to all of you for the outpouring of support and assistance as we faced down the deadly disease, the greatest modern threat to global public health.

We thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon who, in partnership with our countries and support from the African Development Bank, the African Union, the European Union and the World Bank hosted the International Conference on Ebola Recovery to focus attention on and seek support for our post-Ebola Recovery Programs.

Undoubtedly, the Ebola scourge leaves indelible marks of grief, sorrow and

unimaginable affliction. But it has also caused us to celebrate heartwarming tales of extraordinary courage and leadership across governments and communities as well as exceptional regional and international responses.

We are now proceeding with implementation of our Post Ebola Economic Stabilization and Recovery Plan with expectation of support from our bilateral and multilateral partners to a regionally approved Post Ebola Recovery Strategy which the three affected countries of the Mano River Union, have formulated.

Mr. President,

We are determined to address the development losses including rebuilding better and more resilient health and education systems. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda, which we adopted in April, offers pathways to various forms of financing, capacity building and technological exchanges to support the pursuit of our development objectives. We must now forge genuine partnerships in order to move ahead together on the road to strengthening peace and security, human rights, socio-economic development and environmental sustainability.

We stand firm in the political will to meet any challenge in our commitment to leave no one behind.

I thank you.

## The Story Of Anderson Philip – A Cocoa Farmer In Yeakai Bong County

Credit: Ministry of Agriculture

What appears to be a dream - come -through in the life of 28 year old Anderson Philip and his family started on September 9, 2014 when the World Bank supported project of the Ministry of Agriculture called Small Holder Tree Crops Revitalization Support Project (STCRSP) implemented in Bong, Nimba and Grand Gedeh Counties by SOCODEVI



SEVI sent a team of field technicians to identify cocoa/coffee farmers in Yeakai Town for possible recruitment in the project.

Young Anderson's late father (Yarkpawolo Philips) and now aged mother Na-pahn Philips planted 7.25 hectares of cocoa farm in 1971. Upon the death of his father in 2006, the family agreed and turned over the plantation to him since he was the only child residing in the village.

Managing the cocoa plantation and other tree crops planted by his father including 1100 rubber trees, 300 oil palm and few oranges has over the years been a huge challenge for him. The cocoa farm for the last three years has been in the bush and yield was as low as 700 kg on the average. Various cocoa pests and diseases have taken their toll with black pod leading the others. Anderson

and his family soon lost hope and abandoned the cocoa farm as they watched the farm get consumed by pests and diseases.



First harvest after rehabilitation

The MOA-STCRSP/WB/SOCODEVI project in June 2015 completed the farmer selection process in Bong County after resumption of activities following the EVD epidemic in Liberia and Anderson Philips was selected to benefit from the project. Little did he know that his hope in the cocoa farm would get better. He and 19 other farmers met to select a site for the Farmer Field School (FFS) in Yeakai and his farm was unanimously chosen.



Participating farmers in the FFS numbering 20 - 30 within the same or near-by communities gather weekly on a cocoa farm they agree upon and with a trained facilitator learn about best agriculture practices in cocoa/coffee production. The project through MOA/PCU provided each farmer tools for under brushing and pruning as well as cocoa quality assurance

including cutlass, metal file, axe, tarpaulin, nails and carpenter hammer for preparing drying platforms. Pesticides (insecticides and fungicides) along with application equipment comprising sprayers and Personal Protective equipment (PPE) were also given. Topics on the safe handling and sustainable application of the pesticides have been presented and demonstrated through each FFS to ensure proper use.

During the FFS Anderson leaned about black pod disease of cocoa, pruning older cocoa trees, the control of Mirid (capsid)



and other pests with practical demonstrations in the field. This turned to be an eye opener for this young farmer.

"After the school I did what the teacher said we should do and I am getting plenty cocoa now", Anderson told SOCODEVI management team monitoring his farm.

Anderson Philip with members of his family posted near their home. Although the harvest has not reached its peak but farmers are hopeful about the yields of their farms in this year and are happy about the project intervention so far. Anderson who also has a family size of 9 persons (6 children, a wife and very old mother) indicated that if he gets more money as the farm looks, he will send the children to school and build a better home for his family.



## State Merit Medal

The Medal of State Merit which was established in 1920 also under the administration of Charles D.B. King. It is given to nationals for achievements of merit.

The medal is casted in three (3) types or classes of materials:

**Bronze**  
**Silver and**  
**Silver gilt**

It is often mistakenly associated with the Order of the African Star which was also instituted in 1920).

This medal has been used over the times as a kind of Presidential Medal of Honour when the Presidents of Liberia goes on State Visit abroad. This is the reason why this medal is seen so often.

### Ribbon

The ribbon is green with four narrow red stripes which are right in the middle of it.

### Medal/Insignia

On the **obverse** side is imprinted the SEAL;

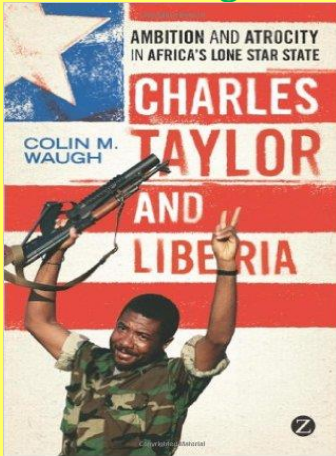


D. Othniel Forte

whist on the **reverse** side are the same intertwined letters RL. It is placed in the middle of a double ring with the words "Light in Darkness" written clockwise and underneath it is 1920. Also in the circle are three stars. It is a rare artifact and a collector's



**Book Review:**  
**Charles Taylor and  
Liberia: Ambition  
and Atrocity in  
Africa's Lone Star  
State by Colin M.  
Waugh**



*Charles Taylor sought to lead his native Liberia to change but instead destroyed it in a frenzy of violence, greed and uncontrolled personal ambition. In the process he threw much of Liberia's neighbouring region into turmoil for over a decade, finally facing judgement in The Hague for his role in the Sierra Leone conflict. In this remarkable and eye-opening book, Colin Waugh draws on a variety of sources, testimonies and original interviews to recount the story of what really happened during these turbulent years. There can be no easy conclusions, writes Tara O'Leary.*

The rise and fall of Charles McArthur Ghankay Taylor - campaigner, insurgent, fugitive, rebel commander, commodity kingpin, elected president, later exiled and finally made prisoner, as he is described in this recent biography by Colin M. Waugh - is a compelling story, one which has the ingredients not only of political biography or recent history, but of the

compelling tale of a modern-day fortune-hunter and opportunist.

Born into poverty in a Liberian village in 1948, Charles Taylor worked his way from village school-teacher to President through a mixture of hard graft and brutal pragmatism, the circumstances of which are recounted here as an extraordinary prelude to the story of Taylor's political, military, economic and social impact upon millions of lives in West Africa. Fomenting armed rebellion with the support of a variety of political allies and supportive regimes, Taylor instigated and waged gruesome civil war in Liberia while facilitating further conflict in Sierra Leone. Later democratically elected President of his country in paradoxical circumstances which are insightfully examined by Waugh, Taylor headed an administration which facilitated and relied on a lucrative trade in what are now commonly referred to as 'blood diamonds', before ultimately losing both his presidency and most of Liberian territory to an armed insurgency against his regime. Exile in Nigeria was followed by his surrender to the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL), a hybrid international tribunal charged with investigating and prosecuting crimes under international law in relation to the Sierra Leone conflict.

The author, [Colin M. Waugh](#), has a long history of professional and personal involvement in the region, and

a sense of affection and respect for Liberia and its people shines through this accessible and readable account of both the improbable events of Taylor's life and the unique circumstances of Liberia, its history and its tragic conflict. Waugh makes a commendable effort to contextualise the effects of generations of discrimination and inequality, and to simplify the complex web of conflicts, armed groups, military alliances, political manoeuvres and financial relationships which converged to create a firestorm of regional conflict in Liberia, Sierra Leone and beyond.

Yet despite the focus of this book, Charles Taylor himself remains somehow absent and remote throughout. The secondary sources used throughout somehow fail to encapsulate his reported charisma and flair, or to explore this very human story of ambition, greed and corruption. In particular, the story of Taylor's transformation from civil servant and businessman to rebel soldier remains elusive. Other than repeated references to Taylor's overarching urge to power and penchant for opportunism - particularly in relation to gaining the support of other West African leaders, including the provision of military training by the Gaddafi regime, for instance - there is little insight into his decision to adopt arms and pursue a

violent solution to the problem of Samuel Doe's disastrous presidency of Liberia. Taylor received his first ever military training - in the Tarjura Libyan military base - at around age 40, yet shortly afterwards found himself successfully leading a military incursion through the Liberian bush that resulted in a takeover of the vast majority of the country. The extraordinary confidence and tenacity this unlikely transformation must have required remain psychologically somewhat unexplored, and Taylor himself feels no closer to the reader at the end of the book than at its beginning.

In this regard, the book suffers from the absence of interviews with Taylor or other forms of direct personal access to him, although this was likely an inevitable consequence of his incarceration and ongoing criminal trial at the SCSL at the time of publication. It is also, perhaps, regrettable in some ways that publication of the book pre-dates the issuing of the verdict in his trial. The judgement, weighing in at a hefty 2,539 pages, provides a historical record and judicial appraisal of many of the events and actions described in the book. Issued in April 2012, the judgement found Taylor guilty of knowingly aiding and abetting rebels in Sierra Leone on 11 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity, including murder, rape and other forms of sexual violence, conscription, enlistment or use of child soldiers and

enslavement. Some weeks later the Tribunal sentenced him to 50 years imprisonment, noting that while Taylor may have publicly supported peace processes in the region throughout the 1990s, he privately undermined peace negotiations by continuing to support Sierra Leonean rebels - the Revolutionary United Front - through financial, operational, and moral support. This largely corroborates the picture Waugh paints of the devastating impact of Taylor's self-interested opportunism on peace and stability in the region.

The mixed reactions of the Liberian public reported at the time of the verdict demonstrated the paradox by which Taylor was held to account for crimes committed in a neighbouring state but not those perpetrated in his own country or by forces under his direct command. In this respect Waugh raises relevant and justified questions: why was so much time, money and energy spent on investigation and prosecution of crimes under international law committed in Sierra Leone but not those which took place in Liberia? Why was there so little support amongst the international community for the findings and recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Liberia, none of which have been implemented or acted upon? Worth noting, in the interests of disclosure, is some direct criticism of Amnesty

International, by whom this reviewer notes she is currently employed in the interests of full disclosure.

Taken in conjunction with somewhat sparse citations throughout, and with a noticeable number of typographical errors, the definitive volume on both Charles Taylor and the Liberian conflict is yet to be written. Yet it is important to remember that his story, his legal proceedings - currently on appeal - and most importantly, Liberia's transition to peace and democracy remain unfinished. There can be no easy conclusions, but pending the final chapter of Taylor's story this is an engaging introduction to the life of a colourful and influential individual, and to a devastating episode of recent history from which much remains to be learnt.

Tara O'Leary graduated from the LSE with an LLM in Public International Law, and works in the fields of international and human rights law. Past positions have included legal adviser and researcher with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in Kosovo and in Bosnia and Herzegovina. She is currently an assistant legal adviser with Amnesty International. Tara also has an LLB in Law and European Studies from the University of Limerick."



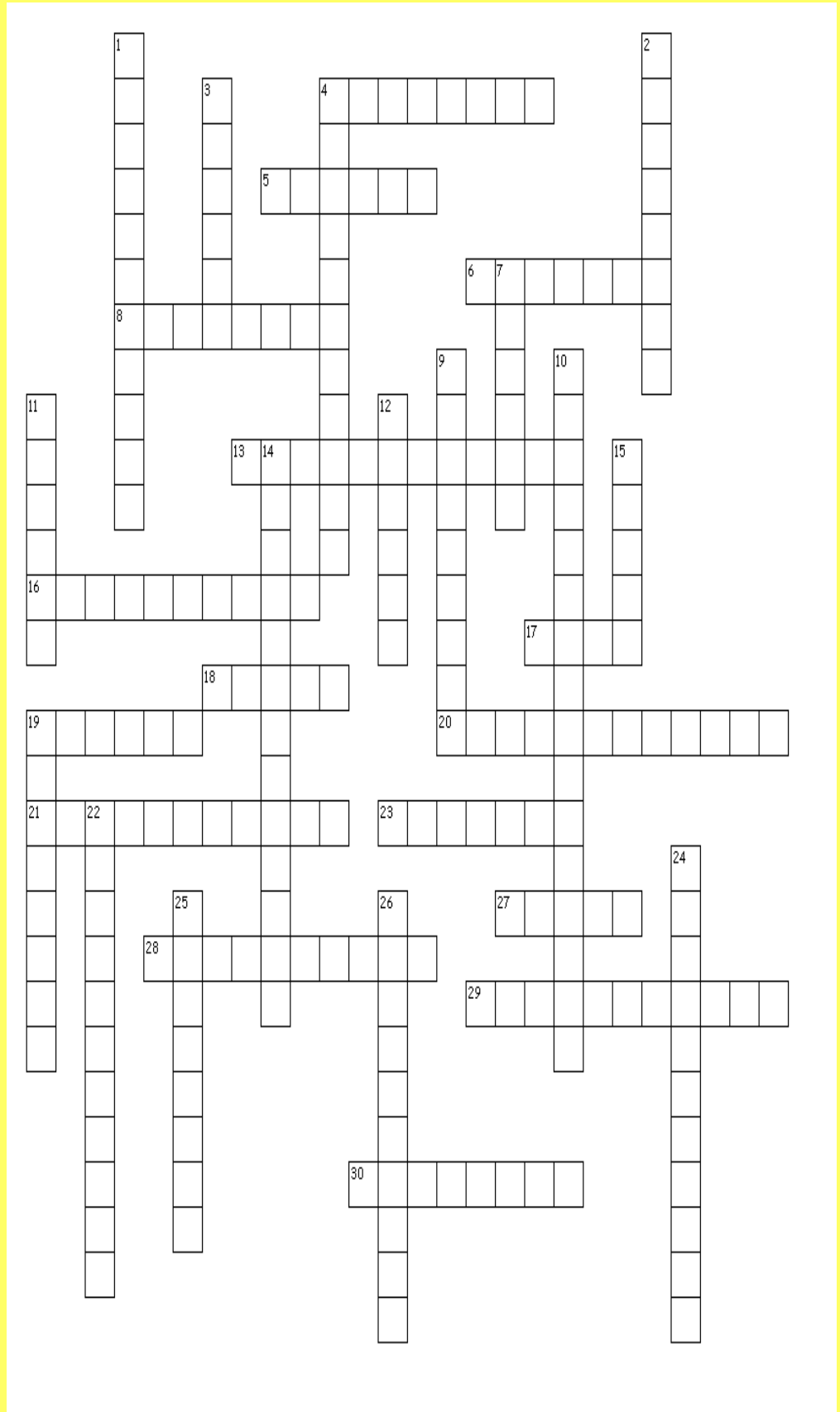
**Liberia Trivia**

**Across**

- 4. Named for another leader that never saw it
- 5. The second largest city in Lofa county
- 6. Second most populous city
- 8. Was one of six districts located in Nimba County
- 13. Named after a President
- 16. Party First Political Party
- 17. An anagram of 'o fay'
- 18. In Search of liberty we came; a word/phrase/sentence
- 19. The letter A in all syllables
- 20. The birth city of the OAU
- 21. City separated from the mainland by Lake Piso
- 23. Another way to spell it. Middle letter "HN"
- 27. A kingdom & often ends in 'land'; names a people also.
- 28. A capital city formerly known as Vaitown
- 29. Highest Point Exclusive to Liberia (1,440 m)
- 30. An edible Town

**Down**

- 1. A city with three 'S'es and Cs
- 2. A capital city in the north western most part of Liberia
- 3. A contraction for a husband/wife
- 4. Presented A Quilt to Queen Victoria
- 7. Located in a newly created county; middle letters 'PD'
- 9. A city named for a River
- 10. Another name for Colonists
- 11. Normally listed the last city
- 12. A folk musician
- 14. Lowest Point (0 m)
- 15. Largest city in the Northeast
- 19. Ends with "play"
- 22. A settlement on the St. Paul
- 24. Smallest County
- 25. A Governor of the Commonwealth
- 26. contains within the color of leaves



## Author Interview 2

### Spotlight Author

Danielle Rose



Let's start by first thanking you for doing this interview. Now, tell us a little about you—childhood, education, upbringing etc.

My name is Danielle Rose, and I call myself a writer-adventuress. That's because I'm a writer of fiction and travel. I'm married with three furbabies (two dogs and a cat), and when I'm not writing, I enjoy being outdoors, reading, wasting the day away on Pinterest, scouring the Web for the perfect Victorian manor, painting, and learning to be a scuba diving master!

.What are two things your fans don't know about you that you feel comfortable sharing?

1. I am constantly on the move—and I mean that in the non-literal sense. I'm always scouring the Internet for the perfect place to uproot my family to. So if I tell you that you live in a place I've considered moving to and then you see that I tell someone else that same thing, I'm actually telling you both the truth. Planning a move is a bad habit of mine!

2. I am in the beginning stages of becoming scuba certified and learning to paint. I'll soon take classes for both, and I couldn't be more excited!

Are you a big picture or detail-oriented person?

Honestly, I can be a bit of both. I suppose it depends on the mood I'm in or what I'm working on, though I tend to be more of a planner, which means I'm more of the latter.

How would your friends describe you?

If friends had to describe

me in five words, I think they'd choose:

1. Creative
2. Empathic
3. Stubborn
4. Indecisive
5. Successful

What books have most influenced your life/career most?

Stephenie Meyer's Twilight Saga and Richelle Mead's Vampire Academy series have had the biggest impact on my career. When I think about how/why I became a writer, I think about them and their works.

If you had to choose, which writer would you consider a mentor?

I have an MFA in creative writing, and to receive my graduate degree, I had to work one-on-one with some of the best writers I've ever met, including Nancy Holder, Theodora Goss, David Anthony Durham, Elizabeth Hand, James Patrick Kelly, Michael Kimball, and so many more.

They were all my mentors and mean so much to me. I wouldn't be the writer I am without them!

**Do you recall how your interest in writing originated?**

Yes. Unlike most, I know the exact moment I truly became a writer. While I do vaguely remember writing stories as a child, I don't credit my writing's beginning until November 2009.

The year prior to that, I watched the film adaptation of Meyer's novel, *Twilight*. At the time, I hadn't heard of Meyer or her series, but I was captivated by the film. I was fascinated with what she had done to make the vampire trope original in a market oversaturated with stories about these creatures. This led me to read her series, which then led me to read more series, and eventually, after I had read hundreds of books, I began to write.

**Do you have a specific writing style?**

I think all writers have a personal style, but I don't believe it's something anyone can describe. It's not a tangible thing. I can't pick it up and say, "This is it! Here's my style." But I do know my style is somewhere between simplistic and flowery, though that doesn't really narrow it down either.

**How do you develop your plots and characters?**

The inception of my plot typically comes from dreams, and from there, I outline my novels. My outlining process can be as simple as chapter breakdowns or as complex as story boards. The more complicated the story, the more complicated the outline.

**Tell us about your protagonist[s]/antagonist[s]? Did you draw from real people?**

I most definitely draw from real people. I think all writers' lives affect their work. Sure, we twist things and mold it into our stories, but the beauty of writing is that you find inspiration everywhere you look.

Avah is the protagonist of *Blood Rose*. To write her character, I really turned inward and looked within myself. We share many of the same characteristics. She's stubborn and devoted. She's selfless and smart. She's strong and emotional. She's brave and determined. She's imperfect and beautiful. She's everything I hope to be and everything I think readers hope to be.

**What inspired you to write your first book?**

I actually started writing *Blood Rose* in November of 2009. It was the first novel I've ever worked on. It's gone through plot changes, character overhauls, and so much more during these six years, though. Because of this, it's not the same story I began writing all those years ago.

I began working on it after dreaming about this world I wanted to create. I could see the characters clearly, and I'd envision scenes. In all honesty, coming up with the plot never was the hard part.

**How did you come up with the title? Why that one?**

The title refers to a specific scene in the book. You'll know the one as soon as you read it, but I can't give it away. This particular scene hints at what's to come in the second book in the series.

I will say that the series name and first book title have changed many times, and in all honesty, I don't know what it was that made me finally decide. I think it just resonated with me more than the other



options. When it reaches your soul, you know you've found the perfect title.

**How much of the book is realistic?**

Very much of it is realistic. The only difference between this world and the world we live in now is that vampires and witches with magical powers exist. Other than that, it is set during present day times. You'll also find very realistic themes. In the book, I touch on things like: what does it mean to be immortal? What is the nature of evil? How are our deepest prejudices formed? There is very real danger, romance, and action throughout the book, too.

**Are other experiences based on someone you know, or events in your own life?**

No. None of the situations in *Blood Rose* are based on any real events that I know of. The plot all came from my imagination.

**What was the hardest part of writing this book?**

There were a few scenes that were difficult to write, but I think the

hardest was the scene in which the characters are completely intimate. This is a new adult paranormal romance novel, so the sexual and sensual scenes are expected. I found myself questioning each keystroke. I never knew if I was going too far or not far enough.

**What was your favorite chapter (or part) to write and why?**

The first chapter is my absolute favorite. (It usually is my favorite in all of my books.) I got to introduce the world to the readers, which was really fun, but I love that chapter because the reader got to see Avah in her true form—as a witch. In it, she is strong, selfless, witty, cunning, and a true badass. It's important to me to pen a character who is a strong female heroine, which can be hard on Avah, because I've thrown her into some really awful situations—the biggest of which is when she completely loses who she is in a moment of weakness. After this event, she is left broken and confused. She has to remember the person she was and try to hold onto that even though everything within her is

telling her to walk away from it and embrace her new destiny.

**Would you change anything in your book[s]? What and why?**

No, and I never would want to with any book. I think that is not a good mindset to have as a writer. This is a difficult job within a cutthroat industry. Reviewers can be downright mean without even meaning to be. Your friends and family can be harsh critics. But most of all, you can be your worst enemy. I think it's important to write the book you want to write and then be proud of it. Don't second guess it or rethink what you've published. That's what the editing stages are for!

**Is there anything you find particularly challenging in your writing?**

I find making it to the computer to work particularly tricky. I love what I do and wouldn't want to do anything else, but sometimes, BIC (butt in chair) is really hard to come by. There are so many other things on my to-do list that are really fun. It can be difficult to

force yourself to work when all you want to do is play.

**Do you have to travel much [for research] concerning your book(s)?**

No, not for Blood Rose. It is set in a part of the country I've never been to, but I have friends who live there, and I rely on my Internet searches. I think the Internet has made writing so much easier. Anyone can research, write, and publish a novel from their couch now.

**Who designed the covers?**

Blood Rose's cover was designed by Robin at Wicked by Design. Isn't it fantastic?!

**What was the hardest part of writing your book? [What's the hardest part of writing in general?]**

The hardest part was reaching the end. Once I get to about 30,000 words, which is about half a novel for me, I'm ready to start another project or go back and revise what I've written. But you can't do that, because then you'll never type "the end." I think that's the hardest part for every writer, and

the only way to overcome it is by having a schedule or a goal and sticking to it. Eventually, writing will become a habit. When that happens, you're in a fantastic place.

**Do you have any advice for other writers?**

Don't give up! If you want to write, write. Make yourself do it. Because you can.

**Do you consider writing as a career/hobby?**

Writing is my career. I am a full-time writer, and this is how I pay my bills.

**What book[s] are you reading now?**

I'm currently reading Cameo Renae's After Light Saga! It's a young adult dystopian series. I'm only the first book, but I'll be picking up book two next month.

**Are there any new authors that have grasped your interest?**

Yes! Though I wouldn't say they are new to the writing world. They're just new to me. I'm really excited to read The Bleeding Heart Trilogy by Nadège Richards

and The After Light Saga by Cameo Renae.

**Tell us your latest news, promotions, book tours, launch etc.**

I'm completely booked with events over the next couple months. I participate in about fifteen Facebook author events every month. You can find out which events I'm participating in by "friending" or "following" me on my Facebook page: [www.Facebook.com/DRoseAuthor](http://www.Facebook.com/DRoseAuthor). That's where I post announcements.

On October 27th, NovelTea Bookstore, an independent bookstore in Kenosha, WI, is hosting a Blood Rose release party. You can find more information about this event on my website: [www.Danielle-Rose.com/events.php](http://www.Danielle-Rose.com/events.php).

On November 7th, Thirst Edition, an independent bookstore in Kenosha, WI, is hosting an author meet-and-greet. The event begins at 10:00 am. You can find more information about this event on my website: [www.Danielle-Rose.com/events.php](http://www.Danielle-Rose.com/events.php).

In December, my next novel, Blood Magic, book

two in my Blood Books series and the sequel to Blood Rose, will be released! I'll be hosting a Facebook launch party, as well as an Internet blog tour. You can find more information regarding these events on my website or Facebook page]

**What are your current projects?**

I'm currently working on the second book in my Blood Books series, which is due to release this winter. I also have several standalone novels I'm going to be working on next, including a post-apocalyptic braided narrative, a young adult supernatural thriller, and some contemporary romances.

**Can you share a little of your current work with us?**

I don't have anything from my current project ready yet, but you can read the first chapter of Blood Rose on my blog: [www.danielles-destinations.com/blood-rose-chapter-one/](http://www.danielles-destinations.com/blood-rose-chapter-one/).

**Do you have anything specific that you want to say to your readers?**

Yes, THANK YOU! Thank you for giving me a chance and for reading my book. I'm so grateful. I hope you'll enjoy the story enough to stick around and take this crazy journey with me.

**Lastly  
Have you read book[s] by [a] Liberian author[s]?**

Unfortunately, I have not, but I am always looking for book recommendations!

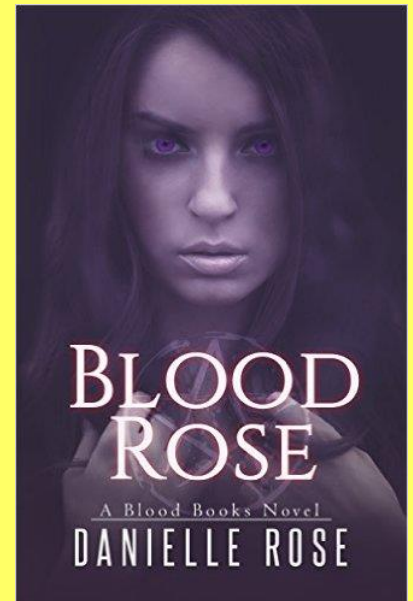
**Have you read any book about Liberia in general?**

Not at this time, but I will be very soon! I have a character in Blood Rose who is Liberian. She is a major character who plays more of a minor role in the first book of Blood Books. I am planning to release backstory novellas about the main characters, so I will be doing a lot of research on Liberia and Liberian culture.

**Have you considered or would you like to work with Liberian authors? What possible areas would you consider collaborating on?**

I have considered collaborating with other writers, but I haven't

thought of anyone specifically. I like to keep my mind open, though!



**There's no wrath like that of a witch scorned**

Avah Taylor has been given a death sentence: as one of the only spirit users in her coven, Avah has been chosen to wield The Power, the ultimate weapon against the immortal vampire species witches have been at war with for centuries. The Power, given by the gods to one witch of each generation, is considered a great honor, but every witch before has died trying to master this all-too-powerful gift, one that the shell of a mortal can't contain for long.

On the night of her birth rite, Avah's coven is attacked, and Avah is left for dead. Confronted with a terrible choice, Avah must decide to either die or save herself by becoming like her enemies. Forced to seek refuge among the very beings she has sworn to kill, Avah vows revenge on those who took her former life from her.

As Avah slowly transitions into a life of blood and war and battles her own feelings for a man she is supposed to hate, she realizes everything she's been told is a lie.



## ***Reform the 1986 Constitution after 2017 Elections:***

### **A National and Passionate call to Safeguard Liberia's Embryonic Democracy**

**By Josiah F. Joekai, Jr.**



Fellow Liberians, it is no doubt that the move by the Government of Liberia to embark on the process of reforming the 1986 Constitution through the amendment of certain provisions is a commendable endeavor that must be embraced by everyone. Certainly, ensuring appropriateness of the law to meet the hopes and aspirations of the people is a fundamental requirement for the sustenance of democratic governance. This is simply because the safety, rights, responsibilities and happiness of the people must be guaranteed by the Constitution. Thus, the need to reform the 1986 Constitution in order to address the ambiguities and many of the provisions which are no longer applicable in our current dispensation cannot be overemphasized.

This is exactly why I am grateful to the President, Madam Ellen Johnson Sirleaf

and her government for initiating this national endeavor and the Constitutional Review Committee (CRC) for the splendid work it has done so far. Indeed, the stage has been set and the legacy will forever live on. This great undertaking of the CRC in keeping with its mandate to complete the conduct of 73 inclusive public consultations in which over 10,000 Liberians from the 73 Electoral Districts and the diaspora (Ghana and the United States of America) participated is a national duty for which its Chairperson, Cllr. Gloria Musu Scott and members are duly credited. The final report reveals that over 16,000 views were collated, 52,308 suggestions produced from which according to the CRC, 25 propositions were derived and taken to the National Constitution Conference and voted upon by a population of 500 persons representing the citizenry. Indeed, this is a remarkable achievement.

The exemplary leadership exhibited by the President and her government to initiate the Constitutional reform process is a clear manifestation that truly reaffirms the government's commitment to engendering equity in our governance process. Once executed appropriately, I have no doubt that same will considerably contribute to the improvement of governance and the quality of life. Certainly, this milestone achievement will never go unnoticed as it will forever remain written on the positive pages of history.

However, as important as the Constitutional Reform process is, we must not lose

sight of the fact that it has come at a defining moment in our enduring national recovery and development process. We all know that the highly anticipated 2017 Legislative and Presidential Elections are just two years away from now. As such, it is anyone's guess that this crucial electoral process is a turning point in the country's fledgling democracy. Thus, it is only befitting that we engage with the process cautiously in the supreme interest of protecting and keeping the democratic process well on course.

It is within this context that I sincerely believe that the anticipated Referendum to reform the 1986 Constitution and the 2017 Elections are two critical national decision-making processes that should not be undertaken concomitantly during the course of the two years (2016 and 2017). Several cogent reasons account for this passionate appeal. The measure of the enormity of the resources (technical and financial) required for both events, the need for a fresh and comprehensive voter registration process to address the integrity need of the current voter roll, the risk of making the referendum a side issue in the midst of the high expectations and enthusiasm of citizens in preparation for the elections, the complexity of the issues or propositions to consider in the referendum amidst the entrenched voters' apathy occasioned by disillusionment and high rates of illiteracy and the looming security anxieties and apprehensions. Indeed, we cannot underestimate these existing realities because they may

have the propensity to encumber the process if caution is not well taken.

I know we are tempted to compare the events of 2011 to 2017 but let me quickly emphasize that these are two different scenarios. Obviously, the 2011 Referendum and elections were challenging but not as the ones anticipated. Although complex as well but the scope of the referendum in 2011 was limited in terms of the number of propositions. Besides, the Board at the time comprised of a leadership with about six years of election management experience from 2005 elections and the many intermittent by-elections conducted in the lead up to 2011. Almost all of the Commissioners who had gained a considerable degree of knowledge and understanding in election management over the years were retained on the Board from 2005. This expertise was indeed critical to the entire process especially appropriate and timely policy decision-making. More so, the coherence of the leadership at the time was an important incentive which facilitated the successful conduct of the two events.

As volatile as the political environment was and contentious as the elections were particularly producing a total of 925 candidates in all categories, the process was largely successful with election related dispute/conflict management expeditiously handled. This was mainly due to the long term planning and meticulous approach which characterized the entire process thereby signifying that coherence and

experience of election managers are fundamentally required in the business of electioneering which must not be taken lightly.

However, this does not in any way suggest that the current Board lacks the expertise and coherence to manage elections. Although they have acquired some level of experience within the short space of time since their appointment in 2013 but the fact is that the Board is basically new. This stems from the fact that four of its members including the Chairman are completely new to the business of election management and will need some time to get properly adjusted particularly in handling crucial tasks of the measure we have at hand. Even though they are men and women with impeccable credentials in other professional spheres, but the business of election management requires time and practice to be able to manage processes and events of large magnitude concomitantly. As such, it is my sincere opinion that undertaking the management of these two historic national decision-making processes together by the current Board will mean giving them too much too soon; something that could lead to a nervy situation. In so doing, we must take on these events one at the time. Thus, concentration solely on the organization and conduct of the 2017 elections for now with all hands on deck is the best option for Liberia.

It is common knowledge that holding a Referendum of this scale requires sufficient time and resources. This is obvious because the Commission has

to ensure that the approved propositions are simplified with the appropriate symbols, translated into local languages with appropriate messages developed and robustly disseminated nationwide in a sustained and uninterrupted manner. This will require a lengthy period of time. In essence, besides logistics acquisition and movement and the recruitment and deployment of temporary staff, Referendum is practically a "Civic and Voter Education Centered" event. This is simply because the ultimate objective is for the people particularly voters to fully understand the issues/propositions and the reward or significance of such reform to them to be able to make informed choices. Thus, as an issue-based election, considerable time is required to educate voters due to the already entrenched voters' apathy occasioned by disillusionment and high rates of illiteracy.

One can imagine in the worst case if the Legislature approves all 25 propositions or even just 20, 15 or 10, this will obviously be cumbersome. Remember, Article 92 of the 1986 Constitution provides that if the propositions or issues are more than one, then each will have to stand alone. Meaning any amount of propositions approved by the Legislature, they will all have to stand alone on the ballot paper. It is only befitting that making such critical national decision, we engage with same in a prudent and orderly manner. This, fellow Liberians cannot be done in a half hazard manner or least to mention be equated to a "tic

to" affair. Thoughtfulness is so required because our safety and happiness as a nation are bordered on the successful conduct of these critical national decision-making processes.

Maintaining a credible register or voters' roll is a universally accepted principle in the electioneering process. I have no doubt that the Commission is considering a fresh voter registration because as it stands now, the current voter roll poses integrity questions. Since 2011 voter registration exercise to present, there exist names of registered voters on the present roll who are deceased. In fact, the measure of the Ebola Health Emergency which recorded more than four thousand deaths has contributed to this integrity problem. This situation gives a wrong impression regarding the reality about the actual number of registered voters in the country. In spite of the fact that the Ministry of Health is legally mandated in keeping with Chapter 3 Section 3.21 of the New Elections Law of 1986 as Amended in 2003 and 2004 to furnish the National Elections Commission (NEC) with the names of dead persons so that the Commission can remove said names from the roll in keeping with established procedures, this mandate is yet to be fulfilled since 2011 to date. I am fully aware however that since 2011, the Commission has appropriately written the MOH requesting such information but to no avail suggesting that the roll contains the names of deceased persons.

Besides, all of the registration processes

including 2005, 2011 and 2014 have produced different sets of Voter Identification Cards which are in the possession of voters in the country. In order to significantly address the issue or potential conflict associated with these cards, a fresh voter registration is required. Additionally, the Commission in keeping with Article 77(b) of the 1986 Constitution has to ensure that Liberians who have turned 18 years or above are registered to participate in these two events. With my limited understanding of electioneering however, I can say safely that voter registration is so very critical to the extent that it does not only attracts the interest of stakeholders but contains the names of the decision-makers in the electoral process. To simply put it, without a voters' roll there will be no elections. Hence, if this cardinal activity must take place before the two events, I do not only see pressure on the Commission but serious mishaps that may jeopardize the credibility of the process. It is no joke that planning and executing the three events concomitantly is burdensome.

Election financing is still an issue in our ongoing democratization process. In 2005, the process was almost entirely covered by the international community with limited inputs from the National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL) in terms of financial and logistical resources. On the human resource or expertise front, there was similar situation but the role of the newly constituted Board was considerable. That was quite understandable given the fact

that the country was in a post-conflict state and virtually had nothing to offer by then. In 2011, a cost-sharing electoral cycle project was jointly developed with a budget of US\$38million by the UNDP and the Government of Liberia. Of this amount, the government covered US\$12million in recurrent expenditure while friendly governments in particular, covered US\$26million in election operation through an election basket fund managed by UNDP in keeping with the agreement. Additionally, the United States Government through its international development arm, USAID provided US\$17million to the electoral process but directly through the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES). In essence, this analysis reveals that our election of 2011 was largely funded by the international community as well.

However, although the dynamics changed a little bit with the government underwriting the entire cost (About US\$15million) of the 2014 Special Senatorial Election, the financing mechanism caused serious delays in key activities such as the procurement of major logistics and election materials which constrained the Commission to postpone the start of the highly publicized Voter Roll Update (VRU) Exercise. This exercise was quite important to give Liberians who had just turned 18 or above the opportunity to be registered as voters in keeping with Article 77(b) of the 1986 Constitution. Liberians who were eligible but did not get registered during the last two



registration processes in 2005 and 2011 also had the opportunity to do so including those who wanted to be well situated on the roll based on their new locations/addresses. The decision of the Commission to postpone the event dramatically reduced the expectation and enthusiasm of applicants; many of whom eventually lost interest in the exercise. Furthermore, the delays in making timely availability of funds created setbacks for the Commission in meeting key timelines which had direct effect on the overall conduct of the election. What is important to note is that US\$15 million can be equated to just a fragment of the total cost of the three events which may account for the least such as the anticipated Referendum which is estimated at 18 million. This means that mobilizing resources for all of the events at the same time will certainly be burdensome. Undoubtedly, considering the size of the envelope for the anticipated Referendum and Elections, any well-meaning Liberian will have reasons to harbor fears that timely resource mobilization is an issue. As estimated by the Commission, the Referendum will cost about US\$18 million while the Voter Registration (VR) exercise and Elections will cost US\$77 million. The rough estimated cost for these three events is about US\$95 million. Absolutely, generating such required amount and making it available to the Commission in a timely manner for the scrupulous conduct of the three crucial national activities remains a challenge that must not be ignored.

Prudently, the best option for now is to take on the Elections component (Voter Registration and the Elections) which is required by law (Article 83(a) of the 1986 Constitution) and then subsequently do the Referendum at a time where resources will be appropriately mobilized. As a single task, I have no doubt that we will get the desired results.

Another key dimension to consider has to do with security for the processes. In spite of the efforts that are being made by the government to ensure security sector reform, citizens generally do not have trust and confidence in the current security arrangement of the country to cover events of this measure. The different security apparatuses have not reached their full capacities to be able to spread so thinly and still remain efficient. More so, the projection by the government that about US\$90 million is required to bridge the security gap that will be created as a result of UNMIL's drawdown underscores the need to timely and sober reflections. This situation is creating anxieties and apprehensions among citizens and indeed, it is a genuine concern that should be highly considered in the lead up to these events. Although the Liberia national Police (LNP) and the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization (BIN) have always worked with the Commission to provide security for the electoral process, the presence of UNMIL has always served as a major deterrent for any form or forms of electoral violence. Besides, UNMIL role

in the elections was beyond providing security to assisting the Commission in transporting election materials to hard-to-reach areas across the country.

In view of the foregoing my fellow compatriots, I wish to humbly appeal that we all go beyond our personal or selfish thoughts, ethnic or political alignments and reason together from a nationalistic perspective to adhere to this passionate call to preserve our dear country for ourselves, our children and the generations to come. In essence, it is purely from such national standpoint that I have chosen to call on the government and citizens to prudently and meticulously focus on the effective organization and conduct of the 2017 elections consistent with existing laws and the application of international best practices as we have always endeavored to do.

I have no doubt my fellow compatriots that with a smooth transition in our governance process as a result of the successful conduct of the elections in a peaceful and credible manner, we can collectively broaden the conversation on the Constitutional Reform process in the lead up to the conduct of a well-planned referendum in a manner and form that meet our aspirations as a people. Indisputably, a revised Constitution emanating from an uninterrupted planning and organization process will ultimately engender national ownership.

This is possible and quite appropriate because the Legislature has not acted on the report containing the

propositions to mandate the National Elections Commission (NEC) to proceed with the organization and conduct of a referendum in keeping with Article 91 of the 1986 Constitution. Accordingly, the Legislature can act to suspend deliberation on the report or defer the conduct of a referendum to reform the Constitution to a suitable time after the 2017 elections based on the rationale herein stated and those of other patriots. Let me further accentuate here that the conduct of the 2017 elections is not contingent upon the holding of a referendum to amend certain provisions of the Constitution. This simply means that conducting the elections before a referendum does not in any way violate or contravene any aspect or aspects of the law which infers that we are in the right position to choose the right option to safeguard our emerging democracy. I am fully aware that we have acquired some degree of experience in terms of expertise in in the management of elections. The trend can be traced from 2005 to present. After decades of struggle for the attainment of a democratic society, Liberia has already recorded a decade of an enduring democratic journey set into motion since October of 2005. In the aftermath of a long melee of political decadence characterized by deprivation, social and economic inequalities, anarchy and subjugation, an elected government was instituted for the first time reflecting the hopes and aspirations of majority of the citizens consistent with

established and acceptable democratic principles. Although the elections of 2005 were conducted largely under the supervision of the international community but the resolve and courage of the people to choose the path of democracy gave birth to the inauguration of democratic governance in Liberia following an atrocious era highly considered one of Africa's bloodiest civil crises (The Liberian Civil War December 24, 1989-August 18, 2003). This great transition from war to peace has gone down in history reflecting the true point of departure from the horrible and unforgettable epoch. This great and timely involvement of the international community in the organization and conduct of the elections was quite understandable. Absolutely, Liberians remain grateful for such intervention. The country had just emerged from a decade and half of self-destroying civil war and its fragility was deeply mirrored in the high degree of its dysfunctionality. Very limited or no infrastructure, social services were practically none-existent, security system fragmented and factionalized along ethnic lines and eventually the country became a setting of poor and war-wearied people isolated from the rest of the world, thus accounting for a failed state. In essence, the conditions necessary for the conduct of democratic elections in terms of the needed human resource or expertise, infrastructure and legal framework (Laws, codes of conduct, regulations and guidelines) were very limited

in scope or did not exist in any measure. This signifies that post-conflict elections such as ours in 2005 and 2011 respectively do required wide range interventions or support of various sorts ranging from technical to financial support. This situation necessitated the need for technical and financial resource support to Liberia's first two post-conflict elections which recorded landmark accomplishments.

Not only were the elections nationally and internationally acclaimed as free, fair, transparent and credible but electing the first female president of Africa, Madam Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was a crucial paradigm shift particularly in Africa's democratization efforts. This history-making was certainly a vivid example demonstrated by Liberia and eventually, the credit heralded the small West African nation for engendering equity in its fledgling democracy.

At the same time however, this much credited gain placed squarely to the feet of the President and her newly elected government the challenge of consolidating the peace and sustaining the country's nascent democracy. Inheriting a shattered country, the government was fully aware of the enormity of the challenges. Thus, it fittingly braced itself to endeavor in rebuilding and strengthening a justice system backed by the rule of law, revitalizing the already weak and unstable economy in order to raise the standard of living with a long term goal of creating a middle class. It also considered the development or building of

infrastructures to provide basic social services such as health, education, electricity and water supplies. Other important aspects of the recovery and development process the government has attempted to address include increased productivity in food production, road construction, upholding the right to information and freedom of the press, skills development and job creation among others.

It is no doubt that since the inception of the government, the country has continued to steadily rebuild in spite of the enormity of the challenges that continue to confront it. As a result of these undertakings of the government, a lot has been achieved. This accounts for the significant improvement in the country's image internationally compared to the recent past which is indicative of its role in global affairs. Access to information and freedom of the press have been considerably improved and enhanced to give citizens the space to share into national conversations. Although fundamental steps in terms of establishing anti-graft institutions were appropriately taken, but corruption remains pervasive thus undermining key national development efforts. As such, a step has to be taken further with a stronger commitment to rally all facets of the society in confronting this common scourge.

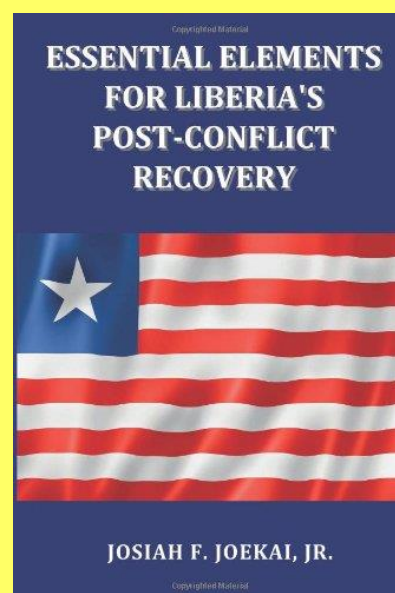
In like vein, persistent efforts have been made toward addressing the prevailing harsh economic situation especially making the basic needs of the people to include health, education, electricity, water, roads and

transport a reality. Absolutely, meeting these needs is critical to the pursuit of happiness and the overall stability of the state. Conversely, much is yet to be done in fulfilling these necessities of life.

In spite of these many challenges that continue to beset our beloved nation, I can unambiguously aver today that we have made reasonable progress but what remains germane in this national excursion is the collective responsibility that we all have to protect this very nascent democracy of ours in order to safeguard our nation.

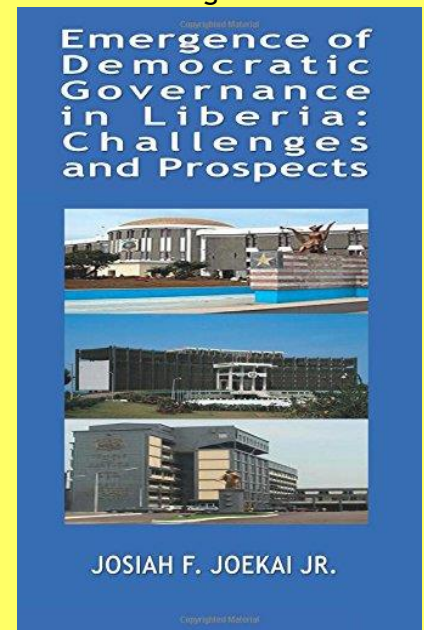
It is therefore my ardent hope that this national and passionate call will be considered by the government as a priority in foresight as we strive to build the Liberia we all envisioned for ourselves, our children and generations to come; a place where equality, fair play and justice will be the hallmark of our national existence.

**MAY GOD ALMIGHTY BLESS US  
AND SAFE THE STATE.**



### **About the Author**

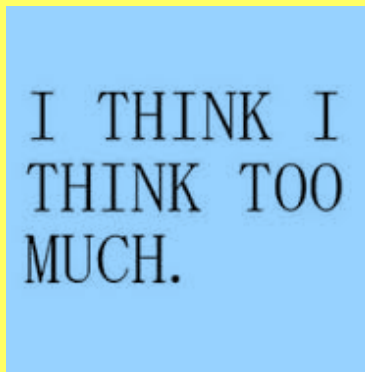
The Author is a candidate for Master's (MA) degree in Conflict Transformation from the Kofi Annan Institute for Conflict Transformation of the University of Liberia. He earned Bachelor's (BA) degree in Political Science with emphasis on International Relations from the University of Liberia. He is a self-managed and results-oriented personality. The Author has more than 10 years of professional experience in the public sector in the areas of education, democracy and governance. He has authored three books and several published articles. The Author is a proud recipient of the ADLA/ALLIA 2015 Award in the United States of America for outstanding services.





Kuluba's Korner

Kuluba's Korner

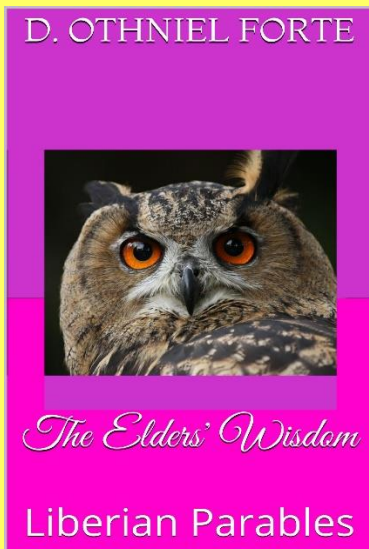


I read something profound the other day that said...Well, for ME it was (sigh) 🙄🙄🙄🙄🙄🙄: Commit to someone who knows how to love, who knows how to love you...who loves like YOU do. See why it's SO important to love yourself and love yourself, FIRST?!!! (Let's not mistake this for pride, ego and arrogance). That's WHY...you ARE love. You have to be "it!" Some Cracker Jacks do not know what love is or love themselves. How can they possibly love another (Men and Women). WHAT are you going to GIVE...that thing you don't have, that thing you are not?!\$#@#% Sounds rhetorical and cliché. Sounds like a "Yeah, Yeah.." We must not overlook these "Yeah, Yeahs." #EverydaysValentinesDay  
Just "K" 🍷

Darling, don't be  
fooled by his charm.  
He doesn't know how to love.  
-Christina Bittar

As old as I am, this simple truth is both reassuring and yet startling, at the same time: You cannot please everyone. If only we'd listen instead of responding before a Q is asked, if only we'd read the fine print, if only we'd keep quiet LONG ENOUGH, if only we'd respond to ONLY what is asked, if only we'd say "NO" without explanation, if only we'd say "YES" with all enthusiasm and sincerity, if only we'd be frank, upfront and definitive sans rudeness and lack of manners or etiquette. There's always a way. Never inconvenience yourself to please people who are ungrateful, unappreciative and not in the "giving" business, but always want to "receive." Appreciate those people who go out of their way...for they don't have to. If you do something for someone and are expecting a reward or favor...don't do it! The goodness and kindness of your heart will be rewarded in time. Let "peace of mind" and knowing you've enhanced someone else's life be your reward. Never set yourself on fire to keep other people warm. Do it all within reason and according to your time or ability. For you will be asked "Why doesn't he/she like him/herself to treat themselves this way for me?" That's not love... that's stupidity, hypocrisy, fear and a lost, empty soul in operation. KLM

## Liberian Proverbs



***Don't cut a kenja for a child before it is born.*** The Kenya/kenja is a carrier used in many traditional communities of Liberia. Its main purpose was to safely transport load. Often, mothers placed their young ones in this basket-like carrier and strapped it to their backs or front thus enabling them to carry firewood, water or some other items with the child safely tucked away. Over time, Kenya came to represent load of any kind. It is also used to mean trouble; come take your Kenya from here...

***Don't try to scare a monkey with a dead baboon.*** It is useless scaring a monkey when the baboon is dead. The monkey doesn't feel threatened if it sees the baboon is dead. Some efforts are worthless to carry out because they don't work.

***Even the lion does not eat its own cubs.*** There is love or some good in every one. The lion may be a danger for other animals, but not to its young. We have to look hard at time,

but when we do, we will find some admirable traits in everyone even those considered as bad.

***Even the mightiest eagle comes down to the treetops to rest.*** No situation is permanent. Some people think so highly of themselves or less of others, but the truth is we are all equal as humans.

***Fowls will not spare a cockroach that falls in their mist.*** A person that goes looking for trouble has himself/herself to blame. If you deliberately provoke others, when they react, you can't claim to be a victim.

*The concept of God in African tradition transcends the Judeo-Christian one; it can mean the ancestral spirits, a particular deity, several deities, nature, the supra natural etc. at other times, it can mean simply the Judeo-Christian God or Allah for Muslims.*

***God is sharper than a razor.*** In this case, it is better to understand this as revenge or fate. When life comes back to a person in full circle for some bad deeds they did, then this parable is used.

***God knows the things of tomorrow.*** Believers tend to accept that God authors (hence knows) their fates. This is usually to encourage people to hold on and have faith, for better days are ahead.

***God, who gave man scabies, also gave him hands to scratch them.*** Regardless of one's situation, there is always a solution to it. God

may allow certain things to happen, but He always gives one the right tools to get through them.

***Greed loses what it has gained.***

A greedy person pays more attention on getting more that s/he loses those things s/he has gotten. Instead of guarding the ones s/he has attained, s/he lets down his/her guard and they get away.

***Having a good discussion is like having riches.***

Wise discussions are priceless. They hold knowledge that could get one the very riches others are fighting to get. A wise person engages in fruitful discussions that may teach life's important lessons.

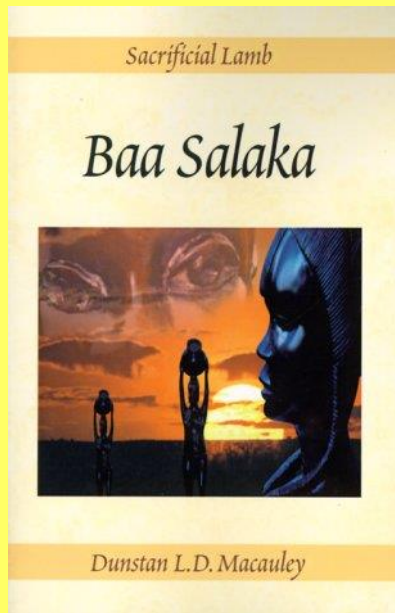
***He that has never traveled thinks that his mother is the only good cook in the world.***

An inexperience person is limited to the extent of their knowledge. The world is small to such people unlike those that open up for new experiences. Such people never get to appreciate the greater world outside of the limited area they know.

***He who doesn't like crabby women must remain a bachelor.***

It is better to avoid situations that one knows they are uncomfortable with or do not like. A man who gets married has to settle for the fact that a woman will be a woman; this means she would get moods and act crabby at times. If this is too much, it is better to stay alone.

## Book Review 2



### **Baa Salaka: Sacrificial Lamb (A Book Review & Commentary)**

By J. Kpanneh Doe

The writing of novels is rather new to the Liberian literary genre. Except for "Murder in the Cassava Patch," a Liberian literary classic, there aren't many others that can be grouped or classified as Liberian literature, or for that matter, constituting a literary tradition. Poetry, short stories, novels, etc., help humanize complex situations, and can capture the heart and soul of a people, a community or nation. While it is fictional, it gives a face and voice to what maybe happening in society.

Dunstan L. D. Macauley, an Engineer turned writer, has written a novel, *Baa Salaka: Sacrificial Lamb* (published by Xlibris Corporation in the year 2000, 269 pages), that grasps developments in Liberia, which occurred in the very recent past. While it is written as a political novel, by using several other stories, the author brings to light other themes such as discrimination in education,

domestic slavery, dissatisfaction in the army, among many others, to give real meaning to why the society was poised for change.

The book's title, *Baa Salaka*, means sacrifice. It is taken from the Gola language. Discussing the Liberian character, Macauley writes: "The Liberian people are just like that; everyone believes that he must be a big man, nobody want to be "Baa Salaka". If he can't get there, he will not let his friend get there. He will pull everybody down with him."

There is no shortage of characters in the story. But the main characters in the story are Aaron and Cora Ashe of Americo-Liberian pedigree who owned a farm in the countryside; Arthur Duncan, a native son of educated indigenous parents, who was dedicated to change; and Fahn Tamba, born in rural Liberia, who seemed determined to live a better life than his parents who worked hard on the farm of the Ashes, by pursuing education in Monrovia.

As the plot of the story builds, Fahn leaves the countryside to live with the Ashe family in Monrovia in the hope that he can pursue his lifelong dream of becoming educated. Aaron Ashe, the good Samaritan, always showed generosity and respect and motivation to Fahn whenever there was that opportunity. But Cora Ashe, the cantankerous housewife was always condescending and frequently reminded Fahn of his low status in life and his "country" origin. Cora overworked Fahn, basically domesticating him to be responsible for all of the house chores to the point that Fahn had no time to read and study. His mistreatment by Cora included such things as sleeping

on the kitchen floor and being the last to eat in the house.

Frustrated by all of the mistreatments, Fahn Tamba decides to leave the Ashes, and whatever hopes he had for pursuing his education were dashed. Encouraged by friends, he joins the Liberian Army and develops a camaraderie with other like-minded friends in a group called the Bad Boys Club (BBC).

Having set his plot, Macauley takes us to other scenes and elements of the story. There is the role of the students, especially those at the University of Liberia, and their agitation for change both on campus and in the larger society. Macauley strikes a revealing conversation between Liberian students studying in the United States who had been exposed to the freedom and democratic nature of the society, and their brethren at home.

Fahn Tamba, now in the army, and who had been friends to several of these students from childhood days, reconnects with them and begins to increase his awareness of the ills of the society, which he had already been acutely aware. In alliance with these students, Fahn begins to plan for the overthrow of the Liberian government.

This is an excellent novel. The plot and character of the story are well-developed.

#### **Product details**

Paperback: 276 pages

Publisher: Xlibris Corporation (1 January 2000)

Language: English

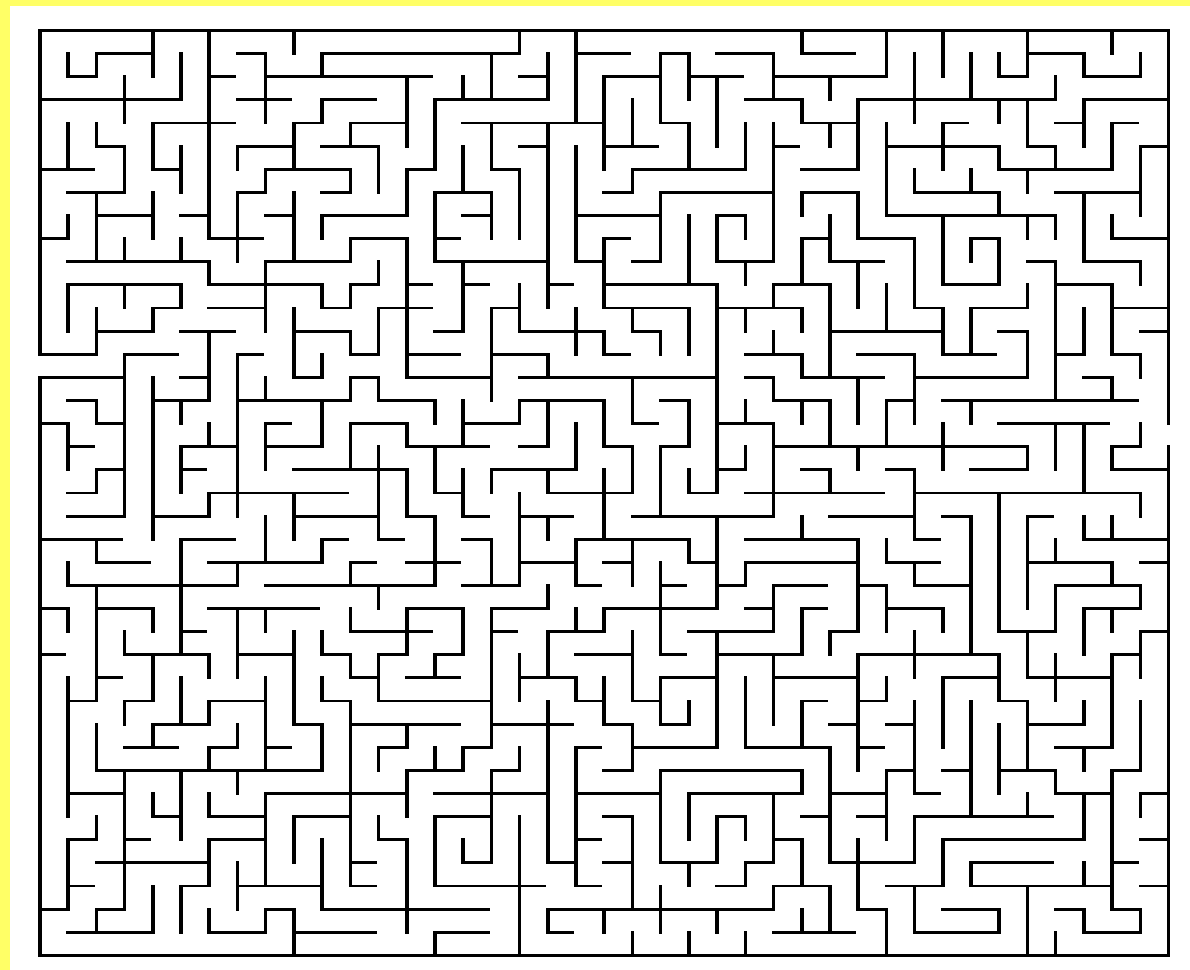
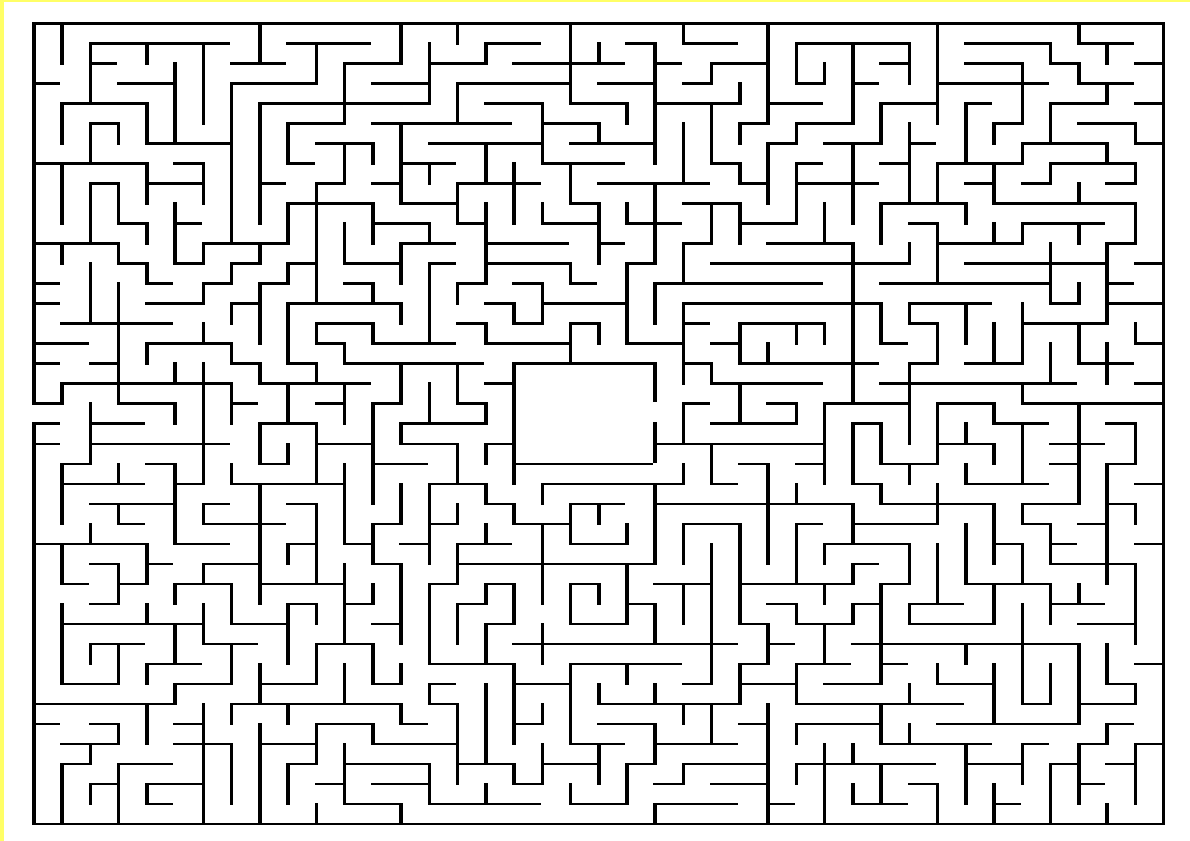
ISBN-10: 0738812552

ISBN-13: 978-0738812557

Product Dimensions: 1.9 x 14.6 x 21.6 cm



*Maze*



## Author Interview 3

### SPOTLIGHT AUTHOR

Cher is a Barbadian poet, artist and scientist... a woman of many hats



Cher Corbin

*Thank you for taking this time with us, we appreciate it. Let us kick off by you telling us a little about you- childhood, education, upbringing etc.*

I grew up and was raised on the Caribbean island of Barbados in the 60's. My childhood was quite a happy one as I immersed myself in books, playing jacks and just normal stuff. I was quite a loner and I guess from then I learnt to appreciate my own space and time alone, also to because I lived with some elderly people and there were no children in the household. Some may say I was a bit precocious.

*What are two things your fans don't know about you that you feel comfortable sharing?*

I am scared stiff of Gecko lizards and I hate sleeping in total darkness.

*Are you a big picture or detail-oriented person?*

I like detail in the big picture !!

*How would your friends describe you?*

Understanding, funny, logical, creative, strange and complex (not complicated..lol)

*What books have most influenced your life or career most?*

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle...and I guess that is obvious because I am a forensic scientist...(wink)

*If you had to choose, which writer would you consider a mentor?*

I have only started writing in the past few years and I really do not have a mentor...gosh that must sound awful...and even ungrateful...sorry.

*Do you recall how your interest in writing originated?*

Coming out of a really traumatic separation in 2009 I started to jot down how I was feeling and it then became very cathartic to write how I was feeling. I then started a blog and would post my musings and thoughts; the

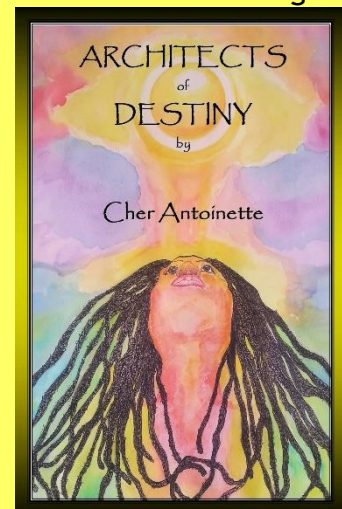
feedback was extremely encouraging and it went from there.

*Do you have a specific writing style?*

My style I think would be considered as very conversational. I have tried to enroll some writing courses and took advantage of the advice of several writers here in Barbados. I also entered the national competitions here and the critiques did help. I also won quite few awards as well.

*What inspired you to write your first book?*

My first book was an anthology of poetry MY SOUL CRIES and this was a series of free verse pieces that spoke to the journey I was on and the emotional turmoil I was enduring.



*How did you come up with the title? Why that one?*

I think that title came about because I speak to my soul quite often in my poetry. I guess it just evolved.



*How much of the book is realistic?*

I would say it is semi-autobiographical.

*Are other experiences based on someone you know, or events in your own life?*

Mostly events in my life or aspects of others that I am passionate about.

*What was the hardest part of writing this book?*

None really

*What was your favorite chapter (or part) to write and why?*

I don't really have any perse

*Would you change anything in your book[s]? What and why?*

No I wouldn't because they all speak to where I was at that time of my life and my interactions with persons on a physical and emotional level.

*Is there anything you find particularly challenging in your writing?*

No not really.

*Who designed the covers?*

I designed the covers for my last two. But the cover of the first one MY SOUL CRIES is a piece of artwork from my former partner.

*What was the hardest part of writing your book? [What's the hardest part of writing in general?]*

I think the hardest part of writing is keeping to a schedule. I have two novels I have started and cant seem to find the time to get back to them.

*Do you have any advice for other writers?*

Advice I would have is write your synopsis. Plan the novel.

I know sometimes your brain runs along a lot faster than you can write. Also when you have many characters in the work it is better to have a plan and look at their interaction.

Because when you get into the work and you change something in chapter 7 you need to ensure that the adjustments are properly made in the earlier chapters.

That can only be done successfully if you have a written plan.

*Do you consider writing as a career/hobby?*

Right now it is a hobby... I wish it to be a career at some point.

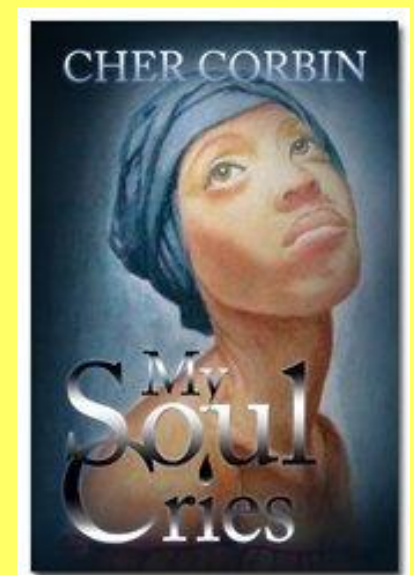
*What book[s] are you reading now?*

I have to admit I am not reading as much general literature as I should because of my day job but I am into my technical art books at the moment, trying to fine tune my skills.

*Tell us your latest news, promotions, book tours, launch etc.*

*What are your current projects?*

My latest work was ARCHITECTS OF DESTINY which is a short anthology of poetry and prose. Again that is an emotional journey, very introspective.

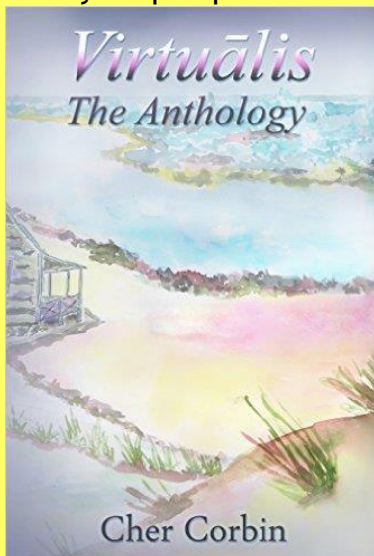




**Do you have anything specific that you want to say to your readers?**

I would just like to say that do not let anyone get in the way of your dreams. Dreams do become reality. And if you have a dream you have a responsibility to go after it, otherwise you are just a dreamer.

I would hope you enjoy my works and I would wish to hear your perspectives.



**Lastly  
Have you read book[s] by [a] Liberian author[s]?  
Have you read any book about Liberia in general?  
Have you considered or would you like to work with Liberian authors?  
What possible areas would you consider collaborating on?**

My first author to read will be *Othniel Forte*. As soon as I can slow down and sit still for a moment. I would welcome working with Liberian authors as we have

different cultural and geographical origins and the interaction would be very interesting.

I would also welcome incorporating my artwork into any of their works as well.

**Cher-Antoinette** is a mother of two, a forensic scientist and is a multiple silver and bronze award winner at the Barbados National Independence Festival of Creative Arts (NIFCA) in Photography, Visual Arts and Literary Arts.

An Honours Graduate in Chemistry from UWI Cave Hill Campus, in 1989 the author gained the recognition of being the first Forensic Scientist in Barbados having achieved her Masters in Forensic Science from Kings College, University of London. She has since had a long and rewarding career in the field and is presently the Director of the Forensic Sciences Centre, Office of the Attorney General.

Cher-Antoinette prides herself in being both left and right brained and demonstrates her creativity as an artist in many different areas. In 2011 she added to her awards by receiving two silver medals in the Literary Arts at NIFCA for her prose pieces INTERVENTION and THE PINK SLIP. The latter also won her the Incentive Award for the Most Promising Adult Prose Piece. She was awarded a bronze in 2012 with THE ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CUSS-OUT and in 2014 two Bronzes for Poetry - FOREVER I WON'T & RE-EVOLUTION. In the Fine

Arts category another bronze for her Watercolour BRIDGE AT THE HOLE. In 2013 her Acrylic painting GEM OF SPEIGHTSTOWN was awarded a Bronze award and in 2014 ST. JOSEPH PARISH CHURCH another Bronze.

Cher's works have been published in St. Somewhere Online Literary Journal, Blackberry - The Magazine, and in four anthologies - Bamboo Press -She Sex, The Barbados National Cultural Foundation's - Winning Words, She Speaks - Woman's Journal, Senseisha - An Anthology on the sensuality of the Barbadian Woman, and The Caribbean Writer 2014.

In December 2013, Cher self-published an anthology of poetry called My Soul Cries and in 2014 VIRTUALIS: A New-Age Love Story and VIRTUALIS: The Anthology.

ARCHITECTS OF DESTINY is the latest anthology that will be published in March 2105.

Her primary media for artwork is Watercolour and she has been exploring Pen/Ink & WC Wash. The cover art for both her works was specially designed by her.

Cher-Antoinette can be contacted at cher.insight@gmail.com and has a social media presence at

<https://www.facebook.com/CorbinGirl>

<http://cher-insight.blogspot.com>

Twitter:

@cherinsight Instagram

@CherAntoinetteStudio

## **Short Story**

### **The Bridge of Sighs**

**by Vamba Sherif**

The October skies had turned violet with the setting sun, and the light formed mosaics on the walls. Every time the water of the canal fluctuated, the light sketched myriads of scintillating images on the walls. I watched the display, the constant play of the light on the water, the squares and rectangles it formed, pouring through impossible corners, through tiny wedges between buildings, red marbled walls and arched façades. On my right, as I walked a crowded street, I saw a waiter in black and white and with a bowtie, standing before his restaurant, his shiny black hair combed backward, and his face and arms tawny from being exposed to too much sun. I could not resist his smile. I must own that the waiters of this city had been trained in the art of baiting. I was led into a cosy restaurant less busy that late afternoon. There were a few diners. The fried seafood, a bowl of spaghetti, and a dessert of tiramisu was not enough to satisfy my hunger, but I was too occupied with finding you to mind. Instead of returning to my hotel, I proceeded onward, stopping to admire masks worn at carnivals, and the

dozens of cards of palaces and churches, of sinewy gondoliers and their gondolas, and of souvenirs intended to quench the thirst of the gullible tourist.

Night was gradually falling on Venice. The poorly lighted alleyways are a haven for lovers, some of whom I saw standing in corners and whispering impossible promises. On a bridge across a canal that stretched into darkness on my left, with a distant light pouring on an anchored gondola and a covered bridge on my right connecting two buildings, I paused to listen with closed eyes to the sighs of the city, to the noise of resounding feet. The sighs gradually formed into a symphony with a familiar tone, and I opened my eyes to see a musician at the foot of the bridge, a young man playing a Vivaldi violin piece. I dropped him a coin for his efforts. I had been looking onto the Bridge of Sighs, which once offered prisoners the last opportunity to see light. But having come to Venice without a map - I was not a tourist but a man in search of someone - I was unaware of that, and instead I edged my way further through alleyways until I reached a park, dark and abandoned, where I walked to the sea. Cruise boats were anchored, gondolas were roaring further away in the nocturnal distance, and an

elderly couple, perhaps in their eighties, asked me to take a picture of them seated on the bank of the sea, with their feet dangling in the cold water. Their faces were creased with age, but when they gazed into the camera, a light appeared on their faces that revealed the passion they still felt for each other.

The windows of this city, dark green, blue or brown, the high façades resplendent under the ever-shifting light on the flowing rivers, are the most original and fascinating aspect of Venetian architecture. Original in the sense that they are an accumulation of diverse influences: Moorish, Byzantine, Roman, renaissance, and gothic. I spent some moments studying those windows. In an enclosed square with high walls, the laundry hanging on ropes tied from one window to another, I paused. It was quiet and the air damp with the fetid smell of the river, which was whispering in a hushed, almost conspiratorial silence. Then I heard laughter full of intimate joy, and I turned to see a young woman in a nightgown standing before a window. She was a Venetian beauty whose curly dark hair fell on one side of her shoulder. I could almost see the whole of her, standing before that wide opened window, with her shapely waist and

ample bosom, a tall woman who, in all probability, when she walked and her heels clattered on the cobble stones of this city, turned gazes towards her. She looked more beautiful in the dusk light, her graceful body covered by a dark night gown. I sensed that she was aware of my presence, though she feigned not to be doing so, her gaze focused on something else. Perhaps she had been watching me long before I noticed her. She must have studied me and as I stood in that enclosed square, making quick sketches of the shape of the windows, the walls, and potted flowers. I thought I saw her smile just before drawing the curtains. For a while I didn't move, trying to make sense of that remarkable encounter. Then I saw two police men moving towards me, and I did not wait to be interrogated.

I had followed a straight route from my hotel in Cannaregio, where, according to legends, Marco Polo once lived, with but few alterations to my course. Heading back to it now, I opted for route in another part of the city. In a window of a shop wedged into a corner of a tiny street was a marionette of a black man. His being there, sporting a costume of a bygone era, must have drawn me to the shop. I asked the lady working in the shop about him.

Othello, she replied, just as I had supposed. It was a beautiful but expensive piece of work, and leaving the shop I wondered what must have become of the descendants of that black man after centuries of intermarriages, for I did not believe in the Shakespearean version of events. I did not believe that Othello had murdered his Desdemona out of sheer jealousy. Somewhere in Venice must live the descendants of these two lovers, with slight traces or nothing at all to indicate their black heritage, the African in them.

Back to my hotel, the air was sultry. Mosquitoes buzzed about me, and despite a cold shower, a sudden but oppressive feeling of the futility of my adventure held me in thrall. I wanted action in a place with little or none, I felt a strong urge to drive a fast car right through its cobble-stoned streets, or plunge into its dark-green rivers to swim them for hours. I rushed out of my room to the street, which was deserted, the restaurants closed. The street could offer me no solace. The sight of it, bare after a hectic day, only heightened the stifling sense of loss, and I rushed inside and spent my first night in Venice without a wink of sleep. For how do I trace a person I had known from my childhood in Liberia in a place as strange to me as his whereabouts?

How do I find you who rented one of my mother's houses, you who were known for never being sick and for cracking jokes in a kind of English peppered with Italian phrases? Was memory in fact playing havoc with my mind? Did you in fact exist? I had come to find you because you were the only person outside of Liberia who could tell me about my childhood, for the bulk of my family members, including my parents, had perished in the Liberian civil war. I wanted to find someone who could assist me with recollecting my childhood, who could fill in the blanks as it were. And I thought you could be that person.

I had always believed in the power of memory. I could recall conversations with my parents at the age of four. But one day, at a music store in Amsterdam, I found some Congolese music my father often played during my childhood. I knew every word of it by heart. But I discovered that day that the music did not belong to the artist I had thought had composed it and sang it. Even the words did not correspond with those I had thrived on. Memory had betrayed me. Perhaps you were merely a figment of my imagination. Certain aspects of life in our household in Liberia still mystified me. I had myriads of questions to ask, for the role each family member



played was often not clear-cut. I thought that my father had more than one wife, for the wives of his many brothers called him *brother*, the same title they used to address their husbands. The extent of his wealth was not definite either - his property was at the disposal of his brothers who took over his gas stations and houses, who took over everything. I don't remember my father ever discussing with his brothers the subject of his properties, which could have made him a very wealthy man, even by Western standards. And my mother, who was as wealthy as my father, treated her husband's brothers equally, even taking care of their children, paying their school fees, feeding them and not holding any grudge against them. Having been brought up in the Netherlands far away from home, I had often wondered who my parents were and what my role had been in that now obliterated family? I believed you could cast some light on that aspect of my life.

I stayed in bed late that morning, hoping to fall asleep, and so missed breakfast: a croissant, coffee or tea, the same meagre breakfast every morning, as I would come to experience during my stay in Venice. In bed, while pondering those childhood memories, I could hear other guests going about their business. My room was large, with a king-sized bed, and the shower refreshing. On the wall were framed imprints of Venice, the houses and buildings represented in blocks, and a Herculean figure sailing the canals. On the outside, there was nothing attractive about my

hotel, except for an engraving of a hunchback on the main door. The hotel owner was an old lady with aristocratic features, her hair always tied into a bun, and with the habit of correcting my Italian. "No, Signor, non é corretto - No sir, it's not correct," she would respond to my attempts at conversation. It did not bother me.

In the afternoon I left my room. The only way I thought I could clear the mystery surrounding you was to visit as many homes and churches in Venice, a difficult task it would turn out. But once made, the decision rid me of the stifling oppression of the other night. I had brunch standing in a crowded bakery, which consisted of olive bread served with melted spicy cheese, after which I had some fresh fruits from a street market. I crossed a bridge over the Grand Canal to San Polo, a quarter with many intricate bends, curves, and closely built homes. My search led me to the Rialto, which was crowded, and I found myself at the market with its wealth of flashy goods. Soon, I was at San Marco Square, with the cathedral built in honour of the patron of the city, St. Michael.

The church was overcrowded, and although it was one of the most beautiful churches I had ever seen, I traded it for a small church-museum behind the cathedral, where I found a place to rest. My solitude was soon disturbed by a throng of people who pushed their way into the church, with cameras strapped around their necks and with guidebooks in their hands, poring over them like prescribed literature. One of

them had locks on the pockets of his trousers. I escaped.

One moment, when my interest in searching for you had waned, after I had inquired from many homes and churches to no avail, I sat down on a bench with the lagoon before me and the gondolas approaching from the distance. There was an island in front of me with the prominent dome of a church. I was singularly aware of myself at that moment, aware of Masakeh, of that particular person with that name, seated on that bench, with chapped lips from the habit of sucking at them, the Masakeh with the flat stomach that would one day turn paunchy. I thought of my life from the moment I could remember staring for the first time at a mirror in our living room in Liberia, and then projecting my life beyond the present to half a century in the future, to an old man seated on that same bench and deliberating on death with an elusiveness that verged on tenderness. The mirror in our house had been sliced into two by a flash of lightening that had struck our home. The lightening had been intended for my father who was a famous judge, for it was believed that the power of lightening could be harnessed by certain people. But my father had deflected it by chanting words from a book of secrets which his father had taught him. As a result the lightening only managed to cut right through the mirror. I must have been six when it happened, which created a legend about my father as being immune to all malevolent spirits and witchcraft, a man so strong that he could face any

calamity. My obsession with mirrors must have begun then, for often in Liberia and later in the Netherlands, I would stare into the mirror. What I saw in the mirror a week before leaving Amsterdam for Venice was a young man who was barely twenty-two when he released an album that changed the course of his life forever. Music was passion. And in an attempt to create a new form, I had fallen back on Liberian traditional music, which I mixed with a jumble of influences that included Qawwali songs from Pakistan, Genawa of music of the blacks of Morocco, Congolese, Hip Hop and others. It had worked. But here I was, in a strange place, in search of answers to questions that have plagued me all my life.

On my way back, I decided to take a gondola, just for the fun of it, and I approached Venice from the lagoon, with a terrific view of the Doge palace, the Cathedral, and the church Santa Maria Della Salute spread out in the distance before me. The image remained with me till I fell asleep that night. The next afternoon, I was standing before a residential building whose occupants could not speak a word of English when I saw the young woman I had encountered at the window on my first night in Venice. My search for you had by then become increasingly elusive. Most people I inquired from, the priests and the residents, even the people at the library, did not know of your existence or refused to help me. I could not have recognised the young lady were it not for her smile. She wore a dark silky blouse and long chequered skirt, and she

came across as a matured lady. I caught a light in her gaze that made my heart skip a beat. She reminded me of how my parents had met in Liberia.

My parents were both on the same campus built by missionaries in Bolahun, a town in northern Liberia, at the turn of the past century. It was in Bolahun that you met my parents. Many Muslim parents refused those days to send their children to school, fearing that they would convert to Christianity or worse become corrupted. But my grandfather, a great Islamic scholar with thorough knowledge of the Bible, had the insight and the courage to send his children, including my father, to school. Standing in line to say the Our Father prayer and sing the national anthem, my mother felt a gaze burning a hole in her nape. She couldn't resist turning around. It was my father's. It sealed their fate, just as another gaze now threatened to seal mine in a different world and time.

I moved toward the young lady, but she backed away and walked on until I lost her in one of the alleyways. Not long after, I met her again in the library around the San Marco Square, where I had gone to continue my search. Her name was Dona, she told me, and we had a brief but rewarding conversation. When I saw her the next time in a café around the same square, she seemed troubled. "What's happened?" I asked. "You are confusing me," she replied and hurried away. Then one day, more than a week into my search for you, I saw her at a restaurant where I was having lunch. **TO BE CONTINUED....**



**Vamba Sherif** was born in northern Liberia and spent parts of his youth in Kuwait, where he completed his secondary school. He speaks many languages, including Arabic, French, English and Dutch, and some African languages like Mande, Bandi, Mende en Lomah. After the first Gulf War, Vamba settled in the Netherlands and read Law. He's written many novels. His first novel, *The land of the fathers*, is about the founding of Liberia with the return of the freed slaves from America in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This novel was published to critical acclaim and commercial success. His second, *The Kingdom of Sebah*, is about the life of an immigrant family in the Netherlands, told from the perspective of the son, who's a writer. His third novel, *Bound to Secrecy*, has been published in The Netherlands, England, France, Germany, and Spain. His fourth *The Witness* is about a white man who meets a black woman with a past rooted in the Liberian civil war. Besides his love of writing and his collection of rare books on Africa, he's developed a passion for films, which he reviews. He divides his time between The Netherlands and Liberia. You can see more of his work on his [website](#).

## *Forgotten Heroes*

**James M. Priest**

(date of birth unknown - died May 16, 1883)



James was a slave who gained his freedom through the generosity of his former master or his wife to be exact. His family is believed to have been born into slavery as well.

He benefited from education with the patronage of his masters and was sent to the colony to explore the possibility of sending others to the colony.

This is something he had in common very few men at the time. Most could not foot the bill of a trip more so do it more than once. This was reserved for the well-to-do blacks.

His favorable results, upon returning to the US, must have contributed to others joining the colony.

Upon his return he furthered his education (1840-1843). He was an ordained Presbyterian Minister and hails from Kentucky.

In the US he was a licentiate of the West Lexington Presbytery. He was the first foreign missionary from McCormick Theological Seminary at New Albany [Indiana] to go to Liberia.

What remains uncertain is if he returned to Liberia with other slaves. For it is a known fact that in his master's will she freed all her slaves if they subscribed to the condition of going to live in Liberia.

After returning to Liberia (under the auspices of the ACs 1843) settled in the colony as a productive son.

Priest rose to prominence when he served as a Justice of the Supreme Court of Liberia a post he held up to his death.

He was the 6th Vice President of the Republic of Liberia (from 1864-1868).

D. Othniel Forte



*Artist of the Month*



**Garmai Klee** is a Liberian Super Model. She has been modelling for top notch modelling agencies around the continent and has been featured in major fashion shows, events or magazines all around the world. She spent some time in South Africa but moves around as much as her work allows. However, she always finds herself back in Monrovia when she can

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SOLVE FOR THE MISSING WORDS

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## *Resident Poet*

### Scars of a tired nation

What more can a country take?  
Stories of children that can't live in peace  
Treating each other like strangers from afar  
The sons returning and the ones they met  
Fighting for a space left by Mama

1980-panic splashed upon the face of Africa's  
oldest child  
Bringing down the walls a century high  
Building another 100ft higher  
Shaking to shreds young old mama  
Promising her a lie to leave her alone

What a tired country she has become  
Standing alone on a continent she blossomed  
Left alone by countries she led to  
Independence

A troubled house is always lonely  
Such a land she stands to be  
Her place in history forgotten by men of time  
Left to maggots and bugs to chew

And spit into history's shredder  
Her prints erased from the archives of  
Africa's glossary  
And left to wander- gathering crumbs

Couldn't her sons keep her diary?  
Of how generous a home she had  
Giving a shelter for Africa's neglected  
Spewing hope into a lifeless continent  
Doomed by colonialism and whisked by fear

She went in shock and comatose  
For years her eyes couldn't blink nor wink  
Only ears of thunder and terror  
With a sigh of relief to live again  
Her candle is lit in a thunderstorm

The scars of a tired nation are eating up  
again  
The face of EBOLA shatters the dream  
To put together a wretched lonely life  
Could this scar flip into a star?  
And shine forever?



*Lekpele M. Nyamalon*

### You Poststockade

Don't smile at me

I was kept in your basement

Like a rabbit

And you never budged.

Fed like a rat

While you looked on

Beaten with catridges

And you looked away.

Why now?

Do you need a friend?

Keep doing your thing

I dread your name

You know it

You can't grap me

Not anymore.

## Poetry Section

Richard Wilson Moss

### Extinction

Eventually we will take a long walk  
Through the final day of a bankrupt circus  
Where performers and performance  
disassemble.

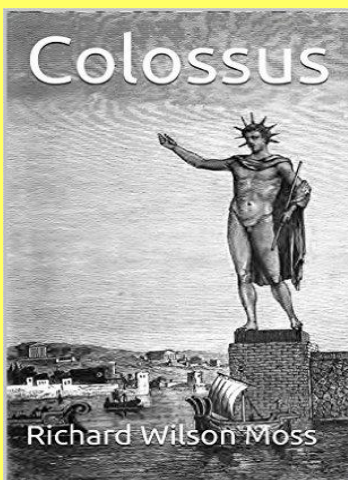
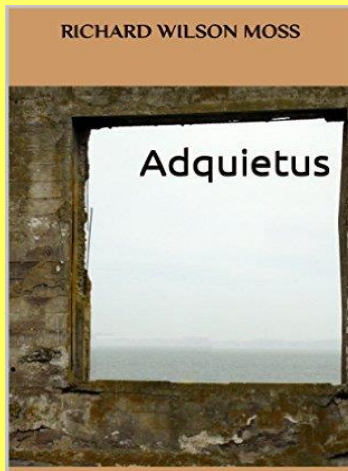
Clowns removing false grins,  
The fire eater rinsing his mouth out and spitting  
Into the sink where the bearded lady is shaving.

Tent stakes pulled up with the aid of tired  
elephants

Rolls of red and blue tickets thrown away  
Stainless steel stands folded and sold to local  
ball fields

And as all gather and grieve of the last show  
forever

Perhaps the last thing to come down  
Is the church of false image  
The hall of mirrors.



### War on a Saturday Afternoon

On the back porch soldiers waiting  
Are brought in to wash the dishes  
Told where to put cups and saucers, stained  
plates

After drying them, some are dropped,  
Rolling and shattering

After fatigue of victories and defeats

Rifles rest on the drying rack

Stacked to the ceiling.

Disarmed they march outside to take down the  
sheets.

### Holy Blue Barrels

I would plumb the last orchid  
Make sewers of its roots  
Let the waste of its beauty  
Feed another less gorgeous.

I would steal furniture of powerful rooms  
Pink ivory and sandalwood  
To give to the homeless to burn  
In holy blue barrels.

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Richard Moss is the author of numerous full length poetry books. You can find his books on every major platform.

*The Lions of Ethiopia*

I  
You are crossing the foreign  
sand of youth  
Panting  
Pawing  
There is no night here  
No day  
Crossing  
Clawing  
  
Dead is the moon!  
Dead is the sun!  
  
Go on with you  
Living has fallen from you  
Like stars dripping down the  
bare arms  
Of a lewd dancing dawn  
  
You that is the distended  
part of me  
As the Kebessa plateau is the  
dry tongue  
Of the Red Sea  
Did you know back then  
Of secrets whispered among  
the leaves  
That cannot be written down  
With a cheap Bic pen  
Or a Cross Brothers of gold  
Did you know that the song  
of Bathsheba  
Caught in the ice  
Crisscrossing the clothesline  
back home  
Waits for a spring of ears  
That cannot thaw  
Even in the deserts of all  
days  
  
Dead is the day!  
Dead is the night!  
  
If it is dead then it is dead  
I tell you  
The day and the night  
Have nothing to do with  
darkness and light  
I tell you again  
It is time to get this right  
  
That night that you know  
That day  
Is as dead as rock

Rising with all its might  
To make mountains of death  
Listless and light  
  
I tell you  
My lion  
Pacing and prowling  
There is no more sleeping on  
dusty plains  
No more lounging in the  
afternoon heat  
Your mate is not returning  
with your meat  
I tell you  
There is no more stretching  
no scratching no  
yawning  
No more idle chewing  
Upon yesterdays chips of  
white bone  
  
Gone is the roaring!  
Gone is the snoring!  
  
You that have feasted on the  
thickest parts  
Did you know your ribs  
protrude  
And you red eyes are yellow  
From the poisons of the grass  
Did you know there is less  
sprinting  
Less sighing in fading  
starlight  
  
No matter the endless  
minting  
Of suns sick with light  
  
But not this one dead in the  
night  
Not this one  
Reasonable  
Irremovable  
But not right.  
  
My lion is shivering in a sheet  
Dark white.  
  
END OF FIRST PART  
  
II  
  
Dead is the winter!  
Dead is the whisper of a light  
snow

In the ear of Israel  
Dreaming of January back  
home  
In Idaho  
  
I go with Israel to find an  
Ethiopian whore  
That was never paid for  
And riding on the back of his  
antique Indian  
Through the turquoise town  
of Asmaria  
I looked for you  
My lion  
And found nothing  
Not one hair from your  
mange  
It was baffling it was  
stressful and strange  
Did you limp back into the  
shade  
Angry and afraid?  
  
Riding  
No  
Gliding  
By hotels of blue and red  
plaster  
Israel called out to all the  
whores  
On the first second and third  
floors  
Huge empty rented rooms  
Cushions piled in one corner  
Where your companions may  
have once  
crouched  
Red gray tongues lapping  
In gold bowels of water  
Tasting of tin  
We go inside we come out  
We go back in  
  
Where is she  
Screams Israel  
Where is my love?  
Where is she  
My lion  
And you  
Are you in shade completely  
black  
Breaking teeth on the last bit  
of Israel's whore  
Are you merely ivory fangs  
found on a dark  
shore



Is that her ear on the red  
floor?

III

An Ethiope washes my hair  
Her dark fingers scrap a  
blonde scalp  
The late shadow of a dying  
hermit crab  
Drags itself across white sand

I am soon sick with the wet  
heat  
Of your breathe upon my  
neck

Strewn around my iron bed  
They argue about the dead  
Dying lions

Fighting over the dead  
While you are already  
Halfway down African Alps  
And I ask them about you  
Between rubs and shampoo  
And these seaman and  
hunters and Ethiopes  
These dying lions  
Rattle yesterdays and  
tomorrows Popes  
They build a platform and set  
up ropes  
Singing

Praise to the savior!  
Praise to the saved!

But if he is dead then he is  
dead

I tell you  
The day and the night  
Have nothing to do with  
darkness and light  
It is time to get this right

Is the unseen lion the only  
sight?

Panting  
Pawing

Shivering in their own blood  
stained sheets  
Dying lions dreaming know  
There is no dawn  
No twilight

END OF SECOND PART

IV

Back in the barracks  
Stereos blasting  
Black Sabbath and Karen  
Carpenter  
Swells of sugared doomsday  
As I stand at the end  
Of a cinder block hall  
And peer through a porthole  
At bleached buses with  
charcoal drivers  
Waiting in formation  
To take radioman to their  
radios  
Iserals from their Idahos  
Buses anxious for fornication  
With the voluptuous curves  
of asphalt lanes

And when it should never  
rain  
It rains

I go back to bed  
In a room where walls  
Rise only halfway to the  
ceiling  
Where African spiders  
Are wheeling and dealing  
With the buzzing of a fly  
And I tell you

I am sick of the long-winded  
sigh

Of dying lions  
A few doors down  
Sick so horribly sick  
Of the crucifixion and  
impossible cry  
Of that insignificant fly  
And but for the sinking stunt  
Of a purple pill

I would rip down the web  
And run down the hall  
To bang on the doors  
Of such sighing lions

I would get back on the bike  
And search for the whores  
Dark and dying  
In the arms of sailors  
Lying lying always lying  
About their love for  
Shakespeare's Ethiope  
The jewel in the ear

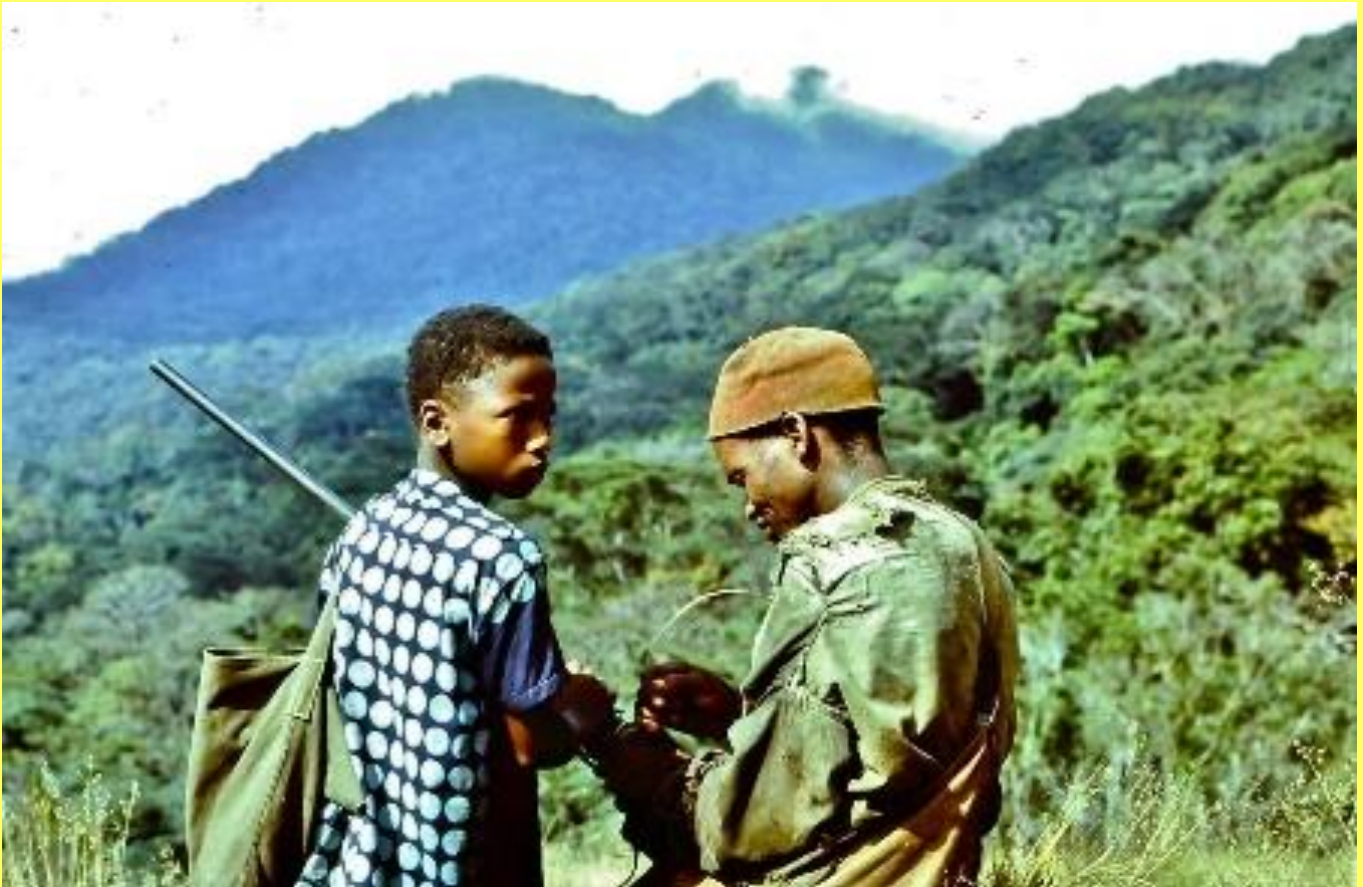
Of every famine year  
Commemorated with statues  
of soap  
That sterilizes the earth as  
each melts  
Leaving outlines of white  
welts.

I tell you  
It is not enough  
To rise in the morning  
Among silence torn open  
Like bullets bursting  
Through one ear and out the  
other  
Torn to shreds  
By the first calls of the  
prayer of the Muezzin  
And Catholic bells attacking  
them  
Echoing across Eritrean  
Highlands  
God at last clearing his  
throat  
After a long night of phlegm

I tell you  
It is not enough  
To eat bacon and eggs and  
drink beer  
With Spec Fives who sit in  
the rear  
Of the Enlisted Man's Club  
Debating death  
It is not enough  
Surrounded by dying lions  
Arguing death  
One insisting  
It is life without breath  
The other sighing  
If you are dead then you are  
dead  
And there is nothing left

END OF THIRD PART

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(Inspired by a trip to Wanigisi in 1970) Photo by Author

*Jack Kolkmeier*

*Seek a Higher Vantage Point*

when looking to scout a  
new direction  
seek a higher vantage  
point  
to see the context of your  
intention  
with a peripheral grasp of  
both pebbles and hills

when searching for  
another path  
among the trees of  
respite and can't

*Seek a Higher Vantage Point*

through the mires of  
discontent  
find a new meander to  
the summit  
for a view of that makes  
an elephant  
an ant  
when wanting a new  
angle  
from which to measure  
the arc  
of resistance to your  
habits

*Seek a Higher Vantage Point*

and to free you from the  
old ways  
to hunter and gather  
fierce new freedoms  
  
seek a higher vantage  
point

*Santa Fe*

Jack once lived in Liberia.  
He is a regular contributor

Matenneh-Rose L. Dunbar

*Mothers Take A Stand*

Sadly she does the  
greatest harm  
Without a heart of care for  
another  
Once her dirty pot is  
boiling it is ok  
If her kin gets bruises it  
means not  
By the way her girl is  
pretty and hot  
Openly you break up a  
woman life  
To traffic your child right  
in your face  
Mothers Take A Stand .....  
Please  
Somedays the act will trail  
the girl  
The seeds we sow must be  
reaped  
Then her own tears will fill  
buckets  
Sorrow shall be her pillow  
at night  
Pictures of the past would  
flashback  
Pains mixed with regrets  
make shades  
Discourage the path of  
sugar daddy  
Mothers Take A Stand  
..... Please  
Dismiss the thrill of fresh  
bad news  
Break her family seal  
loosen a doom  
Build happy homes with a  
locked jaw  
Keep your soul by  
praying your mouth  
Be a positive role model to  
a daughter

Teach her good moves to  
win in chess  
He only needs her time for  
a few hours  
Mothers Take A  
Stand..... Please

*My Country Is Beautiful*

My heart is struck sharp  
with this fledging nostalgia  
Like the loose javelin of a  
strong athlete in full  
display  
Tearing the placid sky with  
a vehemence to proclaim  
hate  
Which leaves a trail of  
tears fears agonies among  
orphans  
In the air over our tender  
sometimes cold old happy  
homes  
Where a multitude find  
succor in arms of much  
lack but glee  
Stringing my rich home soil  
to a place of utter black  
deaths  
.....My Country Is  
Beautiful and I Bellow Her  
Praise  
Equals our most precious  
land to that a an extinct  
prehistory  
Shuns our natural habitats  
for that of some  
preventive existence  
With bone and sinews plus  
zest we straddle strong to  
fight back  
The bane of a sudden evil

as leashed in our ant-like  
walkways  
Bruising our chocolate  
brown hues to bleed away  
our energies  
Championing segregate  
camps right before our  
very two eyes  
Under one roof many  
broken hearts to the  
scrouge of this villain  
.....My Country Is  
Beautiful and I Bellow Her  
Praise  
Our loudest step-out

signals with hands and  
arms opened wide  
Now cast aside to cure a  
festooning ill ravaging our  
mud curb homes  
Far from my kin a pray to  
be united is recited quietly  
as I wave by  
An urge to be firm to  
adopt a new lifestyle  
suddenly so so daunting  
Yes a live reality to readily  
accept else consequences  
are grievous  
Heroes alive our zeal is  
anew a fort to uphold our  
national conscious  
Whatever the odds our  
eyes and mind fastened to  
God we shall win  
.....My Country Is  
Beautiful and I Bellow Her  
Praise

Tsirhc Susej

She is a Liberian Poet



*Varney Gean*

**YEARN**

For education for reverence  
For wisdom for better lucidity  
For happiness while still alive  
For fraternity for prosperity  
I yearn

For companionship for care  
To adore yet still be esteemed  
Find moments to do wonders  
Pray the world finds peace  
I yearn

For today and a great future  
For harmony of every tribes  
A single day without blemish  
Just another time we all laugh  
I yearn

Hum those sweet songs of bond  
For true loyalties we clutch hands  
As one we will make things better  
Be it at present or forthcoming  
I dearly yearn

**Were You There?**

Where were you when I lost my home?  
Where were you when I lost my job?  
Where were you when I was unwell?  
Were you there?

Where were you when I was bankrupt?  
Where were you when I lost my partner?  
Where were you when I was untruly  
blamed?  
Were you there?

Where were you when I slept hungry?  
Where were you when I was raped?  
Where were you when I was depressed?  
Were you there?

Where were you when I needed  
support?  
Where were you when I miserably  
belittled?  
Where were you when everything  
vanished?  
Where were you my dear friend?

Varney is a poet based in Monrovia. His works have appeared in many national dailies.

Darlington Ibe Ifeanyi

*Grace's Chequered World*

Back from the wandering  
Lo the week end lingering  
Through the drape on  
The window guessed out  
Into the compound  
Behold there she was  
Talking to herself as  
If insane  
Hopping and racing like  
A man fed with rum  
Clutching her wrapper to  
Her chest now having  
Readjusted it a million times  
Distorted was her gait  
Confused her mood  
I was curious and felt for  
Her  
My feeling a deja-vu  
Her troubles I must unearth  
After all widows  
Are wives of the living  
And Grace especially  
My neighbor

\*

Her next move was like a thunderbolt

Everything was now clearer  
The deja-vu was over  
Caught in my own world  
I went adrift and  
Remembering the man in distress  
With a helluva stress  
Heaped in his stash  
Waiting for a squash  
Some year s back  
In the home of Ndukaku  
Whose soul was taken  
Some decades to yet come  
Things come  
And things become  
For life is ungood  
If it cannot be groomed

But change changes not  
Like God who fails not.

\*

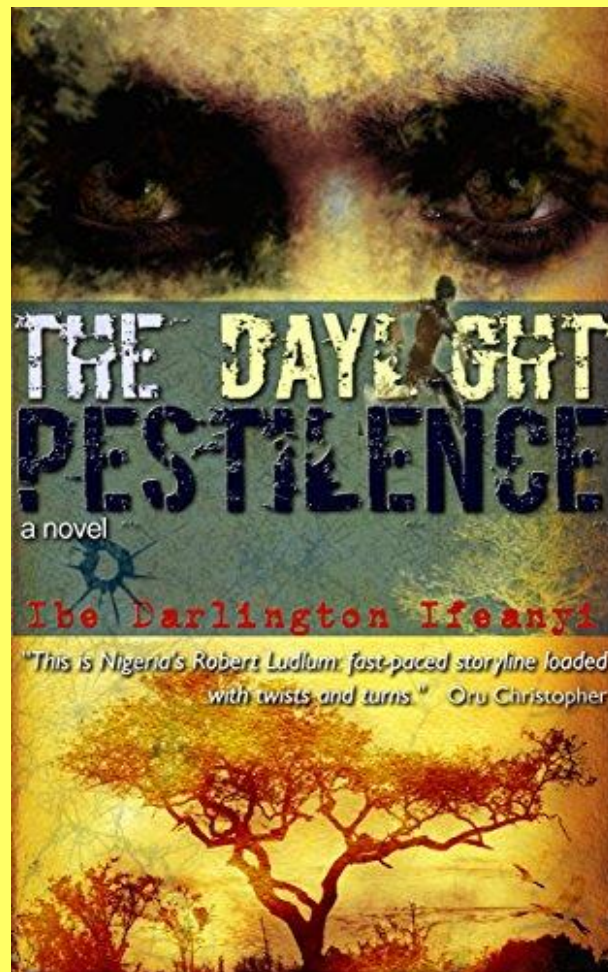
Yes there she was  
Sprawling on the ground  
And crying her heart out  
Rolling from side to side  
And refusing to be consoled  
Questions now started making  
The rounds as to what could  
Have reminded her of her sorrows  
From her sobs she let out the  
Story of how she is uncertain of  
Feeding even tonight  
Little wonder for I know  
The days of her husband  
Her home was home to many  
She was the mother to so many  
But today she is deserted  
And left to her world of  
Confusion and penury  
Really she said time  
Changes and changes itself  
Changes and the rounds are  
The only permanent phenomenon  
But for God who never changes

\*

Be consoled Grace  
Be consoled thou virtuous woman  
Be consoled thou mother of so many  
Though your womb knows no fruit  
Your pot of soup fed many  
Though your womb knows no seed  
Your laps carried many  
Though your womb knows no child  
You nursed a million  
What an irony this life is  
Take heart Grace  
For today you are in sorrows  
But have yet taught us  
A lesson  
Easy goes life  
But it's full of thorns

*When Oga's Wife Farts*

Like one pursued by the devil  
I darted towards the window  
With a force of a snuffed horse  
A rough brush of the blind to the left  
A fervent wish to embrace breeze  
My nose grotesquely distorted like a mating He-Goat  
A stench so powerful it reeked of miasma  
So strong I was awash with goose pimple  
My confusion was palpable I threw a vicious look  
Oga's wife by now suspect  
It must be her and no other  
But ladies don't fart this bad?  
I dare not accuse Agnes  
Even she in all decency  
Eased a fart and still kept an expressionless face  
I stifled my hurt with a face cheerfully glee



Darlington is a Nigerian author and poet.



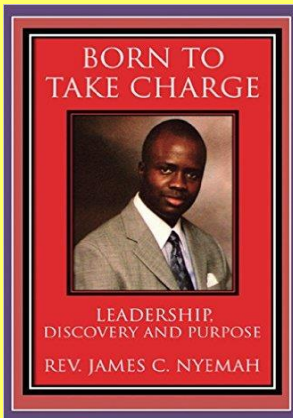
*Between Knuckles; This Shrine*

would the Gods  
not flood  
my navel,  
should I tear  
apart their  
Seed?  
shall I linger  
through the womb  
of maame  
on safety boots  
to where  
the three-paths  
commune to the  
Graveyard?  
should I serve  
frogs with pepper  
when the time  
comes for  
dwarfs to vomit  
the bullets  
of the  
Hunter?  
in this quiet land  
I recall Agya's  
Palms  
quenched fires  
of war drums  
here, beside this  
Sea-bed  
his soul feated  
with crabs;  
turtles.  
an innocent fingerling  
that forgets  
to eat  
Salt  
with contentment  
shall find it  
Groins  
in the canoe  
of the fisherman,  
the elders did write...

*Nana Arhin Tsiwah*

Nana is a disciple of Pan-African Consciousness, a cultural ideologist and a student of Akanism. Tsiwah, a linguist- performist of Mfante-Akan Traditional Ancestry writes from Cape Coast-Ghana.

## Born To Take Charge: Book Excerpt



As good as sleep is, sleeping at the wrong time can disorient us, make us forget important things, and let trouble overtake us.

I understand that sleep is an essential part of our natural existence. Sleeping too much is a problem, yet sleeping too little can be a

problem as well. Therefore, we must have a unique balance of work, play, eat, and sleep for our bodies to function properly.

Follow me as I discuss the issue of sleeping at the wrong time. Perhaps you will discover that some of the problems that affect your life, family, business, or church stem from the fact that you are sleeping at the wrong time.

We should not sleep at the wrong time when there are things to take care of. When we sleep at the wrong time, we give evil people opportunities to mess with our stuff. It is still day; wake up.

### Chapter 3: While Men Slept

We all know that,

*There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens.* [Ecclesiastes 3:1]

So it is with sleep.

King Solomon of Israel said it right when he talked about times and seasons; everything has its own time and season. When things are done in their proper times and seasons, they can better fulfill their purposes; otherwise, there will be a problem. We all know that sleep is good; regardless of our tight schedules and the enormity of our work, we must make time for sleep. When we do not sleep as required, our performances are affected and our bodies are strained. It could also lead to more serious problems. In short, sleep is good; we should all get proper sleep.

When we sleep, we rest from our day's work and allow our bodies to recuperate, thereby giving them more functionality. The psalmist said that,

*In peace I will lie down and sleep, for you alone, LORD, make me dwell in safety.* [Psalm 4:8]

When we sleep we become vulnerable, but the Lord becomes our safety. The writer of Proverbs talks about the assurance the Lord provides when we sleep. He said,

*When you lie down, you will not be afraid; when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet.* [Proverbs 3:24]

This is good to hear—that fear will not be our portion when we sleep. We will not think about what wicked people might do and we won't worry so much; instead, our sleep will be good and sweet. We need to sleep in peace and enjoy the process. We give our bodies good rest and energy for the next day. Interestingly, there is a problem when we sleep too much.

*Sleep is good, but sleeping too much is bad.*

Sleeping at the wrong time is bad; it is dangerous for us. Sleeping at a time when we should be doing something meaningful is a terrible thing. Jesus, in trying to make his audience understand his message about the kingdom of God, said that,

*The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared. The owner's servants came to him and said, "Sir, didn't you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?" "An enemy did this," he replied. The servants asked him, "Do you want us to go and pull them up?" "No," he answered, "because while you are pulling the weeds, you may uproot the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: "First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn." [Matthew 13:24-30]*

In this parable, a man sowed good seeds in his farm, but while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds (bad seeds) among the good seeds.

The enemy corrupted his farm. The good work was tarnished. The man's money and hard work were affected; his rights were violated while he and his servants slept. His hope for a harvest was affected; his resources for the future would be limited. His operations would be adversely affected because his enemy sowed bad

seeds in his farm of good seeds. While the enemy was busy working overtime to corrupt and destroy his farm, the man and his servants slept, only to wake up to the troubling news about the work of his enemy.

It appears as though the farmer forgot that he had an enemy, or perhaps he underestimated his enemy. It could also be that he was familiar with the enemy, but overlooked the enemies' tactics and miscalculated his moves. He planted his farm, but left it without security even though he knew he had an enemy who would use any opportunity to destroy him.

Jesus reminds us about the enemy and calls him a thief when he says,

*The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.* [John 10:10]

I want you to bear with me as I deal with the horrific issue of sleeping, carelessness, corruption, and wickedness in some places across the globe. This reminds me of the problem in the continents of Africa and South America, but most especially Africa.

Somebody has been stealing from Africa.

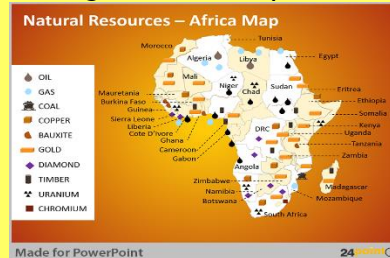
Africa is one of the richest continents in the world, full of natural resources like diamonds, gold, iron ore, bauxite and other fine minerals, oil in land and deep waters, rich biodiversity, plant and animal life, and land naturally fertilized for plantations. Yet it is the poorest and most troubled place on planet earth! Why? Africa, why?

Africa has everything it needs to be self-sufficient and to prosper from the blessed much can sustain Quite history that the of Africa have attracted thieves and lords of wars. They have taken Africa hostage. Please save Africa.



Please excuse me, but I must ask a few questions here. Why does the rich continent of Africa have no food for its citizens? Why is there a lack of good security for our countries? Why is there no cheap cement, nor even iron and steel for our construction projects, when iron ore is

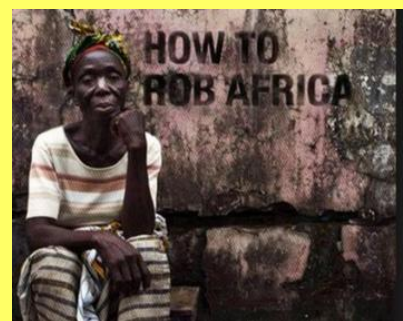
mined in Africa? Why is it that the oil and fine minerals in the earth and waters in America and other Western countries do not cause civil wars or riots, which are commonplace in Africa? Something is not right; something is terribly wrong. We, the people of Africa, must step up to the challenge and fix the problem before it's too



late.

Africa has not truly discovered its own value yet. Out of Africa's own self-ambitions in times past, we have waged wars against our own brothers and treated each other poorly. The West discovered us and scornfully invested in our own wicked passions, leading to a situation in which thousands upon thousands of African slaves were carried away to Europe and America so that they could work in plantation labor camps.

But that's not the only thing; envious of the development of the black man, some people and countries fought hard to destroy every good thing about the continent and its people. They destroyed cities and cultures and any cultural artifacts that spoke of the real history of Africa. In their arrogance and pride, they manipulated the people of Africa, scornfully rewrote their true history, hid their true identities, destroyed anything that spoke of the truth, and introduced false institutions and systems to keep the people down as they looted the land.



Even though slavery ended, a new type of slavery was created to benefit certain groups. After emancipation, the next and current phase has been corruption and plunder. Oppressing groups always find ways to dupe the black man and enrich themselves, even if it means starting conflicts between political parties with the sole purpose of creating a war that gives them an excuse to sell guns and other munitions while they loot the land. Many times, they have ulterior motives as they laugh, pretending to do business, offering aid, or trying to be friends. We



have seen in many cases that, if there is no special interest, they do not go anywhere to offer help unless circumstances compel them to do so.

It seems like the West is telling Africa,

*“Since you Africans are stupid, we took your people for slaves; now, we are taking your stuff.”*

Why does Africa need continual aid from the West—a situation that creates dependency—when the continent can underwrite its own projects and care for its own people? The answer is simple. A seed of distrust and corruption has been sown and is flourishing well among the people of Africa.

Many African leaders trust Westerners more than they trust each other. Nowadays, the common people have also learned not to trust their leaders—and definitely not to trust each other.

The educated West has shown Africans how to outsmart and cheat each other; as they do that, the West siphons all the good stuff, leaving only pocket change for African leaders to squander.

Without realizing it, African leaders have been stealing from their countries and serving the interests of the West, leaving the rich continent full of nothing but abject poverty, sickness, and a lack of development.

Sadly, when you leave Africa and travel to any Western country, you’ll notice a vast difference between the place and people in terms of development. This is so sickening.

How can Africans not see this conspiracy—that some special interest groups are keeping things the way they are so that they can enrich themselves and exert influence and power over us?

A significant number of African nations are on the World’s Top 100 Corrupt Countries list, and Africa is constantly riddled with wars, famine, and disease. Africa has more poor countries than any other place in the world. Why is Africa rich but poor?

I am so hurt every time I think about all the smart, educated, talented, and religious people in Africa who are treated as free labor for Americans and Europeans. Now the Chinese have crossed the seas to take their portion. What is going on, people of Africa? When will we wake from our sleep?

Why do you sleep and let others sterilize your women and infect your people with various

diseases under the guise of vaccines? After some of you learn what development is, how can you not develop your own home? Why don’t you become the change you want to see? Where are the

intellectuals and educated people? Are they sleeping, too? Africans must wake up to the



dawning of a new day, a day of hope for us and our children. Ladies and gentlemen, we must arise!

From the savannahs in Ethiopia to the safari in Kenya and Botswana, and to the Niger delta in Nigeria; then to the Nile valley in Egypt, and on to the tropical rainforest in Liberia and Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe, there must be smart, educated, and intelligent people full of integrity in Africa. We must wake up and do something before it is too late.

It seems as though, as a people, we have been sleeping while the West plundered our land. As a man, it hurts me to see them taking our women and our possessions. If they took our people in the past and are now taking our possessions, what is next? Sell the continent or what? This is so unfair!

I am left to wonder about the place of the Church in Africa. Is the Church, like many African leaders, affected by cheap politics, competition, personal glory, and material goods?

Where is the Church in Africa? Where is the Church that is so full of the power and anointing of God? Where is the Church we hear around every street corner across the continent? Where is the ht prayers filled the darkest skies? Where is the Church where bells ring every Sunday morning? Where is the Church that should stand for God and declare the word of God against the injustices that occur on its doorsteps?

Is the Church in Africa good only for performing



miracles on Sundays—healing the sick and saving a few souls—or can God work in us for transformation and profound

leadership to govern our land and its people?

To the Church in Africa, God says,

*Arise, shine; for your light has come! And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you.* [Isaiah 60:1]

I say, arise and shine for it is time to allow God to manifest his "kingdom come" in Africa. God does not delight in injustices, corruption, and other human sufferings like sickness, poverty, bad leadership, and a poor church with no impact on the land. Let the Church in Africa arise and stand against the intrusion of the enemy.

I have come to realize that God does not just want to see us saved and experience healing. He does not want to simply give us a few provisions so that we can live from hand to mouth. God wants us to take charge of the land.

God wants to see neighborhoods and cities transformed. He wants to see countries transformed, to have law and order and justice served without sentiment. God wants to see businesses grow and great advances made in education. He wants human development and capacity building because we are behind the rest of the world. God wants the best for us. He does not want us to be liable to anyone. We have what it takes to make this happen, but we must open our eyes and guide our hearts accordingly.

*The enemy is tactical; we need to be mindful and act accordingly if we want to move forward.*

The writer of Proverbs talks about sleep, sluggishness, and laziness when he asked,

*How long will you lie there, you sluggard? When will you get up from your sleep? A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest and poverty will come on you like a thief and scarcity like an armed man.* [Proverbs 6:9-11]



There is a serious question we must all answer; the way we answer it determines our course of action. How long will we sleep while trouble is coming? How

long will we fold our hands and close our eyes while everything is going wrong?

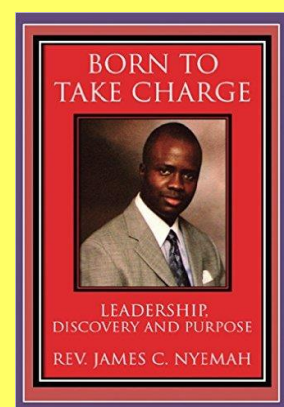
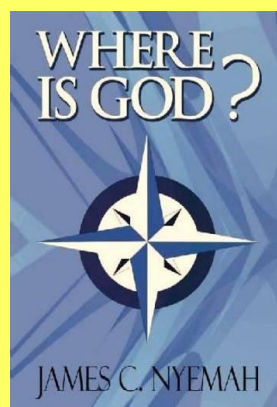
We must arise. We must unfold our hands and wake to the dawning of a new day. We must not sleep and let the vices of life take over. We must not sleep and let the wicked and corrupt people take over our land, take our wives and children, and take our property. We must not sleep and let illiteracy, poverty, injustice, famine, and disorder engulf our society. A new day has dawned; every sleeper must awake from his or her slumber. Wake up because it is time to work.

Today many people sleep and play dead in the midst of important issues. People sleep and play dead in the midst of society's injustices, about which they can do something. That is not good at all.

I pray that all of us will hear the voice of God and take on our proper roles as leaders. I pray that we will not sleep when we are called upon to be leaders and champions.

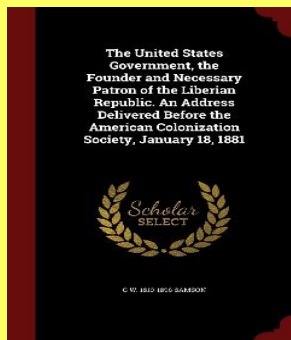
If you were sleeping, wake up; it is time to work. If you were playing dead, wake up because you are not dead; start doing something meaningful with your life. The world is like a grand stage that needs performers. The arena is set. The audience is ready. They applaud top competitors, boo poor performers, and stone non-performers. Arise from your sleep. It is time to work.

Are you ready to perform when it is your time, or will you be sleeping or sleepwalking? The stage is set. The audience is waiting—do something!



Rev. **James Nyemah** is the founder and senior pastor of Africa Faith Expressions in Phoenix, Arizona - USA and Liberia, West Africa. He is the author of two books "Where is God?" and "Born To Take Charge". His leadership conferences has touched more than 5000 pastors and communities in Liberia. Join Rev. Nyemah in his passion to develop the homeland of Africa. Follow him on Facebook, YouTube, Google or at [www.jamesnyemah.com](http://www.jamesnyemah.com)

## New Releases



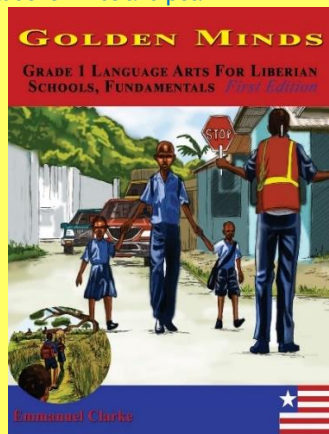
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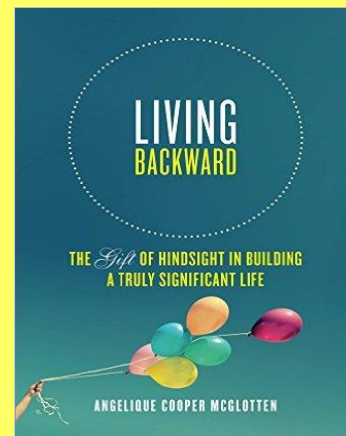
### Golden Minds: Grade 1 Language Arts For Liberian Schools,

Fundamentals First Edition is a book every Liberian first grade student and teacher must use. This book is arranged in three distinctive sections—The Fundamentals, Grammar and Structure, and Hands-On Writing Workshop. The book opens with an introductory chapter that provides an overview using familiar objects to correlate with letters of the Alphabets. Each chapter that follows discusses a key component of the English Language including but not limited to, the use of grammar and structure, phonics, reading comprehension and analysis. In

addition, the book includes a section in poetry, writing and punctuation designed to develop the students’ overall Language Arts skills. This book was written to meet and exceed the national curriculum standard for Grade One English Instructions of the Ministry of Education, of the Republic of Liberia. Golden Minds: Grade 1 Language Arts For Liberian Schools, Fundamentals First Edition is structured as follows: Concepts and Analysis—each chapter introduces key components followed by a detailed explanation. The Concepts and Analysis approach enables the student to think creatively as they relate the key ideas from the book to everyday situations through guided discussions. Teachers will find this method easy when assisting students to decipher important points, which will help the students, build their analytical skills. Hands-On Exercises—each section has End-Of-Section, or follow-up, exercise that reinforces key points from the chapter. The end of chapter review assessment is comprised of cumulative questions from the various sections found within a given chapter. These exercises enable students to investigate the material while reviewing the sectional contents within the chapter. Writer’s Workshop—allows the student to become imaginative by engaging them in a variety of creative writing activities, such as brainstorming of ideas, vocabulary development, deciphering of root word, prefix/ suffix and sentence construction. With a unique color-coded pagination, Golden Minds: Grade 1 Language Arts For Liberian Schools, Fundamentals First Edition, is geared towards the specific needs of 1st grade students. The simple and attractive layout will definitely stimulate the student minds and peak



their curiosity as they navigate through each chapter. This book is a complete Language Arts system which doubles as a textbook and workbook for the student.



Imagine looking back on the sum total of your earthly years . . . and realizing that your reasons to rejoice are far greater than your regrets. **Living Backward** is your invitation to discover the powerful gift of future-oriented hindsight and reap the incredible rewards it offers. As we grapple with today’s fleeting problem or tomorrow’s important choice, the ability to “live backward” provides us with not only a new perspective on our lives but also a powerful tool for creating true joy by fulfilling God’s plan for us. We desire to matter, and God knocks on our hearts, beckoning us to open the door to a life of eternal significance.

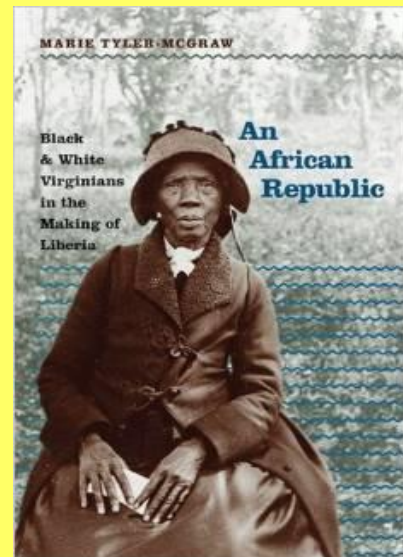
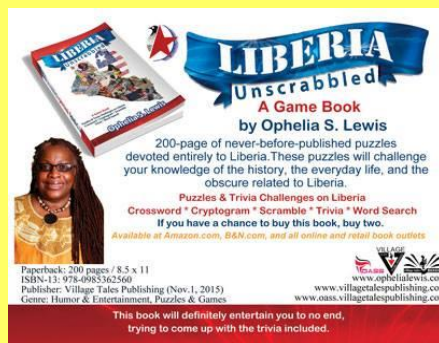
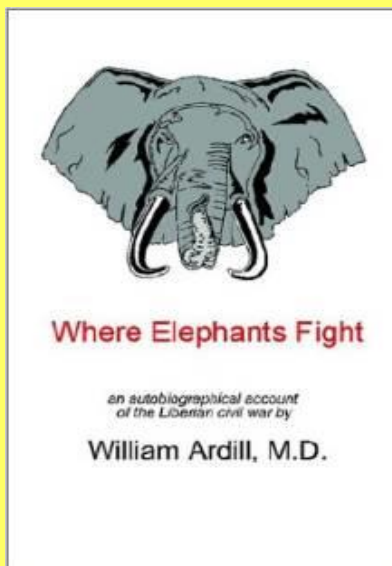
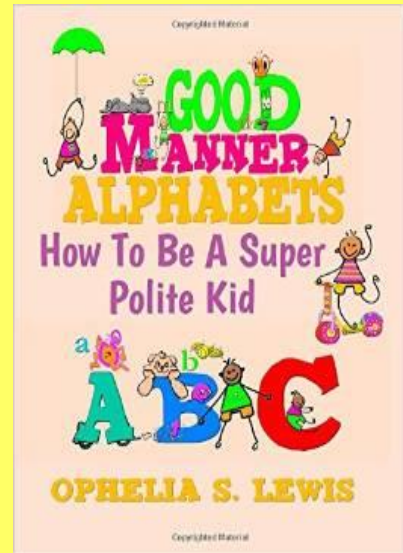
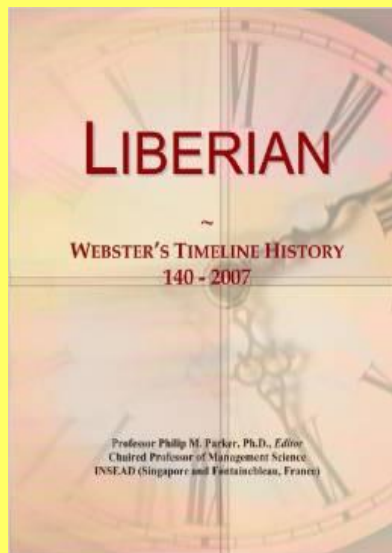
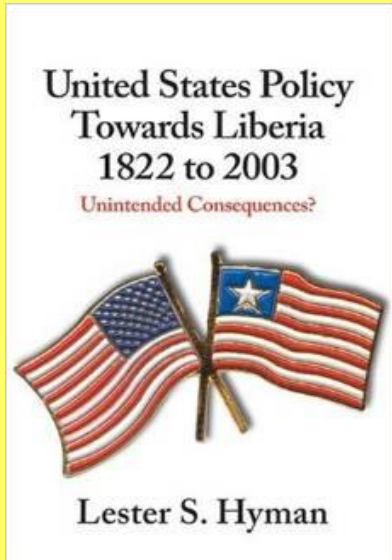
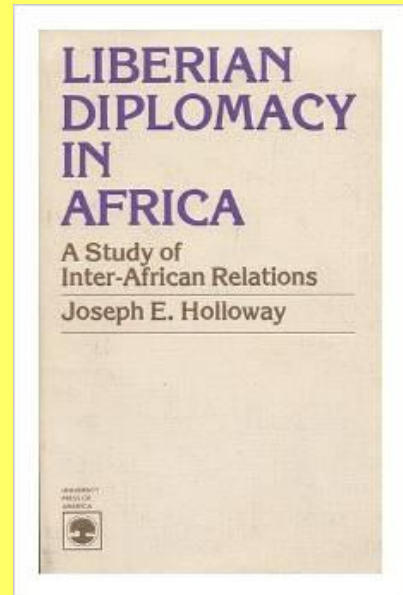
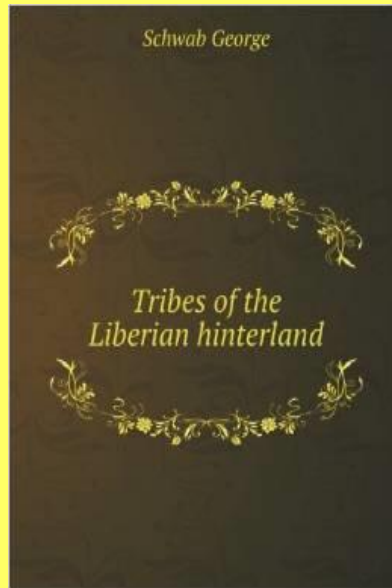
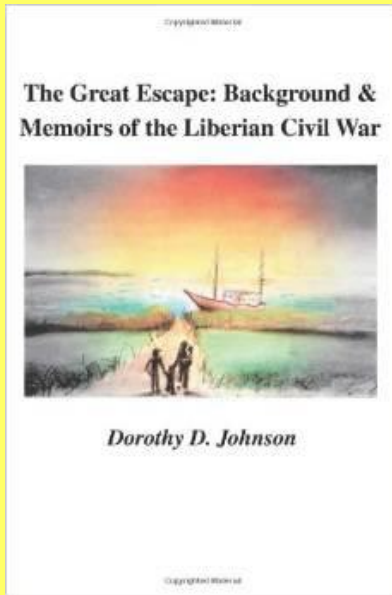
By way of word pictures, analogies, and personal anecdotes, Living Backward facilitates head-to-heart understanding, helping us internalize key biblical principles so we can truly experience their life-changing power. Only then can we achieve genuine success, weave enduring significance into our lives, and make the most of the precious time we’ve been allotted.



Recommended Reads

Recommended Reads

Recommended Reads



**Liberia UnScrabbled** (a game book), grab a glass of palm wine, or Club beer, and solve all the puzzles. Careful, you might learn a thing or two about Liberia. Or more. Coming Soon! **November 1, 2015**



*Around town*



Local Street down town Monrovia



Traditional Dancers

Traditional dances form a major part of life. It is free entertainment. Sadly they aren't paid.



Selling 'Smor-smor' Things

A set of photos of people selling food. This is how the ordinary people survive.



Colorful Local Shops, Waterside



Providence Baptist Church



Real Life Hustle Rounds



Kids Playing Tug of War



Local Arts and Craft Seller



Marines choppering over the City



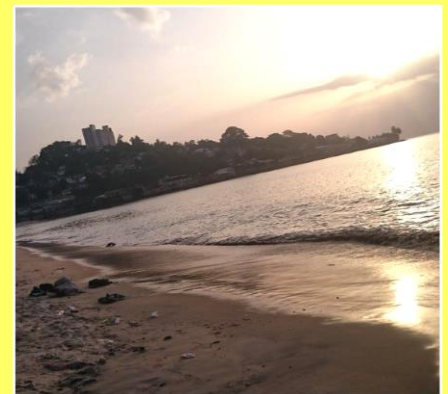
Car Loaders and Taxi

"Carboys" hustling for passengers on the road. This is part of the average hustle



Skyline- Relaxation Time

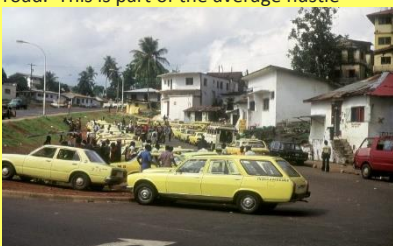
White sand beach adorned with fully grown cocoa nut trees



Beach on the out sketch

Liberia has some of the best beaches in the region. Sadly, many are not developed

Photo Credits: Darby Cecil



An old taxi rank before 1980



MEET OUR TEAM



MOMOH SEKOU DUDU  
SENIOR REVIEWER/CONTRIBUTOR



HARRIET AGYEMANG DUAH  
STAFF REVIEWER CHILDREN'S BOOK



REBAZAR FORTE  
IT/LAYOUT DESIGNER



HENRIQUE HOPKINS  
SEGMENT HOST/REVIEWER



JOSIAH JOEKAI JR.  
CONTRIBUTOR



KULUBA MUCURLOR  
SEGMENT HOST



MARTIN N. K. KOLLIE  
CONTRIBUTOR



NVASEKIE KONNEH  
CONTRIBUTOR



LEKPELE M. NYAMALON  
RESIDENT POET

OTHER CONTRIBUTORS



JOSEPHINE BARNES  
ART CONTRIBUTOR

- PATRICK BURROWES
- JACK KOLKMEYER
- RICHARD WILSON MOSS
- BERENICE MULUBAH
- CLARENCE PEARSON
- VAMBA SHERIF
- PRESTON M. TULAY
- MASNOH WILSON



BRIMA WOLOBAH  
ART CONTRIBUTOR



# Editor

D. Othniel Forte

Here at Liberian Literary Magazine, we strive to bring you the best coverage of Liberian literary news. We are a subsidiary of [Liberian Literature Review](#).

For too long the arts have been ignored, disregarded or just taken less important in Liberia. This sad state has stifled the creativity of many and the culture as a whole.

However, all is not lost. A new breed of creative minds has risen to the challenge and are determined to change the dead silence in our literary world. In order to do this, we realized the need to create a *culture of reading* amongst our people. A reading culture broadens the mind and opens up endless possibilities. It also encourages diversity and for a colorful nation like ours, fewer things are more important.

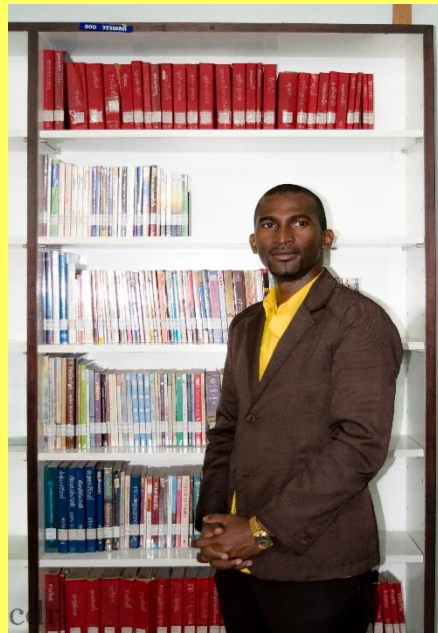


PHOTO BY: CHITO REYES

We remain grateful to contributors; keep creating the great works, it will come full circle. But most importantly, we thank those of you that continue to support us by reading, purchasing, and distributing our magazine. We are most appreciative of this and hope to keep you educated, informed and entertained.

Promoting  
Liberian

Creativity  
& Culture

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Submissions

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# KWEE

Liberian Literary Magazine

Oct Issue

#1015

West  
Point  
Calypso

Poetry Series  
Liberian Proverbs  
Short Stories  
Forgotten Heroes

Liberian Model  
Garmai Klee

Book  
Excerpts



Author  
Danielle Rose