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Liberian Literary Magazine

KWEE

Feb Issue

0217

BLACK
HISTORY
MONTH

**Anthony
Barclay**

**Author of
the Month**

Featured Poets:

Althea Romeo Mark
Richard Wilson Moss
Herbert Logerie
Aken Wariebi
Cher Antoinette
Josiah Joekai Jr.
Jack Kolkmeier
Matanneh Dunbar
Ngozi Olivia Osuoha
L. Christine Brownlee
Keith Osborne

Featured Poets:

Gwendolyn Brooks
Imamu Amiri Baraka
Maya Angelou
Langston Hughes
Rita Dove
James Weldon Johnson
Wanda Phipps
Claude McKay
Quincy Troupe
Phillis Wheatley
Etheridge Knight

Liberian
Proverbs

Liberian Classics
Gifts of the Masters

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 would still 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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Segment Contents

Editorial

In our editorial, one should expect topics that are controversial in the least.

We will shy away from nothing that we deem important enough. The catch theme here is addressing the tough issues

#KolloquaTakeOver

Being true to our Liberian origin, the contributors to this segment make use of something uniquely Liberia to communicate their messages. Colloqua [Liberian English] is one language every Liberian speaks.

Risqué Speak

Henrique hosts this segment. He explores 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.

Liberian Classics

Liberian Classics, as indicated by the name, is a section to show national creativity. We display works done by Liberian masters in this segment.

Authors of the Month Profile

This is one of our oldest segments. In fact, we started with displaying 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; the characters and how they all 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.

Diaspora Poet

Althea Romeo Mark hosts this segment. The Antiguan poet needs no introduction. Her pieces need none either. Her wisdom of her travels are hard to miss in her writings.

Unscripted

As the name suggests, **Cher** gives it raw. The artist, the poet, the writer- anyone of her talented side can show up and mix the science geek. You never really know what will come up until it does.

'Twas Briggin'

Richard Moss goes about his randomness with purpose in his poetry corner, *'Twas Briggin'*. He can assume the mind or body of any of his million personifications, ideas or characters or just be himself and write good poetry. He does this magic with words as only he does.

According to Eliot/Extra

John Eliot is a Welsh-*ish*, Engl-*ish*, Brit-*ish* guy who tells us all these 'grandpa' beautiful Jewish stories. He even has a book called 'Ssh. What can I say; he is an *ish* kinda bloke! ☺ But, don't let that fool you; he has a genuine voice that knows his way with the pen? ☺ Now I am in an *ish* kind of trouble. ☺

Finding Meaning in Everyday Living

Y'all know that one educator that insisted on using the right grammar and speaking better than the "Y'all" I just used? ☺ **Janice Almond** embodies that and more... Her segment is loaded with motivation for the weak, weary and positive dose we all need to hit the road.

Aken-bai's

Hmm, this here is my 'partner', the resident 'love' expert. Yeah I know, you don't want me saying it but those love poems you have been weaving, I have used a few, lol. There you see, I've confessed. Guess what, they worked the magic. ☺ host, **Aken**

Gifts of the Masters

Our masters left us a treasure trove. Now we revisit and feast- that's the idea of this segment.

Poetry Section

The Poetry section is our major hotspot. It is a fine example of how KWEE manages to be true to her desire of giving you the best form of creative diversity.

We have new poets still finding their voices placed alongside much more experienced poets who

have long ago established themselves and found their voice. They in a way mentor the newer ones and boost their confidence.

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 show-case 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!

Yeah, we know, but we wish to keep the magazine closely aligned to its conception- *a literary mag*. You will not lose your segments they will only be shifted. The blog is also attached to the new website so you don't have to go anywhere else to access it. It is the last page of the site- [KWEE](#).

We have new segments hosted by poets and authors from *all over the world*. "I ain't sayin' nothin' more" as my grandmamma used to say. You'd have to read these yourself won't say a thing more.

Editor's Desk

The Year Ahead



Last year, 2016, was an amazing year in many regards. However, 2017 promises a whole lot more in as many, if not more, ways than the previous.

This is our new issue and I am excited for many reasons. We have an improved line up, some segments have changed and others shifted, whilst yet others are, well, NEW.

It appears that we might outdo ourselves this time around AGAIN. Each issue, we see a better [KWEE](#) and for that, we remain thankful to you. Yes you. All of you that stuck by us; that take time off to read and support us in the different ways you do. Thank you once again.

I will try to let nothing out of the bag too early, although I can't promise. The excitement is too much to contain.

Oh heck, here are teasers, but I'd deny it if quoted! Oops, did I just type that? There goes my plausible deniability.

It had to happen right?

Over the year, we received repeated requests for themes. Some wanted to know our themes so they could prepare the right pieces for submission, others I guess are just plan freaks, what can I say.

This however, slightly conflicts with our policy of not interfering with the creative process. We believe creativity should be allowed to run wild, but not necessarily unguided. We have tried not to impose on our segment hosts what to or not to write.

I guess we found ourselves in a fix- to give the readers more of what they want and to leave our contributors to create contents freely. Thus, we found a middle ground.

We will try list our yearly themes loosely and encourage our contributors to avail of them.

However, what fun is there if everyone did the same thing? We love and prize difference, diversity. That, we believe has made us who we are today.

On the one hand, we will endeavor to have at least half of our contents themed whilst leaving the rest up for grabs. This way, we will satisfy both ends of our readership and remain true to our convictions.

We have actually been doing this. The main difference now is that we will make a conscious effort to balance

Therefore, in **January** we bring you, *New Beginnings*.

February is all about our famous *BLACK ISSUE*, which commemorates *Black History Month*. Don't worry love freaks, you'd still get your *Val's* treats.

March is about celebration to women in our *WOMEN ISSUE*

April-We go huge with our *National Poetry Month*. An issue full of poetry.

May-We take time to honor and celebrate

mothers- the special breed that carried and or molded us. It's the *MOTHER'S Issue*.

June-We do the same for the men who are not deadbeats, *DADDY'S Issue*.

July-We pay tribute to nationhood and honor our founders in the *INDEPENDENCE Issue*.

August-We continue the homage with our *FLAG Day Issue*.

September

Anything goes, yeah!

October

We get ready to wind the year down, *Nobel Issue*.

November

We are thankful for things, *THANKSGIVING ISSUE*. We also do NaWriMo. There is no killing of turkeys, absolutely none. ☺

December

The Holidays Issue comes your way.

Well, I knew I said only tips I was giving but it is just hard to contain myself considering all the things that are in store.

If there is one message, you want to take from here, let it be this-prepare for a roller coaster this 2017.

We are bringing you a better KWEE every single issue. We will break the boxes; go on the fringes to find what it is we know you would love.... *Creative Difference- the best of its kind*.

From the entire team here at KWEE, we say enjoy the year, sit back, lay back, relax or do whatever it is you do when you hold a copy of our mag and feast along.

Read! Read! Read!

KWEE Team

Liberian Classic



GUANYA PAU: A Story of an African Princess I

By: JOSEPH J. WALTERS

Guanya Pau holds a special place in Liberian and African literature. It is the first full length novel published by an African.

The first book of long fiction by an African to be published in English, this novel tells the story of a young woman of the Vai people in Liberia. Guanya Pau, betrothed as a child to a much older, polygamous man, flees her home rather than be forced into marriage, and the novel recounts her subsequent efforts to reach the Christian community where the man she loves awaits her. Joseph Jeffrey Walters was a Vai man who converted to Christianity, and this, his only novel, is a remarkably complex work, embracing both Christian beliefs and a deep pride in his African heritage.

RECAP From PART V

GUANYA PAU RUNS AWAY

The ground beneath them literally trembled, the lofty beech and mango tossed to and fro, the pointed tops of the bugbugs were knocked off; a violent whirlwind swept the mountain, the air became charged with a mal-odor almost stifling, and surcharged with a fume as if from the crater of some volcano. Trees

and shrubs were pulled up and hurled high into the air ; the whole forest seemed in violent agitation ; and oh, what must be the fate of the bugbug ! — certainly it will not stand against the onrushing storm when such hardy trees were yielding.

Another prolonged bellow, and a monstrous elephant, transfixed with a spear, tore out of the thicket with marvelous swiftness, followed by some twenty more than half-naked Veys, in full pursuit.

He made straight for the bugbug, as if to hide from his pursuers. But no such intention had crossed his brain.

The elephant is no coward. His aim was to get possession of this vantage ground where he could make a bold fight.

When in front of this, he halted.

The men also halted. Each waited for the other to make the initiative attack.

Finally, a youth of about nineteen years, with more daring than common- sense, advanced nearer, and threw his dart.

The elephant turned around, lifted his snout in the air, and the imprudent young brave went up in the air, and came down crashing against the unlucky bugbug.

The elephant in his turn accidentally struck the mound, crushing in part of a side, making a hole large enough to expose the unfortunate girls.

But this he did not do purposely; he had nothing against the maidens, and probably would have stopped and apologized, had his tormentors permitted him.

With a surprising manoeuvre, he turned about-face, going due north, carrying the eager huntsmen with him.

Then the winds hushed, the tempest subsided, the trees assumed their normal posture, terra firma became steady, the atmosphere received back her redolent and healthful elements.

Peace and order was everywhere restored, and the Borneys brought back to their right minds safe and unharmed.

Chapter VI.

PRINCE MARANNAH.

WHEN travel again was safe, the Borneys crept out of their hiding place, and continued their journey. At twilight of that day, they came to a large rice farm. The people had ceased working for the day, and had gone to the village, at the farther end of the farm. The crackling notes of dumboy, and the sweet odor of palaver-sauce and palm butter (fine African dishes), reminded them of the good things they had left behind.

After it had grown dark, and they had disfigured their faces beyond recognition, they came into the village, and mingled with the crowd that had assembled before the king's house. The presence of Zobah with the particular cymbals, songs and dance, together with the peculiar attire of the participants, the disfigured and powdered faces, the manipulation of hair, so that it or its substitute stood perpendicular on the head a foot high, beads tastefully arranged around the neck and waist, and many other nameless appendages which baffle masculine vocabulary to find names for—these indicated that the celebration was that of a wedding.

The girls recoiled at the thought of another innocent damsel decoyed into the trapper's meshes. They were, therefore, anxious to learn something about the couple; for their breasts were heaving convulsively because of the injustice heaped upon their sex. They also startled at the idea of the women around manifesting such great

enthusiasm over the same. It was true, as Guanya Pau had said, that they were both ignorant and blind.

Accordingly, when the chorus had sung, or rather had hallooed themselves hoarse, the door of the king's house was opened, revealing a large room, on whose hard dirt floor-mats of matchless whiteness were spread, on which were massive bowls of food. After dispatching the palatable dishes, then came the climax.

The king, with his own hand, opened case after case of Holland gin until many were intoxicated. Would that I were allowed here to tell my readers something about the effect of rum and gin on the heathen.

But my feelings would lead me too far off, and besides it is irrelevant to the story. Suffice it for me to say that the heathen, at his best, is little better than the beast, and can you contemplate his condition after imbibing this distillation of hell}

After the feast, reports of several guns were given, and the crowd dispersed. Guanya Pau then secured a conversation with certain women of the place, who told them the following story:

Young Prince Musah was travelling incognito, when he made a visit to his old home, where he was born and reared, a village, as he called it, "of lofty palms and pretty women."

When he had sauntered through the glens and dells of his boyish haunts, along the shady banks of streams where he used to listen to the sweet warble of the mocking-bird, and watch the squirrel prance and chirp, and had strolled around refreshing his spirits with reminiscences of by-gone sports, he

decided to make the visit more remindful by-taking back with him one of the pretty Borneys.

He had not long to make up his mind which of the many maidens he should choose, as the only satisfaction he required was a face fair to look upon, and one pleasing to the eyes (a fault common with African youths).

Musah made his choice, and found out her guardian, who told him that the girl was sold, intimating at the same time that the where-about of her lover was unknown to him, he having left the country when she was quite small. But the possibility of the Prince losing this sweet girl, made him exert himself to the utmost to get her.

He therefore doubled the dowry, and promised to make her his head wife, arguing withal the absurdity of hoping against hope the return of the vagabond lover. Adding that such action on the part of a lover indicated that he was not concerned about her ; "for men are generally," said he, "anxious about those to whom they are attached, and show this by their frequent presence and their attempt to cultivate acquaintance." "I can testify to this," continued he, "**from personal experience."

Then the Prince dwelt largely upon his worth, becoming ever eloquent, giving true examples of persuasive oratory. He was a natural orator, and he knew it, and he knew besides that with his voice he had influenced the most fastidious maiden.

The guardian, overcome by the Prince's offer and logic, sat still for a while plunged in deep meditation ; then he looked up into Musah's face, as if to study his physiognomy, looked off

into space, scratched his head, and drew a deep* breath.

His eyes then fell upon the timid Borney, who was standing behind the mat, pretending to be engaged in the arrangement of her beads!

"Borney, child of the patient heart, and idol of my house," said he, "**are you willing to forego your husband who is lost to you and me, of whom during these many moons the sun has run his course, no wind has brought us intelligence ? Surely such ill becomes a lover.

I fear he does not care anything for you. But he may be dead, my child, and in his grave, who knows ; for though we feed and nourish our dead, yet you know that no correct tidings do they send us.

But, Borney, be not persuaded. In this matter I want you to be alone in your decision. Would you not though prefer this stranger, a Prince from the Pisu, of noble mien and warlike appearance ?

Let your heart answer, Borney ; but for my part, I would prefer this gentleman, though I shall not influence you."

Whereupon he swung the mat back, revealing a shy maiden of "sweet sixteen' of pretty face and figure, in a profusion of blushes.

The truth is, the girl had no decision to make, as her guardian had implied in his questions what course she should pursue.

So she, without further ceremony, took her stand beside the noble young prince, and whispered, amid sobs and blushes: " I shall be your head wife. Prince Musah."

*****To be continued!*****

In Celebration of Bai T. Moore *Ko Bomi Hee M Koa*



THIS VERSION OF A GOLA POEM BECAME VERY POPULAR AROUND 1956.

Bai. T Moore

Ko Bomi Hee M Koa [Full Version]

Gola Version**

koa mu wo yeye
o hinya kpo goo mbe
bomi hee m koa
ko mi nyinia kei ma
ma jeima wuye m zoo

koa mu wo dada
o hinya kpo goo me
ko bomi hee m koa
ko mi nyinia kei ma
ma jeima wuye m zoo

koa mu wo siafa
o hinya duaze n noo
ko bomi hee m koa
ko mi nyinia kei ma
ma jeima wuye m zoo

koa mu mambu
o wande gongoeh
ko bomi hee m koa
ko mi nyinia kei ma
ma jeima wuye m zoo

koa mu jamba
o wande deve eh
ko bomi hee m koa
ko mi nyinia kei ma
ma jeima wuye m zoo

Ko Bomi Hee M Koa [Full Version]

English Version

go tell mother
to bring my root pot*
to bomi i'm going
where i'll do my stuff
and sweat it out hard

go tell father
to bring my root pot
to bomi i'm going
where i'll do my stuff
and sweat it out hard

go tell siafa
to bring his duazet**
to bomi i'm going
where i'll do my stuff
and sweat it out hard

go tell mambu
to stop worrying
to bomi i'm going
where i'll do my stuff
and sweat it out hard

go tell my jamba
to cease advising
to bomi i'm going
where i'll do my stuff
and sweat it out hard

**The Gola tribe is one of the tribes in Liberia. They are often believed to be one of the earliest groups to migrate to the landmass we today call Liberia. Their language is also called Gola. They are one of the local tribes that lost their script over time because of inter-tribal conflict and disuse.

Today, the **Gola Script** is considered one of the 'dead scripts'. There are no known speaker and hardly any full version of the script. The text above was Mr. Moore's '*anglicized*' or '*Romanized*' version. It was not written in the original script.

The Gola Script is one of the six indigenous scripts developed in Liberia, making Liberia one of the only nations to have developed as many indigenous scripts all of which are unrelated to the other.

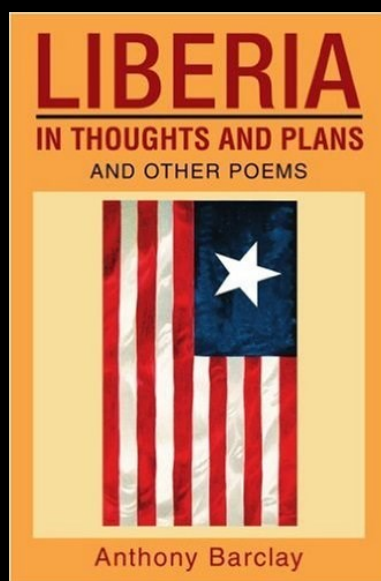
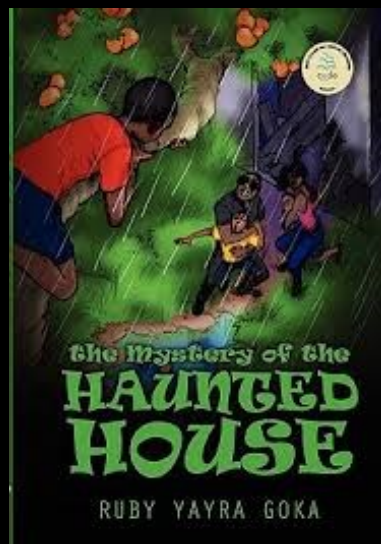
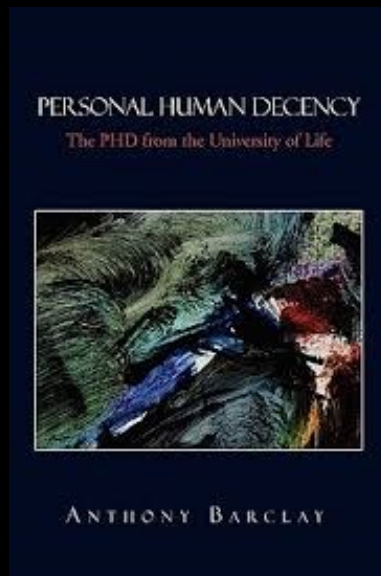
Authors of the Month Profiles

ANTHONY BARCLAY



Anthony Barclay

Anthony Barclay, a Liberian national, has studied and worked in the area of national and international development for over a period of 35 years. He currently holds the position of Senior Advisor to the Executive Director for Africa Group I (EDSI4) where he serves as an Executive Board Official at the World Bank Group in Washington DC USA. Before joining the World Bank, he held several senior-level positions at national, regional and international institutions, which include the Liberian Institute of Public Administration, the University of Liberia, United Nations Development Program, the Central Bank of Liberia, the African Capacity Building Foundation, Zimbabwe and the Economic Commission of West African States/Nigeria. He has also rendered consultancy services to USAID, UNECA, UNDP and the Government of Liberia. He further served as a Board member of two non-profit Liberian development organizations in the Diaspora and is a member of several professional organizations.



RUBY YAYRA GOKA



Ruby Yayra Goka

Ruby Yayra Goka (born 1982) is a Ghanaian dentist and an author who is best known for being a multiple Burt Award for African Literature winner.

Ruby Yayra Goka is the daughter of Simon Yao Goka, a retired diplomat, and Lydia Aku Goka, a housewife. Her family moved to Ethiopia when she was two. There, she attended the Peter Pan International School. When she was six, her family moved back to Ghana and she continued her education at the St. Anthony's and Achimota schools both in Accra.

She obtained a BDS from the University of Ghana in 2009 and worked for two years at the Ridge hospital in Accra.

She later moved to Sogakofe where she worked for two years at the South Tongu District Hospital. She became a member of the Ghana College of Physicians and Surgeons in 2016.

Our Spotlight author is a young Liberian making inroads in youth advocacy

AUTHOR INTERVIEW

ANTHONY BARCLAY



Liberian Literary Mag conducted an interview with

Anthony Barclay

LLR: First, we would like to thank you for granting this interview. Tell us a little about your education, upbringing, hobbies etc.

I am a Liberian dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the application of it towards problem solving and contributing to making life meaningful and enjoyable to the best of my ability. I have good interpersonal skills and cherish the opportunity to work with people irrespective of their ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status or socio-political orientation. I am a good listener and take other people's point of view into consideration

without compromising my integrity and trustworthiness. I take my commitments seriously and do my best to live up to them.

I enjoy reading and writing and constantly seek ways and means to enhance both with a view to making each personally meaningful and professionally rewarding. I am also keen on analyzing issues before reaching major decisions in my life's undertakings. In this regard, I am always trying to improve my analytical skills so as to transform related data into useful information.

Academically, I studied economics, development planning and public policy and administration at universities in Liberia and the United States. My work experience, spanning over 35 years, fall within these disciplines with a development orientation. I have written and published a number of development-focused articles and two books of poetry.

I consider myself a Liberianist and am interested in collaborating with others with similar interests bent on having a positive impact on Liberia be it through literature, socioeconomic research or development policy, program planning and implementation.

Why Writing?

I assume this question is an inquiry to know why I write. Allow me to provide a nuanced response through one of my poems on page 10 in my book titled, Personal Human Decency: The PHD from the University of Life. The title of the poem is Why Do I Write

Why Do I Write

I write to share knowledge; provide reasons to have courage.

I write to raise questions appraise answers.

I write to be informed; to learn, to help people perform and earn fairly.

I write to right the wrongs that's been around so long like sin deep down within all parts our hearts and minds

*I pray
one day
I will
succeed.
Indeed,
that's why
I need
to write.
Indeed,
that's why
I write
and that's
a fact.*

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

- *7 Habits of Highly Effective People, by Steven Covey*
- *How to Win Friends and Influence People, by Dale Carnegie*
- *The Wretched of the Earth, by Frantz Fanon*
- *Things Fall Apart by Chinua Achebe*
- *Long Walk to Freedom: An Autobiography of Nelson Mandela by Nelson Mandela*
- *Africa Must Unite, by Kwame Nkrumah*

How Do You Approach Your Work?

I think about what I need to do and develop a work plan that establishes priorities, identifies the necessary resources, acquires them and sets specific timelines with built-in flexibility.

What themes do you find yourself continuously exploring in your work?

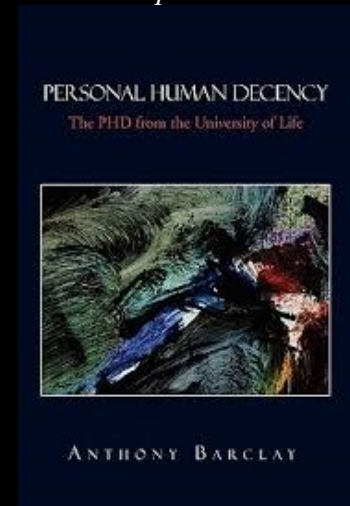
Pursuit of success factors with persistence and finding the appropriate balance in my work activities.

Tell us about your book



*My last published book, *Personal Human Decency: The PHD from the University of Life*, is a collection of my poetry. The poems are written with a view to providing insightful reflections on the attributes and imperative for cultivating what I term “personal human decency” in one’s personal life and in the process of national development with a focus on Liberia. The book*

discusses, in poetic style, the country’s history, including its 14-year civil war and the post-war challenges and opportunities for recovery and development.



It advocates the need for patriotism, peace, knowledge, skills and integrity.

Furthermore, it conveys an overarching message that development should not be regarded solely by the level of material wealth, but also by how it touches human life, and whether it protects or undermines the dignity of people.

What inspired you to write this title or how did you come up with the storyline?

My ardent desire to contribute to the enhanced understanding of the Liberian situation and to advocate for people to get involved meaningfully in the development process

same time, developing and nurturing the attributes of human decency and integrity. Given my love for poetry, I thought that there would be an added value to presenting the message with poetic style and elegance through which, despite the important narrative, some readers may also find it refreshingly entertaining.

Is there a message in your book that you want your readers to grasp?

Concisely, the message is that the imperative of human decency, respect and making positive contribution to a national cause cannot be overemphasized.

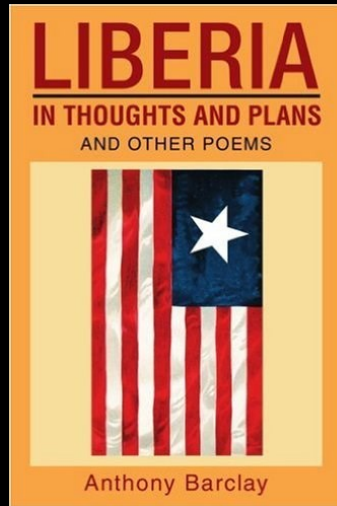
Is there anything else you would like readers to know about your book?

The book is available on line including Amazon, and Barnes and Noble outlets, amongst other sources. I can be contacted yalcrab77@yahoo.com

Do you have any advice for other writers?

My experience tells me that in, general, the hallmarks of success are the following: a deep and abiding interest in one's

aspirations; courage; hard and honest work; effective collaboration with others; and sustaining efforts in achieving one's set goals. My advice to other writers would be along these lines.



What book[s] are you reading now? Or recently read?

Between the Kola Forest and the Salty Sea: A History of the Liberian People Before 1800 by C. Patrick Burrowes published 2016.

Growth of the Liberian State: An Analysis of Its Historiography by Clarence E. Zamba Liberty, published 2002.

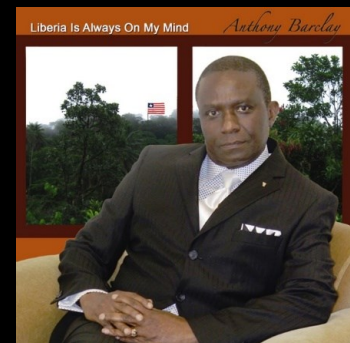
The Liberian Way: Breaking the Cycle by Olubanke King-Akerele, published 2016.

Prelude to Political Economy: A Study of the Social and Political

Foundations of Economics by Kaushik Basu, published 2000.

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

I am in the final stage of publishing two book: (1) a book of poems; and (2) a collection of historical Liberian Independence Day Orations 1855 – 2000.



What are your current projects?

See answers to number 12 above.

Have you read book[s] by Liberian author[s] or about Liberia

Yes, I have read several completely and sections thereof.

Any Last words?

I thank you for the opportunity to fill-in this Interview Questionnaire and look forward for the next steps.

Diaspora Poet

Step to Freedom

Eyes slammed shut by fists,
she still remains
his sparring partner.

We have tried to lift the blinds,
shed light on
her boxing-ring scene.

The step to freedom
too far a vision,
we have not convinced her
to walk away.

© Althea Romeo-Mark 12.12.16

Cutting Patterns

I sketch you in my mind,
someone who would be the perfect fit.
Cut your length to my desire, not short,
rather take up hems than let them down—
thinking of my progeny.
Ah, this pattern of a fictional man
that must fit right.

When fitting, there are places that
need tucking in—too big a personality
may be overwhelming. And
places that
need letting out—too tight, constricting to
movement.

I will throw this pattern out and start anew.
Draining, this business of designing and cutting patterns.

Should I not choose something ready-made?

© Althea Mark-Romeo 16.03.2012

Althea Romeo-Mark



Born in Antigua, West Indies, [Althea Romeo-Mark](#) is an educator and internationally published writer who grew up in St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands.

She has lived and taught in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, USA, Liberia (1976-1990), London, England (1990-1991), and in Switzerland since 1991.

She taught at the University of Liberia (1976-1990). She is a founding member of the Liberian Association of Writers (LAW) and is the poetry editor for **Seabreeze:**

Journal of Liberian Contemporary Literature.

She was awarded the Marguerite Cobb McKay Prize by **The Caribbean Writer** in June, 2009 for short story "Bitterleaf, (set in Liberia)." **If Only the Dust Would Settle** is her last poetry collection.

She has been guest poets at the International Poetry Festival of Medellin, Colombia (2010), the Kistrech International Poetry Festival, Kissi, Kenya (2014) and The Antigua and Barbuda Review of Books 10th Anniversary

Conference, Antigua and Barbuda (2015)
She has been published in the US Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, the USA, Germany, Norway, the UK, India, Colombia, Kenya, Liberia and Switzerland.

More publishing history can be found at her blog site:

www.aromaproducts.blogspot.com

Resurrected Master

Edwin J Barclay



This series focuses on the writings of one of the literary giants of Liberia. Unfortunately, more people remember the man as the politician or the masterful lawyer.

Arguably, the Barclays [he and his uncle, both presidents of Liberia] were the sharpest legal minds of their times, rivalled only by an equally worthy opponent JJ Dossen.

What we try to do in this series is spotlight the literary giant, E. J. Barclay was. We attempt to show the little known side of the man- free from all the political dramas.

The Quest

Saw you my love as she fled far
away,
Down by your waves, O sea,
Fleeing in haste at the first smile
of day, —
Hastening away from me?
Tell me, O tell from your
mystical spray,
Saw you my love to-day?
But the sea growled in anger and
answered me naught,
Down by its rock-bound shore;
And I took my lament and my
sorrowing thought
Far from its furious roar:
But I left it my curse! — let it
roar, let it roar! —
Ay, I cursed it forevermore!
Then I turned to the shrubs that
encircle its verge,
— Sentinels guarding the Coast
— ,
And I lifted my voice o'er the
din of the surge
And questioned the spray-
kissed host:
"Saw ye my love as she
wandered this way,
Just at the birth of the day?"
But the shrubs answered me
with an irony sore:
"Ask of the clouds thy love!"
Then I cursed them too, and my
agony bore
To the shade of a neighbouring
grove,
Where I brooded my sorrow in
that place of delight,
Awaiting the coming of night.
Soon the phalanx of Night with
a steady advance
Conquered the monarch of day;
And life's revels and riots,
pretentions and cants
Died with his flickering ray.
Then I rose in my anger and
questioned with might:
"What of my Love, O Night!"
Retrieve thou man's edenic fall!"

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#KOLLOQUA TAKEOVA

In Liberia, the closest thing to pidgin is the Colloqua [Liberian English]. It is the one thing that every Liberian understands and or speaks. It is tonal and has roots in the deep southern belt of the US. There are elements from the Caribbean and West Indies adopted due to the transatlantic slave trade.

Unfortunately, this rich language has received very little scholarly study. This however, has not limited its growth. Regularly, new words and phrases are added. Its growth is alarming. It's used in more than the markets and streets it used to be restricted. Currently, many radio programs are delivered in this medium and serious advertising goes on using the Colloqua.

Marketers, it seems are not the only ones cashing in on Colloqua, the music industry over the last five has hugely vested in it usage. This is greatly responsible for the growth in the industry. Their movie and film counterparts are growing into tapping into this market.

Sadly, it seems only the academia and writers that are not making major usage of it. This is partly due to the stigma once associated with the usage of colloqua- it was once believed to be used by the with little formal education.

Here at KWEE, we break barriers. We do the unexpected we keep finding new frontiers. We threw the box away long time just o swim in the open sea of creativity.

This segment translate works into Colloqua or create new, original ones. Our hosts will explain things so our non Liberian readers can enjoy the beauty of the pieces.

Ay Ray

Eeryweh you go
Ay Ray
Eeryweh you turn
Ay Ray

Young geh dem gapping
rate high
Dey can't ride charro on
anyone
Young boy dem eye linking
.....gari soaking
Dey turning de ollor side
nah... crossing owor

NGOs eye ray, their packays
geh holes

Godma dem with olden
time sor-beh
jeh seeing their slippa
Tay tays
Godpas, with their big
gut dem
can't even go one round
seh

Smor chirren frustrated
dey hungry
So Dey can jeh cuss bad
bad way
Even young baby dem
spacing on us
Dey born way der eyes
open becuz
dey wan make sure Da nah
clem milk their ma dem
giving dem.
Dey wan beachnut and
cerelac and....
Dey NAH wan cocodolo
and portor portor
Ay Ray ewery weh. I say de
whole town Ray, dey whole
contray Ray.
Ay Ray so much dah ley flag
nah geh weh and blu on it
Ay MY pepo, I say ay dam
ray yah.

@ Forte Othniel D. addresses
hardship in a society where a
few has plenty.



Born in Voinjama City Lofa County, **Kpana Nnadia Gaygay** is a product of the Bromley Episcopal Mission School- an all girls Episcopal Church of Liberia boarding school. She began her educational journey at Voinjama Public School but was interrupted due to the civil unrest and her family moved to Monrovia. A lover of the Sciences, Kpana is currently pursuing a degree in Biology at the University of Liberia. For her love of books and writings, she uses her free time to write short stories and poems.



Thelma Teetee Geleplay

is a blood-bought Christian (Message Believer), an entrepreneur, poet and Marketer

Unscripted

Cher Antoinette



Barbadian Forensic Scientist, Visual Artist & Writer, **Cher Antoinette** is multi-faceted and has been successful at NIFCA in Photography 2009, Literary Arts 2011/2012 and Fine Arts 2012/2013.

She has published a poetic anthology *MY SOUL CRIES* in 2013, *VIRTUALIS: A New Age Love Story* in 2014 and *ARCHITECTS OF DESTINY: Poetry & Prose* in 2015.

Her artistic journey started in earnest in 2014 where she decided to let her work speak to her life. A self-taught artist, the process included finding what media she was most comfortable with and resulted in works of Watercolour, Pen & Ink, Charcoal and a multi-media mix of all three.

Her timeline history to date is exemplified by *ENDANGERED, ARCHITECTS OF DESTINY, UNMASKED & COLOURS OF MY FREEDOM*. "The sky is but a stop-over on my journey to the Stars."

MUD PIES AND ENGLISH ROSES

"Aie, Aie, there it goes Darren, there it goes!" Danella was screaming with glee. The younger of the twin was screeching at the top of her lungs.

Her brother was running forward and looking back at the same time at the small but beautiful kite that was rising, and rising in the sky.

"Look Cindy, look!" Danella shouted at me.

It was early Saturday morning, and it was sticky hot. I hated being outdoors, I loved the quiet of my little space in our house where I spent hours alone with my books and art.

But, I also loved my best friends Danella and Darren who were quite the opposite of me. They were skinny and full of life and I was chunky (I never used the 'f' word) and preferred less energetic activity.

"Come on," she pleaded, pulling my hand and jump starting my clumsy run. The flip-flops I had worn to just 'go outside' were not the best choice for running and I kept

tripping on the straps and stumbling. Danella was still screaming and finally let go of my hand.

Not a good idea, "Ahhhhhhh,"....I fell, face down, in the marl, humiliated.

Darren and Danella had come over that Saturday morning as we were on a mission to make the best exercise book kites that there ever was. I was responsible for providing the strips of cloth for tail and the sticks for bones.

The evening before I had scrounged through my Gran's old sewing scraps and found

some nice bright pieces that would catch the sunlight as we hoisted our babies to the heavens - red, blue, lime green, purple, the colours of long forgotten frocks.

I filled my pockets with the materials and slowly tip-toed past my gran's room. She was having her five o'clock snooze and a rattling heralded each step I took on the loose boards snort from Gran's equine nose.

I headed towards the back yard and the old tool shed - my source of bones awaited. The yard broom was propped in the corner, newly purchased from the old man who peddled them in our village.

This fine specimen was made of the middle ribs of the dried coconut tree fronds, stripped bare and cut into precise lengths of about three feet; held together with string at the top and then collared with a used Trout Hall Grapefruit Juice can.

As I moved to the corner of the tool shed and reached for the broom I realized the top sticks were moving; they had come to life.

"Ahhhhhhhh," I screamed.

A huge wood slave jumped off and barely missed my right leg; that seriously gave me the willies. The critter then scurried up to the exposed ring beam and stood there glaring at me, ready to pounce again.

I quickly grabbed the broom, knocking over some paint tins in my haste, and ran out of the shed.

Closing the door, I stood still for a few moments catching my breath.

"Gosh I *hate* white lizards," I said out loud. Just then I heard the clanking of pots in the kitchen. Snooze time was over for Gran and I snuck around the broad side of the shed where she couldn't see me.

Trying to focus again on my intended task, I was now to extract the bones I needed for

the kite. This took dexterity and skill.

The new mid-ribs were in really tight and I knew that the minute I removed a few of them the whole thing would shatter and fall apart. That was the reason for the little treasures in my other pocket - the small stones.

Very carefully, I pried the sticks from the collar and simultaneously pushed two stones in and forced them sufficiently far down that the remaining sticks pressed against the side of the metal and stayed fast.

"*You smart girl.*" I congratulated myself, and returned the broom to the tool shed whilst looking out for Gran and keeping clear of that vicious whitey.

I was certain we would win the upcoming Easter Kite competition.

The taste of marl was extremely unpleasant.

"Ptew, ptew," I spat out globs of chalky dirt.

"Cindy, Cindy you ok? Oh gosh! You ok?"

I waved a sore left arm at Danella and turned over on my bum and just sat there. My yellow flip flops lay at the side of the road in the gutter, both straps pulled away from the base. My shirt was torn and my knees were grazed and bloody. There was marl on my hands and my face and I started to crying.

"*No, no, no you big wuzz, what you gonna be crying for? What else did you expect? Yuh got on de wrong shoes and yuh fat; yes I said it,*" my conscience was cruel, "*and yuh got two left feet!*"

I just sat there shaking my head, holding my ears in my hands, trying to block out the Voice.

I could hear my friends running towards me. Just then, a hand was on my shoulder.

Turning to my left, I looked up and then, I saw him - the darkest skinned boy I had ever seen. His eyes were twinkling and the brilliance of his wide smile dazzled me. There was a bright glow around his face. Surely I must have hit my head pretty hard.

"Are you alright?" His voice was a sweet melody, like the man on the BBC News that came over the Redifusion at seven in the morning. "Here, take my hand, let me help you up."

I couldn't say a word. I took his hand, the skin was soft and he smelt of Lifebuoy soap.

He helped me up and was just a little taller than I was but he was bigger.

"Hello, my name is James, what's yours?"

My vocal chords snapped shut and the Voice said "*My name is Cinderella.*"

Danella was screaming my name as she ran head long into my back causing me to trip right into the arms of James.

"Oh my gosh girl, you scared me, are you ok?" Danella stopped yapping at the sight of the boy in front of us.

"Ooooooh....Hi, I am Danella. This is Cindy here and that is my brother Darren....and you are?" she flicked her curly plait away from her forehead in that "come hither" motion she had seen in the Elizabeth Taylor movie last summer. (Unbeknownst to our parents we had snuck into the back of the park to see it).

"I am James from the house across the road there. I am spending my Easter vacation with my Auntie. My mum and dad are travelling

the Caribbean and I get really sea sick so I am staying here until they return."

We all stared at this newcomer in disbelief. Travelling, Caribbean, sea sickness, conjured up visions of big boats and yachts and lots of money; something that was only in our dreams or at the movies and far beyond our reach.

Yet here was a boy about our age (at least thirteen), or so we thought, that knew firsthand about it.

I finally spoke. "Well, thank you very much for helping me," I winced as I put weight on my right foot.

James' expression changed quickly. "Does that hurt?"

"No, no, I will be okay," I pretended. Dannie promptly poked me in my side.

"Oh dear Cindy, you need help getting home?" she winked at me.

"Lean on me, I will help you to the door. Where do you live by the way?" James held me around my waist.

I was embarrassed beyond belief, not because I was leaning on this stranger, but because my house was no more than twenty feet away, and my gran was already at the door.

"It's right there," I pointed.

It seemed like forever, the journey to my crumbling front step. Gran opened the door and filled the small doorway, hand akimbo.

"What happen wid you now girl? Lord hav-ist mercy, you and dem two lef' feet." Gran moved aside to let me get in, "and who is dis nice young man?"



I was a bit appalled to see my gran smooth the skirt of her apron and primp her netted hair with the upside palms of both hands. What the hell was she doing?

"Good morning ma'am," James said politely with a short dip of his upper body. "Cindy here had fallen and I was just assisting her to the door."

"O my gosh, he called me Cindy!"

James stayed on the step and smiled sweetly at the elderly woman who was obviously now feeling like eighteen.

"That is so nice of you. Not many gallant young men 'round this place anymore." She said this whilst scowling at Darren who was sitting on the side of the road inspecting his kite. Gran then turned to me abruptly, forgetting the visitor at the door. "Girl, go clean up yuh-self. De mercurochrome pun top de sink in de bathroom."

I was now thoroughly mortified as my guardian was treating me like a five year old. I looked at her and felt the tears welling behind my eyes. How could she?

I mumbled a "thank you" to James to which he replied "Not a problem Cindy. Will you be back outside this evening?"

Gran seemed to think she was designated to speak on my behalf. "Once she sort out sheself she can come back outside 'round four o'clock when it get cooler and after she help me fix de lunch."

James bowed again and bade his farewell.

As Gran closed the front door I ran as quickly as my bruised legs would carry me to the bathroom and locked the door. I parted the curtain to the WC and saw the familiar clothncover for the seat, which portrayed a most forlorn cartoon man standing inside his toilet bowl with his hand pulling on the overhead chain and crying "Good-bye Cruel World!"

I wondered how long it would take to flush my large body.

The rain started pouring, buckets-a-drops. It was just past four o'clock and I was sitting in the front room reading one of my favorite books, *Wind in the Willows*. Somehow this afternoon it was quite difficult to concentrate as every other line in the book seemingly started with the word "James".

The Voice was cackling now, "Ha ha ha ha, Cindy got a boyfriend."

"Shut up, shut up," hands over ears.

The rocking chair I sat in creaked on the floor boards. Terrence, my tabby, was curled up on the mat at my feet. I gave him the occasional rub with my big toe which resulted in a deep

resonating purr, the sound of which would have come from a much larger feline. But, that was Terrence, every opportunity to make up for his puny frame.

The old clock sitting on the radiogram in the corner chimed four-thirty. The sun was now shining but the rain was still pelting down. I smiled because Gran always had quite a lot to say when the weather behaved like this.

"Humph! Dat is de devil and he wife fighting fuh de cou cou stick"

It always baffled me, this saying of hers. As far as I knew the devil was in hell, and that was somewhere under my feet. So how did he and his wife get up to heaven? And what was even more disturbing, did Jesus really serve cou cou up there?

"You idiot!"

I shook off the thought and wished the rain would just stop falling. Four was already gone and I wanted to go outside.

I closed the book and looked through the wet louver panes. I could just see the black wrought iron gates of the house across the main road. This was where Miss Parson lived. The old retired teacher was a fixture in our village. She had quite a bit of money (it was rumored to be stashed under her mattress) and she gave lessons to the neighboring children. She was tough, hard as nails and a disciplinarian. During her evening sessions she was known to rap the blackboard with a metal edged ruler as she made the students recite their tables.

"Two ones are two - Two into two one."

*Flack flack flack flack -
Flack-i-ty flack flack.*

You dared not make a mistake otherwise your knuckles became the blackboard.

Just then, the downpour stopped as abruptly as it had started. I wondered who had won. Getting up from the chair I went to the front door and removed the chained peg from the corner of the wooden slats that kept them closed. I peered through and my heart skipped a few beats. I immediately closed the vents and stood with my back to the door.

"Oh no!" I said out loud.

"Oh yes!"

I ran to my room, almost crushing tabby in my haste. A few minutes later I heard Gran scuffling toward the front house. Someone was at the door.

"Hold on, I coming. Lord, I can't walk too fast, de art-rits and dis rain don't help either."

There was the knock again. "Wuh I jus say? Wunna too impat ient doh. . ."

I heard Gran stop in mid-sentence - her voice changed.

"Well hello again."

"Good evening Ma'am."

It was James. I had seen the big gates open. My heart was racing.

"Is it still possible for Cindy to come out for a bit? I realize it is a tad later than planned, but who can argue with showers of blessings?" I heard the charm in his voice, the eloquence with which he spoke. I held my breath.

Gran replied inaudibly and then, "Cindy! Girl get out here!"

I swallowed, took a quick look in the broken dresser mirror, licked my finger and smoothed my unruly eyebrows. I had donned my flowered skirt that just covered my bruised knees and my pale yellow button-front cotton blouse that was just a little close across the chest. My hair was neatly pulled back and secured in a ring comb. I teased the ends out and I figured I had done a pretty good job with my singular afro puff.

"So, who you trying to impress?"

"Shut up!"

"Cindy!"

"Coming, Gran!"

I stepped through the glass beads to the corridor. There he was, standing next to Gran, watching me. He was at least a full head and shoulders above her and smiled that brilliant smile once again. I am sure I heard music playing. For once the Voice was as awe struck as I was.

Gran announced, "Cindy, James's here."

"Yes Gran I can see that."

I stayed just inside the yellow and red hanging stones, framed by the cheap jewels.

"Hello Cindy," James greeted me and glided forward with an out stretched hand. I placed mine in his and he tilted the palm over and lightly brushed the back with his lips.

"I hope you are feeling much better now?"

"Yes she is. Aren't you my dear?" There was Gran speaking on my behalf, again. I looked at her with a timid scowl. This whole situation was unreal.



Here I was, in my Gran's living room, with a boy I only met this morning, who had the gumption to kiss my hand, in front of her and, she just stands there, beaming. What the hell!

"Run with it girl, run with it," the Voice prodded.

I decided to take charge.

"Gran, would it be okay if James and I sat on the gallery and talked a bit?" I stared at her and hoped that my inner voice was speaking to hers.

"That is okay sweetheart," Gran was totally under the spell. "Let me get two folding chairs; the step outside still real wet."

As the old woman shuffled off for the furniture I stood there, feeling the residual heat from his lips engulf my hand, making its way up my arm. I tried not to look at him, but out of the corner of my eye I took it all in. His stance was not unlike a soldier's but tempered with a gentleman's. He held the unopened umbrella behind his back, his legs slightly at ease, waiting.

His skin was shining, like thick, freshly poured molasses; I loved molasses, the taste of it - the way it felt on my tongue

Gran appeared from behind the beaded curtain, James moved forward with agility. He was bigger than I was but from what I could tell there was not an ounce of fat on him. I had a funny feeling in the pit of my stomach - it moved lower down. It made me uncomfortable and I unconsciously held myself.

James unburdened my grandmother from her load and placed the chairs in the gallery after finding the driest spot in the corner. I remained standing by the rocker as my eyes followed his every move.

"Cindy, are we ready?" James extended his arm to me whilst standing to a side and opening the door. I felt like a debutante. Breaking my reverie, I barely remembered the space was much smaller than my wide self. A shimmy, a quick step and a ninety degree approach allowed my passage through the portal without falling flat on my face.

"You go girl!"

Awkward - that simple word best described our rendezvous. We sat in the creaky folding chairs, side by side, like two dolls propped for display by a giggly toddler. Face front, legs crossed at the ankles and hands on our laps. I knew not what to

say although the Voice had plenty suggestions.

Just then, Terrence appeared from the bushes, walked across the wooden bannister and promptly jumped on me, claws extended.

"Oooh tabby, what's up with you?"

Kitt y curled his body into an inverted 'U', his tail moving from side to side as he glared at James. His eyes were a fierce green and his pupils dilated. He bared his teeth and a menacing snarl came from deep inside his throat.

"Terrence!" I yelled at him, giving him a smack on his bottom.

James laughed - a musical sound with staccato breaks, "He's just marking territory.

Obviously he wants you for himself."

"Ok, Cindy, you have read enough Mills & Boon to know what that means. Read between the lines stupid."

I looked at James timidly. He was smiling, well more smirking and he turned towards me, side sitting on the chair.

"Well at least Terrence broke the ice for us." I nodded in agreement, still a little flushed from his last words. Not to mention the thoughts the Voice was conjuring in my head. I swear, I know I was only thirteen (fourteen in a few weeks), but maybe I did need therapy.

"Is the weather always like this here? You know, really hot, and then rain pelting, then

sun and rain together." He seemed genuinely interested so I gave him Gran's version of the events.

James just laughed and laughed and kept tapping the umbrella on the floor in a hypnotic rhythm.

We talked about many things over the next hour, his Auntie, his parents, his absolute hatred of flies and we high fived on the treacherous tenacious whiteys. Then it was my turn to be forthcoming.

"I love reading and writing poems and painting. I can show you some of them if you like?"

Ha, I'll show you mine if you show me yours.ha ha ha!

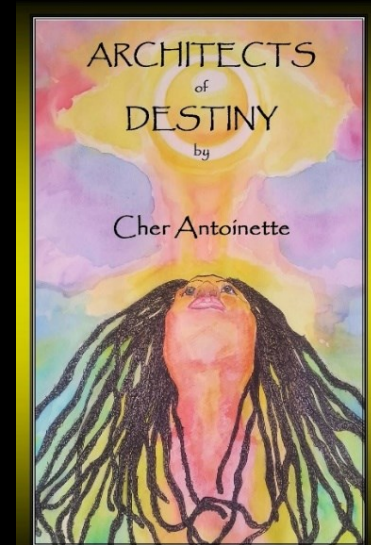
"Shut up!"

"That would be really nice," James replied. "I have two of my favorite books here with me. Hey maybe we can start a book club this vacation."

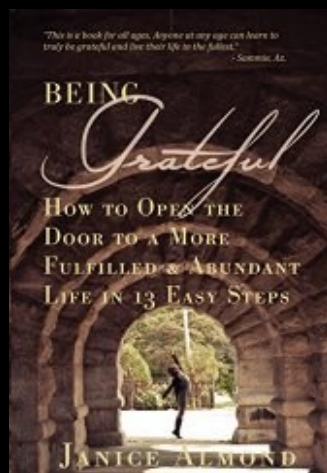
Who was this boy?

To be continued

Cher-Antoinette ©Cher



Finding Meaning in Everyday Living



Janice Almond

FORGE Ahead in February!

February 2017:

It's February now! How are you doing?

Are you staying on top of your goals and chasing your dreams?

Are you keeping your joy and counting your blessings?

Did you get the "Will to Do" and the "Will to Win?"

I hope you've chosen Love, Faith, Forgiveness, and Peace.

NOW, FORGE ahead in February!

F- Forget

O- Overlook

R- Remember

G- Generate

E- Enjoy

FORGET any failures or successes of your past! It is time to diligently focus your mind today on what is in your future. The present is what counts. I heard someone say that's why it's called the "present." It's a gift. Open your day and explore your options. Imagine limitless possibilities. What are you thinking of? Treasure what you can *learn* today. Treasure what you can *be* today. Treasure what you can *do* today.

OVERLOOK any flaws or faults that have been hindering your forward momentum.

Think about how you can capitalize on any and all strengths you have. There is not enough time in our day for us to give so much attention to things that have a tendency to slow us down and "weigh" us down. Think about what Philippians 4:8 says, *Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.* (New International Version)

REMEMBER any and all dreams that you want to achieve this year. Write them ALL down and give yourself a deadline to realize their accomplishment. Remember, a hazy goal is just a "wandering generality." The late Zig Ziglar, (1926-2012) motivational speaker and author said this. Be specific and precise! Create and accomplish something today that you can be proud of tonight. Action toward your goals is the ultimate sense of fulfillment.

GENERATE any and all means to continue to move forward. In my book, *BEING DETERMINED: How to be Relentless in Pursuing Your Dreams in 15 Simple Ways*, I talk about the necessity of taking "baby steps." Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the late civil right leader, (1929-1968) said, "Take the first step in faith. You don't have to see the whole staircase. Just take the first step." As you advance, you will begin to see and also recognize new opportunities ahead. Keep advancing. Keep moving. Keep on getting up when you fall down.

ENJOY any and all ways to live your life to the fullest! If you don't, won't, or can't enjoy your life, that will be the greatest tragedy. So many people have the "should've, would've, could've" syndrome. Don't be one of them! Be an "enjoyaholic." I, again, admonish you to **COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS**. You do have some. Get busy being better and being grateful. Just a change in attitude can make all the difference.

Published Author

Janice Almond

#1 Amazon Kindle Best Seller New Release
www.janicealmondbooks.com

VISIT my Amazon author page
amazon.com/author/janicealmond

"Be Grateful. Be Determined. Be Happy."

#1 Amazon Kindle Best Seller New Release

www.janicealmondbooks.com

Reach out to me: Get a copy of my first book, *BEING GRATEFUL*...free! Simply click the link: begrateful.subscribemenow.com

-- You will join our "being grateful" community. We look forward to having you become a part of spreading gratefulness around the world.

Until next month-
Your attitude matters,
Janice

Follow me on twitter: @JalmondjoyRenee

Like me on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/begratefulbooks

Sign up for my monthly inspirational newsletter and get my first book *Being Grateful: How to Open the Door to a More Fulfilled & Abundant Life in 13 Easy Steps* FREE!

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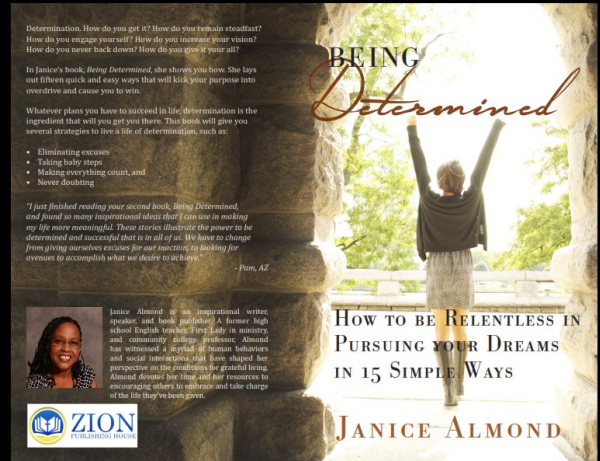
Janice Almond is the author of the *Being Grateful* book series. Her first book in the series, *Being Grateful: How to Open the Door*

to a More Fulfilled & Abundant Life in 13 Easy Steps is available on her website:

www.janicealmondbooks.com.

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AUTHOR INTERVIEW 2

Spotlight Author

RUBY YAYRA GOKA



Liberian Literary Magazine conducted an interview with Ruby Yayra Goka ☺.

LLM: First, we would like to thank you for granting this interview. Let us kick off this interview with you telling us a little about yourself....

My name is Ruby Yayra Goka and I'm a dentist and a writer. I write for both children and adults. I'm a book, animal, plant, food and sleep lover. Six of my young adult books (*The Stepmonster*, *Plain Yellow*, *Perfectly Imperfect*, *When the Shackles Fall*, *The Lost Royal Treasure* and *The Mystery of the Haunted House*) have

won prizes in the Burt Award for African Literature competition.

I currently have eleven published books.

Why writing?

I've always loved stories so I guess it just made sense that it got to a point where I had to write my own stories. I think it was a natural progression.

What books have most influenced your life/career most?

Where do I start? There are so many books that I love and that have shaped my career but I think the ones that stand out most are *The Jasmine Candle* and *Spears Down*.

They were both written by Christine Botchway who at the time was a really young author (who later became a dentist☺) and I remember being very impressed by this because her stories stayed in my mind long after I'd finished reading.

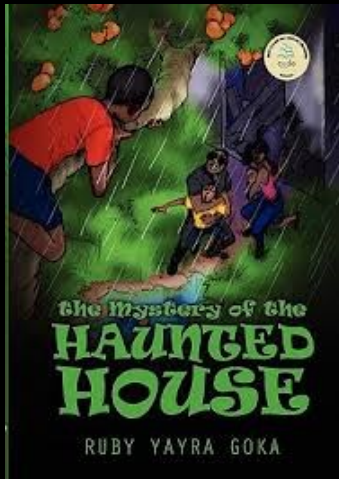
Her characters were almost human, they were so real to me, I felt I knew them.

But I grew up reading Enid Blyton, Nancy Drew, Hardy Boys, Sweet Valley and Agatha Christie books so I'm sure those also had a role to play.

I greatly admire Francine Rivers, Jane Austen, Agatha Christie, Tami Hoag, Mariama Bâ, Allan Folsom, Ola Rotimi, Chinua Achebe, Echi Amadi, Markus Zusak, Andrea Levy, Manu Herbstein . . . Believe me, the list is endless

How do you approach your work?

I write as and when I have something to put down. I usually have a vague idea of how the story starts and how it ends but everything in-between I find out as I write. I usually carry a small notebook with me to jot down stuff when I'm struck with an idea. Sometimes I might get ten or more pages at a go, at other times I'm lucky if I get a word.



What themes do you find yourself

continuously exploring in your work?

For my young adult books, they are more of 'coming of age' stories where the main character realizes something about herself or life or growing up that she didn't know before.

Tell us a little about your book[s]-storyline, characters, themes, inspiration etc.

Different settings and by that I mean towns, cities, villages etc. are my inspiration. It's usually about the setting first, the smell and feel of the place and then the peculiarities of the people who live there and then out of that I see the main character and a story develops out of the

setting and the character.

I think this is one of the things I love most about writing. It gives you the freedom to be curious, to stare openly, to explore, to ask all the nosy questions that otherwise would be considered rude. People are more welcoming when you say 'it's research for a book' and then they are more than eager to help. I guess it also goes to show us that underneath everything else we are still one people—we hurt, we love, we live.

What inspired you to write this title or how did you come up with the storyline?

My most recent book, *The Step-monster* is a young adult book that explores the relationship between step parents and step children. For most people the first thing that comes into their heads when they hear someone has a step-mother is that the woman must be wicked and must be maltreating her step-child. So in this book, I

did the reverse of that. It was the step-child who was making life miserable for her step-mother.

Is there a message in your book that you want your readers to grasp?

I don't consciously set out to put a message across but most of my main characters are female so I am hoping that by reading about my characters, young female readers would be able to speak up, be independent and make the right choices for themselves.

Is there anything else you would like readers to know about your book?

I hope readers will enjoy reading them as much as I enjoyed writing them. I hope the characters will be as real to them as they were to me. I hope long after they've read the last page and closed the book and put it away, they continue to wonder about the characters. They continue to wonder. I love to hear from my readers. You can

contact me on Facebook or e-mail me. My e-mail address is rygoka@yahoo.com.

Do you have any advice for other writers?

Read as much as you can and the time to begin writing is now. Today.

What book[s] are you reading now? Or recently read?

I've just finished Yaa Gyasi's *Homegoing* which is the story of two half-sisters and their descendants. She puts a different spin on telling the story of the slave trade.

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

This quarter, I'm the guest author for the DAKpabli team which is made up of Nana Awere Damoah and Kofi Akpabli. The team holds reading sessions in Ghana and this year they travelled outside the capital, Accra, to Kumasi and Ho. It's a great opportunity for all book lovers to meet with the authors

and ask questions, buy books and have fun. In November, we had a reading session in Ho, the capital of the Volta Region of Ghana. On the 29th of December we have another reading session, a dinner reading session actually at the Jamrock Restaurant and Grill at East Legon in Accra. We have a third reading session in January next year.

In September, my book *The Stepmonster* won the first prize in the Burt Award for African Literature competition organized by Mr Bill Burt, the Canadian Organization for Development through Education (CODE) and the Ghana Book Trust.

Two of my award-winning young adult books, *Plain Yellow* and *Perfectly Imperfect* are available on the FunDza site where they can be read for free. My books can also be bought from Amazon, Storefoundry (<http://booksbyrubyayagoka@storefoun>

dry.com) and on Etsy. Happy reading everyone!

What are your current projects?

I'm working on three different projects. One is a picture book about a little girls' first visit to the dentist. The second is a young adult book which centers around one of my great loves: food, and the third is still a nebulous thing about the second world war.

Have you read book[s] by [a] Liberian author[s] or about Liberia?

I've read Bai T. Moore's *Murder in the Cassava Patch* and I think it's an absolutely terrific story!

Any last words?

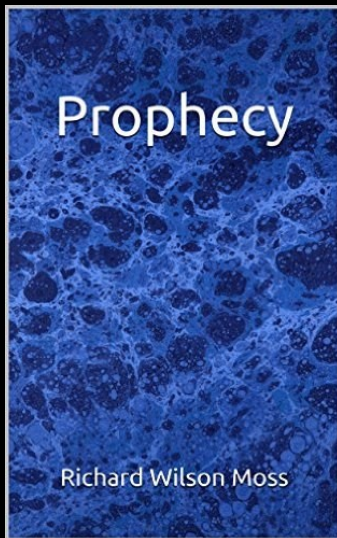
Read, read and read some more. Thank you so much for having me! Hopefully someday I can have a reading session in your beautiful country.



'T'WAS BRIGGIN

**Richard Wilson
Moss**

**The Convictions of
Nature**



I stood in the dying
garden
And listened to the
politics of a rose
Angry red over the
migration of arrogant
weeds.

Upon barren cliffs
I attended a stern
lecture of the sea
Wild waves crashing
upon solid rock.

Deep in a forest of
redwood and fir
I was bewildered by a
massive noisy revolt
Of cicadas armed to
the teeth.

In the thick audience
of protest and
campaign

I screamed for the
candidate, waved
banners
Knowing whoever won
could never match
The convictions of
nature.

Loons

I want to dance like
loons
But I can't
They wriggle and twist
Chasing fish
underwater
New choreography
unwritten,
Never rehearsed.

I can only write and
practice
This chase upended
This dance of attrition.

Steps of Disdain

The countryside
rearranges itself
Boulders roll to happier
spots
Grass gets up and tip-
toes to richer fields
Trees drag their roots
closer to the riverbank.
We move without
reasonable intentions
Walking we cover the
earth
With meandering steps
of disdain.

Elsewhere

Somewhere in some
other world
A moon attempts to
pull a lake into the skies
A night is bright and
crisp with the light
Of that moon but solid
with the shadows of
the gentle sighs
Of a world delighted
with itself
Somewhere in some
other world
In someone else's eyes.

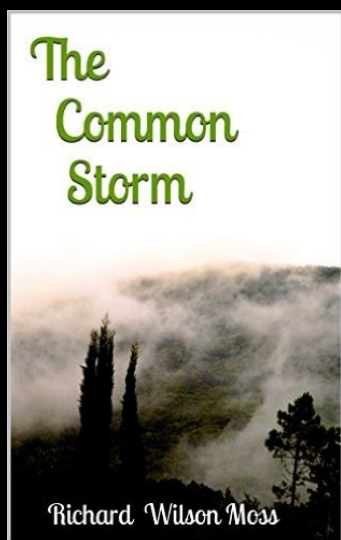
Absolution

People are huddled
together
And their arms
Are tangled roots
Uplifted from the dirt
By the weight of the
falling tree.
A mass of thick and
thin pulp
Reaching ever upward
For the substance of
the earth.

Stranger At Breakfast

Outside the kitchen
window
Crepe Myrtle was
dying.
Inside, the butter was
passed

A soft boiled egg sat
 on its pedestal
 The youngest was on a
 fast.
 The kind stranger came
 to the door, coughing
 And there was fear
 and there was courage
 That does not last.



Black Fire

Shadows of day
 Unlike those at night
 Sweep past as cloud
 banks push
 Into their storms like
 demons
 Pressing against rotten
 floors of heaven
 Darkening, our
 shadows are like black
 fire
 Rage replacing what
 was once desire
 To quietly cloak naked
 skies
 Rage building and then
 this blundering
 Into drifting contended
 clouds

Like ragged, starving
 lions
 Leaping upon fat,
 white throats of the
 gorgeous pride.

The Funeral

Early morning the
 grave was dug
 Flowers arrived, lily and
 rose
 Limousines, one with
 white walls
 Pulling up, but no
 hearse
 A lame priest stood
 ready
 His face pink in the
 pews
 Now darker, distorted,
 His cane playing at his
 shoes
 Like a prophet poking
 ashes
 Of burning bibles.
 From one foot to the
 other
 The mourners,
 unsettled, shifted
 As if the burden of their
 wait
 Would be gently lifted.
 They waited, looking at
 their phones
 But still no hearse
 And when the sun
 found its fate
 After all was the same
 again
 Someone said, if no
 one comes
 Who will we bury then?

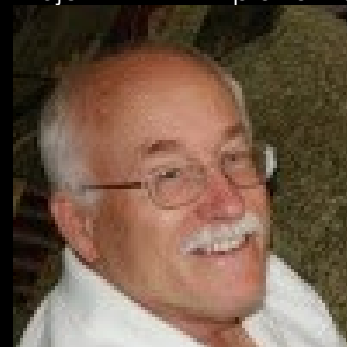
Who will receive this
 lovely service
 And just what good is
 our grief?
 Then someone
 shouted
 Look, here it comes!
 And there are sighs of
 great relief.



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Richard Moss is the author of numerous full-length poetry books. He's witty, understands words in a most peculiar way. His poetry is just...You can find his books on every major platform.



ACCORDING TO ELIOT

The Radio Interview!

Last month I told you that I was due a radio interview with Radio Cardiff, Wales. I also mentioned that I would tell you all about the experience.

For a week before the event I was nervous. Ridiculous you might think, but true. I get very nervous before I read my poetry in public, so much so that my wife asks why I continue to do it. But it is almost as a drug and I feel so good after it that I want to get up and do it again.

The radio interview was live and set to go out at 7pm. I'd checked about the sort of questions I was to be asked and how many poems to be read on air. Three, so I spent some time rehearsing them. It was a freezing evening, minus two degrees, I was to meet the presenter, Osian Grifford at 530pm to take me to the radio station for what I thought was a run through. I had the time wrong. I arrived an hour early, he was fifteen minutes late and I was like Quinn the Eskimo. We walked to the radio station which was in quite an industrial part of Cardiff. Inside it was as I expected a radio station to be closed windowed rooms and lit up signs saying 'On Air'.

Approaching 7pm we took our places behind the mikes and the 3 2 1 On Air took place. I was interviewed along with a singer songwriter Ryan Rabey. The hosts were Osian, James Cocks and an interesting guy who said very little, but asked some perceptive questions, Simeon Davies. Simeon is interested in religious poetry and I'm hoping that Osian invites myself and Simeon back for another interview nearer to Easter.

I won't give a run down on the show and the contributions, but if you want to listen it is available at this link:

<https://www.mixcloud.com/illorad/pitch-illustration-radio-12th-january-2017/>

Oddly enough I wasn't at all nervous. I took my time answering questions, and I felt I read my poems well. Being in Wales I concentrated my poems on the ones that I've written about Wales, or my family in Wales. For example from my new poetry collection *Don't Go*, the poem *Heol y Cyw*, the village where my Father was born. I visited a couple of summers ago and it is a tiny place. I met one person, and just walked the couple of streets and fields where he might have played as a child.

Heol y Cyw

Did I expect to meet
Father walking the street
Man and Boy
crossing paths
looking for remains
on the earth

as I walk deserted avenues
searching for you

in a Cardiff square
listening to Mr Humphries
Morning has Broken
a favourite song

I knew you'd departed
this village long ago

and striking out
into the country
beneath an arch of trees
the falcon soared
leaving your Spirit to me

I read two more and then Osian said to me, "I have a special request to hear one of your poems," he went on, "I was at one of your readings and you read a poem about the wife of the British King Richard III. Tell the listeners the story behind the poem as well, please."

Richard III was King in England from 1483 to 1485. He lost his throne to Henry Tudor at the Battle of Bosworth. His body was

buried somewhere near Leicester, but nobody knew where. I went to school in Leicester. In 2012 skeletal remains were found where a school and playground used to be. The school was the one I attended, the playground I ran around in. The remains, after research at the University of Leicester were proved to be those of Richard's. I'd played on his grave. Near where I live in France is a Cathedral, where Anne Neville was betrothed to her first husband. Anne was later married to Richard. Here from my collection *Don't Go*, is the poem Anne Neville.

Anne Neville

Mourning in our separate silences
still in the Cathedral of Angers
I hear the spirit of Anne Neville
walking away from something
upon nothing.

On the sound of midnight
I stand at the church door
listening for your voice,
before the car crosses
empty expanses of countryside
to warmth, red flames
and the finding of hidden mists.

c. John Eliot

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John Eliot is a poet. He shares his time between Wales and France. In Wales he lives close to a capital city where he spends a lot of time reading his poetry to an audience.

In France he lives in a tiny village and enjoys the silence to write. John was a teacher.

He is married with children and grandchildren. He has two books of poetry published. '**Ssh**' and '**Don't Go**' his new one which is his latest creative effort, titled 'Don't Go'. Both books are published by Mosaic Press of England" and are available on Amazon.

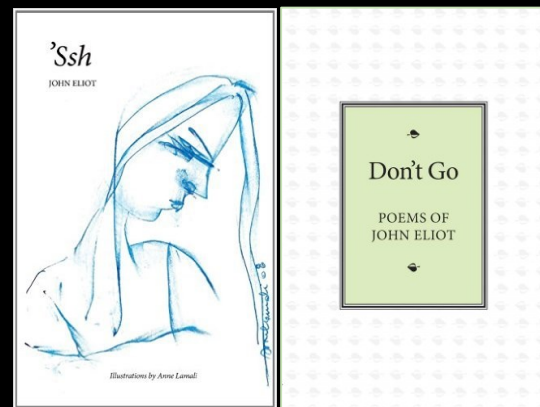
Any comments to

I will reply to all emails.

Connect here:

johneliot1953@gmail.com

John Eliot



"The photograph of John Eliot was taken by Dave Dagers during a live poetry reading. Dave is a professional photographer and artist. He has contributed drawings to John's new collection of poetry, 'Don't Go' which will be out in the Autumn."

ACCORDING TO ELIOT **- EXTRA -**



La La Land

When I was a child, and I stress child, if you lived in la la land then you were mentally unstable. There's a film at the moment from Hollywood named La La Land. La La Land is for Californians, in America, the desire to be a musician, singer and dancer.



January 20th was the inauguration for the new president of the United States, Donald Trump. I ask myself how the American people can allow such a man to become their new leader. Trump wasn't even democratically elected. The majority of the populace voted for Hilary Clinton. But the Electoral College had to vote for Trump because he had won key states.



Listening to Trump's inauguration speech, as well as being an insult to President Obama, was so nationalistic as to be fascist. And for a man who dodged the draft five times to avoid joining the army it was militaristic. Americans are going to trust this man with weapons of mass destruction?



Trump wants American to be so insular, stopping immigration from various countries. Build a wall to stop Mexicans entering the country. Fine. Build four walls and stay within your country Trump, West coast, East coast and North across Canada.



A commentator on American news called Trump unbalanced. I say he's living in La La Land.

c. John Eliot 2017

I will respond to every email and may include them, with your permission, in future columns.

AUTHOR INTERVIEW 3

Spotlight Author

ARYANNA



Liberian Literary Magazine conducted an interview with the ARYANNA @.

LLM: First, we would like to thank you for granting this interview. Let us kick off this interview with you telling us a little about yourself.... Tell us a little about yourself

I am 27 years old born and raised in Washington D.C. I am outspoken and writing is my passion.

Why writing?

It started off with reading because books provide a way of escape and allows you to see things from different perspectives. Writing allows me to share experiences that people can probably relate to but probably can't articulate.

What books have most influenced your life/career most?

I have always read different genre's but authors like Carl Weber, Nikki Turner, Terri Woods, John Grisham, and Steven King helped me become a well-rounded storyteller. The books book's that I write reflect what I have seen and been through and so I do my best to let people into my world.

How do you approach your work?

Once the idea for a book pops into my head I try to break it down to the beginning, middle and end and then I think about the twist and unexpected turns but once I start writing I have no control over where the story goes. It just tells itself.

What themes do you find yourself continuously exploring in your work?



The struggle that is life because it is something everyone can relate to in some shape for or fashion no matter your race, religion or sex. The struggle is real.

Tell us a little about your book[s]- storyline, characters, themes, inspiration etc.:

At present I have six books out. "A Gangsters Revenge 1-4 is about love, sex, betrayal, gangbanging, power, loyalty and as the title says revenge, it's a urban tale but it gives you a futuristic feel because it incorporates technology that isn't readily available at present time.

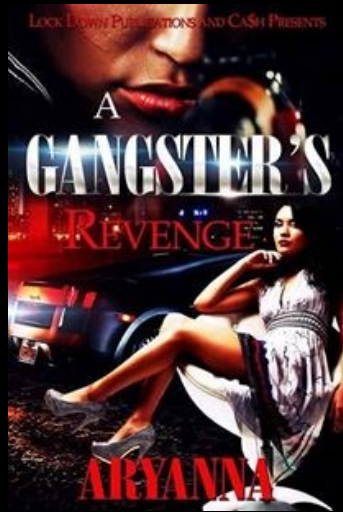
The main characters are Devaughn, his wife Ramona, his sister Keyz, her girlfriend Candy, his four daughters DayDay, Deshana, Lativia and Isabella and his two sons Devaughn Jr. and Devontae to sum it up this is definitely a family that preys together and sometimes on each other."

The fifth book I have out is part of a two-book series called "A Savage Love, it's a story about a young girl named Makayla who is looking for love in a good guy in a world which she only finds that only bad boys exist. The main characters

are Makyala, Lorenzo and Cameron. This story is of heartbreak, cruelty, and love but it is also a cautionary tale for young women.”

My most recent release is “No Honor Amongst Thieves which is a story about how misplaced loyalty is in the street life and how you can never trust anyone sometimes not even yourself the main characters are Zayvion and wife Carmen, Rocko who is Carmen’s brother and also Zayvion’s right hand man.

This story also gives you a look inside prison life but not the mind depicted in movies and T.V shows.”



What inspired you to write this title or how did you come up with the storyline?

The title of A Gangsters Revenge comes from the simple truth that nobody remembers how to forget, I know innocent people

doing time and they don’t have a voice. The title of Savage Love is just the truth of the story, the actual story itself came from events that someone I love lived through.

The title of No Honor Amongst Thieves came from my own days spent in the trenches learning the rules that would someday save my life the storyline is something that happens every day all across the country.

Is there a message in your book that you want your readers to grasp?

From the Gangsters Revenge Series, the message is when you do dirt you get dirt, and once you get blood on your hands they are never clean again.

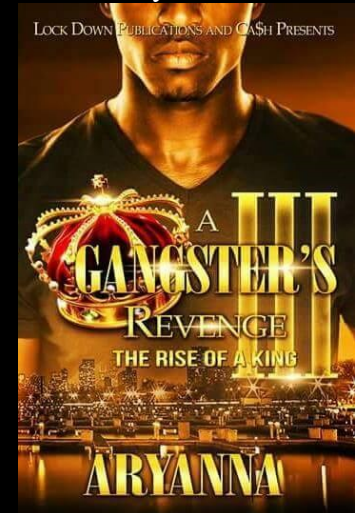
The message from A Savage Love is everyone should love herself more than she does any man. The message from No Honor Amongst Thieves is to trust no one.

Is there anything else you would like readers to know about your book?

I would like my readers to know that the best stories are true lies so if they see themselves in these pages it’s ok because they are not alone.

Do you have any advice for other writers?

Don’t try to be like anybody else just listen to the voice that is inside you and believe in yourself no matter who doesn’t believe in you.



What book[s] are you reading now?

Or recently read? I have recently read “Last of a Dieing Breed” by Jamaica and “A Thin Line Between Love and Power” by Silent Storm.

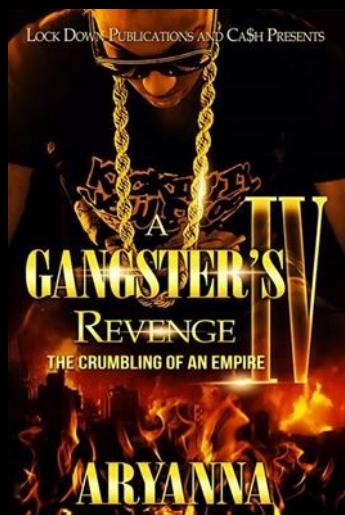
Tell us your latest news, promotions, book tours, launch etc.

I have three books getting ready to come out call, Savage Love 2, To Die in Vain and my poetry book called Words Unspoken.

What are your current projects?

I am currently working on a collaboration with

Anastasia Iree which we do not have a title at present time but will be out in the earliest part of 2017.



Have you read book[s] by [a] Liberian author[s] or about Liberia?

No but I would like to so I am open to any recommendations or the authors can contact me directly.

Any last words?

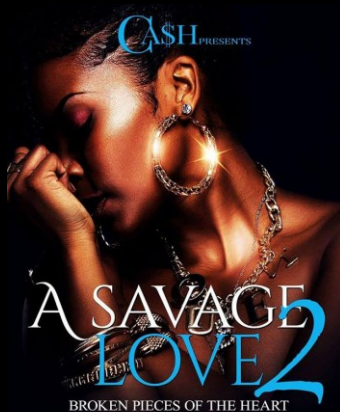
I would like to thank you for the opportunity to show case my talent, your interest in my work is much appreciated and you're not just a fan of my work I am also a fan of yours.

Stay true to yourself and do what you want and need to do while you still have the chance.



Author Bio

I write stories that are true lies because they represent the things I have seen or done. Because everybody has a story to tell but not necessarily the ability to tell it.



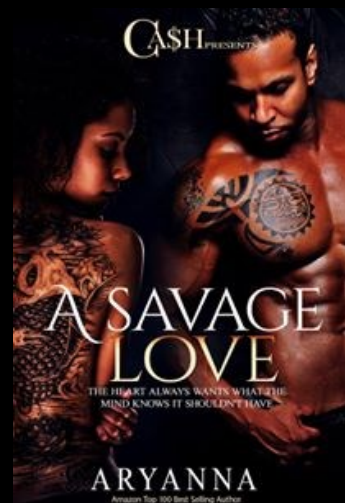
I'm motivated by the struggle because it's real and what i come from, but I held onto dreams of better things.

I represent Washington D.C

which is a melting pot of multicultural backgrounds, so when I write I do it in hopes that everyone can relate somehow. I give all glory to God for my creative talent, and I remain humble by all that I was given.

I am inspired by my fans because it is crazy that I have fans that is something else I am humbled by. The best way to describe me is a rose that grew from concrete (shout out to Tupac).

If you don't like me it's okay to hate me because I was born for this and I live life on my own terms. I do it my way.



AKEN-BAI'S- A FLOW OF THOUGHTS



Aken Vivian Wariebi is an avid reader and writer. She began writing since grade school. A graduate from both Rutgers and Syracuse Universities, respectively, she never behind left a book nor a pen.

Today, a poet and Advocate for the most vulnerable, Ms. Wariebi finds joy in inspiring and helping others in any positive way that she can.

Some say her Poems speak to their hearts and souls. Others describe her writings as life short stories. For Ms. Wariebi, life speaks to her pen. She believes that she speaks to people's hearts and souls from hers in hopes that, in her writings, others can find a little more light along their journey of life.

She is originally from Monrovia, Liberia and currently resides in the USA.

www.facebook.com/inspirewithlove

Fixing Ourselves

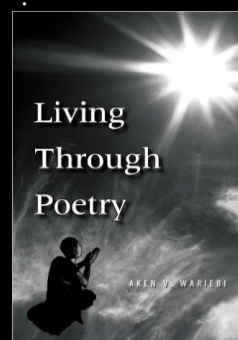
Can we fix ourselves if we can't accept and embrace change? If change must happen within and around us, we have to accept and

embrace it. Change can be good sometimes. If we can't fix us, who can? Saving ourselves may happen as we save or support others, some may say. But first we have to forget and forgive ourselves. We must be able to accept ourselves with our flaws unconditionally. This many can't identify with but they love, they claim they believe in love. Or is theirs' a love with an illusion, distortion or a disassociation of their own reality with themselves? Control, greed, power, and selfishness, may all be negatives, some may say. And they are indeed. Yet controlling ourselves of anger perhaps could lead with small steps to positivities. Power-the power of self-well if used wisely can lead to many unknown of foreseen blessings. Self-motivation can allow others to see possible potentials within us and it can change our world as we know it bringing a lot of light and a lot of gifts, talents and skills that may or was in remission within us. Or that we never have identified within us. Greed- being a taker versus a giver and having a balance and a limit to both bring about fairness that is admirable if we are willing to see truly and not deceptively. Being a giver especially wins that war. Selfishness-Self-care isn't that. Taking care of ourselves is a plus, a

big one that enables a longer lifespan in some cases, a much healthier life and a better way to extend care to others. The latter is a good thing. Forgiveness is a start of something big. It involves a whole lot of healing starting with us. Because in order to refrain from brokenness, I'll add, we need to keep ourselves whole, even if on the outside all is fallen apart. How do we attempt to do that? We search for resources where we are, inquiring and accessing the same, having a support system not of drainers but lifters, not those that bring or weigh us down but those that lift us up and serve as our cushion. So we must avoid those who are in a path of brokenness themselves and look for those that have embraced their brokenness and healed. The healing process can provide for us fixer uppers within our own lives. So if we must begin again and fix, we must begin again to give and surrender our lives to our creator in order to assist us and show us how to do the fixing. This should be done in spite of our imperfections and the battles we fight and we will succeed in the process. It will not be over night or instantaneous instead it will be victorious. This fixing is only possible if we have the desire to meet and want to arrive at the best

version of ourselves. Now that is real change in our reality and so let me ask again. Do we prefer this change or want change at all when we move along each level of our lives and adversity peeks out its ugly head? Can we fix ourselves and if we can't accept and embrace change, what role does self love play and how does it play with us? Fixing ourselves makes brokenness have beauty. Do we choose the beauty or the ugliness that we accept? Which one does our purpose call for and which one do we choose to embrace? And if we can't fix ourselves how in the world can change affect us, any change? How in this life do we intend to proceed with peace, with joy and love and us? In this time of the year where love is exercised hopefully sincerely we may want to answer or find the answers to the questions we so often ask relative to fixing us and healing us and loving us unconditionally with no holds bar.

Written by Aken Vivian Wariebi





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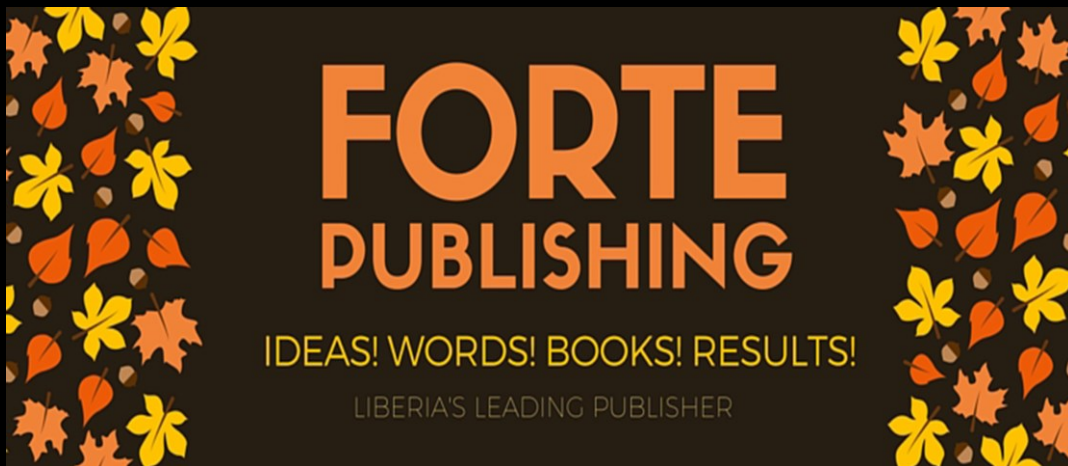
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The Importance of Responding to Email Messages [A Liberian case]

Emmanuel Gbanja Luke

B. S. IT, MSIS., MSHI

Information technology or IT as it is usually called in all industries, is very essential to every business existence globally. Information technology may have a broad meaning, but in the context of business or other enterprises, it is the application of computers to store, study, retrieve, transmit, and manipulate data, or information. This means that businesses or enterprises (for-profit and not-for-profit) who use computers for their daily activities, are always in need of qualified potential IT employees. Globally, there are thousands if not millions of IT jobs that are waiting to be fill by employers.

On the other hand, students studying in the IT field do so with the hope of getting employ by a business to fulfill that business IT needs. These business IT needs includes hiring qualified employees to fill positions as Chief Information Office, Database Administrator, Database Analyst, Programmers, Developers, and Helpdesk, just to name a few. And salaries of these jobs are nothing to laugh at. The median annual wage for computer and IT occupations is about \$45,000 higher than that for all other professions, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. And I would imagine that other parts of the work have very good competitive salaries for IT professionals.

Why it's true that businesses have the jobs and IT students hope to fill those jobs one day, it takes hard work and dedication to the IT field to get hire in one of those positions by potential employers. And it's even harder when you don't have IT background to get an entry-level position, or know someone in the industry that can help you land a job. There are also those individuals that understand the IT field and are hire quickly, and there are some that are smarter and are hire straight out of college. And there are some individuals that are just lucky to get hire in the IT field.

However, for those that do not have IT backgrounds, not very smart, do not know anyone that can help them get hire in an IT field related positions, or are not lucky to get hire in the IT field, there are steps you can take to get your foot in the door in an IT related position in almost any company. I called these steps, 'The Keys to a Successful Information Technology Career'.

These key steps are:

Degree. Whatever degree you can obtain (Associate, Bachelor, Master, or Doctorate) now, go for it, as it will pay off in the future in your search for IT jobs. Statistically, those with degrees are hire with higher salaries than those that do not. College graduates tend to understanding of what types of jobs are available, how to prepare for those jobs or how to go after them.

Certifications. Adding any type of IT certifications to whatever degree you have in the IT helps potential

employers to start looking at your resume with interest. Certificates can range from the basic, The Computer Industry Association (CompTIA) A+ to any certificate in Networking, Security, Application, Developers, and Programming. This can lead to you being hire.

Knowledge and Skill. Hands-on technical skill and theoretical knowledge, persistence and intuitive, have people and communication skills, and be a lifelong learner in the IT field. If the IT field is where you want to work and make it to the top with great salaries, you must be will to learn and aware of new technologies, because IT consistently change.

Experience. Experience in any industry counts lot, and so is in IT. Acquiring the necessary experience while you are in college or right after you graduate, is vital in landing and IT job faster. While in college, individuals looking to work in the IT field should always seek means of obtaining experience through internship with organizations in the It field, work with temporary agencies that will hire and send them to companies in the IT business. Working with temporary agencies help potential IT person gained the necessary insight experience in the field. Furthermore, temporary agencies may send you multiple companies over the year, and with each company you work, you gain different experience and can look great on your resume in the future. Volunteer you time to help others with IT issue, and look for ways to do that by all account.

Network. The way people make it in life is by how they navigate it through fiends, and looking for job is no different. Starting your network while you are in college prove to be a starting point when looking for job. Enlarging your network through co-workers, acquaintances, also prove to be remarkably helpful during job hunt.

Relocate. You have to be willing to move in this industry to network and gain experience. In rural areas, there are fewer jobs in computer science, and the people who fill them don't leave those jobs. In cities, there's more turnover and opportunity for advancement.

Pay Cut. To make it in the IT industry, you also have to be willing to take a pay cut if it means going somewhere to get that experience. The money will increase again if you are persistent about what you want to do.

Currently, there are lots of individuals including myself that followed these key steps, and are doing exceptionally well in the IT field than they expected. Taking the appropriate measures in the IT field can mean obtaining a successful IT career or not.



Emmanuel G. Luke

is an Information Technology Instructor at North Plate Community College in the USA

WORDS OF NIA

On the road to SUCCESS or TO YOUR DESTINY

On the road to SUCCESS or TO YOUR DESTINY, there are quite a few scary parts. The bottom of the ladder for one.

A friend recently posted- DO NOT DESPISE THE BOTTOM RUNGS IN THE ASCENT TO GREATNESS. Starting at the bottom builds character. Some think they should start in the middle but entitlement teaches few lessons and gives a person a false sense of what they can achieve with very little work.

Another scary part of the ladder to your destiny is about 3 rungs from the top. I'm choosing the 3rd from the top because you can STILL SEE that one. You can look down from it to see how far you've come. 3rd from the top, you can see at least one of the other 2.

Besides, that 3RD RUNG FROM THE TOP is where we become exhausted. That's where we say we can't go any further. That's where we might want to turn around to go back. WHY? Because the end of the journey, the goal we want to reach, the brass ring(if you will) is just beyond our vision. This is where some panic and STOP or EVEN REVERSE!

"I can't see how much further I have to go, maybe it's too far.

What if I can't make it?

What if I fall?

What if... ??

NO! NO! NO! OH NO!

This is where YOU HAVE TO PUSH. It's that ALMOST MOMENT!! There was a gospel song that said "I'M TOO CLOSE..." i don't remember all the words but I know my uncle used to play it as a motivator. If he was going on a job interview, if he was going to make a sale or get another contract signed, if he was going after something he truly wanted, he'd play that song >LOUD< as he was getting himself together. He'd get himself all pumped up, go out and come back happy. Success every time? Of course not.

The point is, he geared himself up TO BE successful. When it came, he was ready to appreciate it!

Next time you have REACHED YOUR GOAL -ALMOST; picture yourself reaching beyond the cloud that's hiding that last part of your journey or that last rung on the ladder. Picture yourself extending your hand blindly into your future and GOD reaches and pulls you the rest of the way and says, "YOU MADE IT!" Go to your destiny.

21-2-2017 © RuNett Nia Ebo,

Poet of Purpose

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Letter to My Enslaved Ancestor

11/10/16

No one has ever thanked you for your sacrifice.
Some even behave as if your capture was your fault.

I read that some jumped ship and took their babies too.
I accept that one of them was not you
If you had died there would be no me.

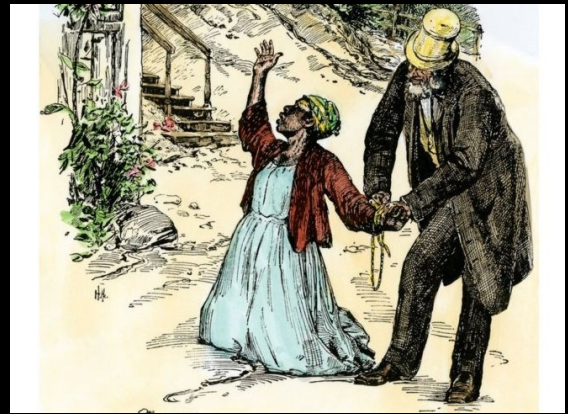
No one has ever thanked you for your martyrdom.
You gave up the essence of you.

I regret I never met you
Yet, I know
I could not have lived in your time.
My spirit's too hot.

My blood runs too cold
and when I am abused, misused;
my tongue is too bold.
Your silence gave me life.

Your core had to be strong
to endure so much wrong
and withstand such indignities
all day long.

You held your tongue
so mine could freely flow.



Letter to My Enslaved Ancestor (continued)

No one ever praised your concession.
I'm sorry I couldn't touch you,
couldn't hold you close
after the beatings and rapes,
couldn't speak into your ear
to say that change DID come;

Not perfect but better because we excel

They're still trying to keep us captive,
strangling our education, paralyzing
our rights,
forcing our incarceration,
killing each man-child among us.
They are slaves to their own hate.

I wish I could have saved your tears,
put them in a vial to
nourish seeds in my lifetime
so your past would shower my future.

No one has ever recognized your
forfeit.

You put your fight on hold
so I could do it.

You postponed your flight to freedom
so I'd have mine.

You have my respect. You are all I
admire.

You endured so I could be
everything I desire.

I recognize your agony.
It fuels my fire.

To all that was ripped from you,
I now lay claim.

I embrace my heritage that
was stolen

and I give you back your name
Thank you for me.



RuNett Nia Ebo, Poet of Purpose, is a resident of NW Philadelphia and married to William Gray, Sr. She has been writing since age 10 (over 5 decades). She is published in several anthologies including Stand our Ground © 2013 and she collaborated with eight other senior poets on the anthology, Seniors Rockin' the Pen © 2014. She has self-published 8 chapbooks, 3 books of poetry, one CD and one fiction story, All For You © 2002. Her signature poem, "**Lord, Why Did You Make Me Black?**" © 1994, is also her contribution to Chicken Soup for the African-American Soul © 2004. Recently (Feb 2015) RuNett and Victoria, her Partner-In-Rhyme, released a poetry book they co-authored entitled Truth With Purpose © 2014.

In 1998, along with her brother, Darien and another musician, the late Keno Speller, Poet Ebo established Nia's Purpose: Poetry and Percussion @ Work. The trio used this vehicle to visit churches, schools and community

centers to share poetry, percussion and Black History with audiences of all ages.

She has guest appeared on cable, public televisions and radios shows. She acted on local stages in Philadelphia in addition to speaking and presenting at community events and local schools in Philadelphia, New York, Houston, Los Angeles, and St. Croix as well as several cities in New Jersey and Delaware.

Miss Ebo wrote the play based on her signature poem, Lord Why Did You Make Me Black which has been performed by the Fresh Visions Youth Theatre Group as part of their Ebony Kaleidoscope #9
 (end of the year) shows.

In addition to other awards received over the years, she was recently presented with The 2014 Philadelphia Black Poetry Honors for over 20 years of Poetic Excellence by Poetic Ventures and The Black Authors Tour (May). She also received the Golden Mic Award from Rick Watson and World Renowned Entertainment (July).

Ten years ago, in 2006, Poet Ebo, established POET-IFY: Poetry to Edify, a poetry venue she hosts bi-monthly from Feb. to Oct. with her co-host, Victoria "The Axiom" Peurifoy. She manages the MTM Band that has played for this venue since it started. She accepted the Lord into her life in 1980 and is a member of Germantown Church of the Brethren.

SHORT STORY

"THE DEADLY SECRET" [Parts 1&2]

It was fall of 2016 and I was the new girl in town. My family and I had recently moved to Minnesota. My family consists of, my younger sister Evelyn, my older brother Johnny, my mother Judy, my father Chris and me Savannah. We are a very close-knit, typical family that ate dinner together every night and asked how each other's day went. My brother, sister and I started attending Cooper High School. It was junior year and I didn't know a soul.

On my first day, a couple girls came up to me, at my locker, and introduced themselves. One was Cindy, Cindy was really tall I'd say about 5'9, light skinned with long, bushy, curly brown hair. She had a warm friendly smile. The other girl was Rebecca, she and Cindy were quite fond of each other. Rebecca was a little shorter than Cindy was. She had big greyish brown eyes, straight brown hair and a wide mouth full of a bunch of pearly white teeth you couldn't miss.

Rebecca and Cindy were really cool and well known in the school. I guess it's safe to say that they were "popular" which made me somewhat popular as well for hanging out with them.

A couple months along and we're still kicking it. One day after school, Cindy invited Rebecca and me to a weekend party her ex-boyfriend Dion and his buddy were throwing. Dion was fiiiiiiiiinnneeee; tall dark and handsome, 6'2 with smooth chocolate skin and well-built. One could tell that he was putting in some work at the gym faithfully. He had these beautiful light brown eyes with juicy pink lips and a peach fuzz beard, fully waved, that connected to his clean fresh cut face.

Anyways y'all get the picture the boy was fine, but that's my girl's old boo which means he was off limits. I am just admiring the dude.

Dion's friends, Jeremiah, was damn fine too, he was my complexion light skinned, tall too with a slim muscular figure. He had long black

curly hair that he held back into a pony tail. Picture a case where Quincy Brown and Halle Barry had a baby boy- Jeremiah would be him."

"The party was lit; everyone 'turnt t'f up' having a good time except for me. I was the quiet one in the bunch, Cindy caked up with Dion in one corner of the room and Rebecca was dancing with someone I didn't know.

Jeremiah spotted me being a lame and started walking towards me. In my head, I'm thinking "omg please don't come over here, what would I possibly say to this sexy ass guy headed my way; what if I say some dumb shit and make him leave laughing"

"Hi." Jeremiah said, "I'm Jeremiah."

"I know who you are." (Me playing it cool). He smiled the most beautiful smile I've ever seen on a human.

"I've noticed you for a while now around school but I've never gotten the courage to say anything until now." He said.

I could swear my heart tripled its rate and the room spun. "Noticing me, dam!" I thought to myself.

Part 2 "It's Monday morning, back at school Cindy and Rebecca are giving me a hard time about what went down with me and Jeremiah at the party. Even though nothing major besides talking happened, they were both in my ear nonstop about how Jeremiah and me are so in "love" blah blah blah. I could honestly care less about him, to me he was just another teenage boy looking for a girl for a quick nut, so I played it cool with him but we did keep in touch on a friendship level. I was very cautious when it came to boys, me and my sister Evelyn had a very close relationship with our dad and older brother Johnny. They pretty much schooled us on teenage boys, after all that knowledge, I was aware of the "dangers" lol. Jeremiah was nice though, he understood clearly about boundaries, he always greeted me with sweet text messages here and there. Let's just say he knew how to keep a smile on my face as needed

A few months went by and our friendship has gotten a bit deeper than expected, we were hanging out almost every day at school. We went out to the movies a few times and out to

eat a couple of times with some of our friends. Saturday afternoon we were at Dave and Buster's with some friends, I was sitting next to Jeremiah a group of girls walked by our table and recognize Jeremiah. Apparently, it was his ex-girlfriend Keisha and her friends. Keisha was a pretty girl but seemed nothing like Jeremiah's type. She was loud and kind of bitchy (I'm not trying to be rude). She came over to our table and instantly got irritated at the sight of us sitting so close. She was completely rude and demanded that Jeremiah follow her away from our group so they could "talk". Jeremiah wasn't a rude guy so he politely excused himself "I'll be right back y'all excuse me please". "What's up Keisha?"

"I miss you baby" said Keisha

Jeremiah rolled his eyes in disgust. "Why are you playing games, you broke up with me for my friend and now you miss me?" You could tell Jeremiah was getting upset. Keisha leaned in to kissed him but he pushed her off. Rebecca and I were all eyes. Keisha started yelling and cursing at Jeremiah for turning her down, at this point I could tell she was a little bit intoxicated. Keisha then walked over to our table and smacked me dead in my face trying to fight me. Mind you I'm a tiny girl who's never gotten into any altercations before.

I was shocked at what just happened. Keisha thought I was Jeremiah's girlfriend and the reason why he turned her down. Jeremiah quickly ran over and grabbed Keisha and moved her away from me but not quickly enough before she started pulling my hair. Cindy and Rebecca were about to whop Keisha's ass until Jeremiah yanked her drunk ass and yelled for her friends to come get her. I ran out of Dave and Busters and Jeremiah ran after me, grabbed me and gave me the warmest hug apologizing for his ex's actions. Damn! He smelled so good, I was quickly calm and he lifted my head and kissed me...

After that it was official Jeremiah was mine!

We were kind of the IT couple in school. We've been going together for about a month and a half now, my sister and brother approved of our relationship, I was shocked with my brother because he was very protective of me and my sister, but Jeremiah never gave any

reasons for my brother to disapprove. Now it was time to break the news of my new and first relationship with my parents. I told my mom first that I was interested in someone and that he was interested in me too. I never really used the words "Boyfriend or relationship" it felt awkward, but my mom took it better than I expected. She eventually told my dad and they were both eager to meet this guy that's caught my attention." Jeremiah's birthday came and we had a big party, his parents let him use their house to throw the party while they both were away for business trips. By now, we have been a couple close to 3 months and things were heating up. At the party, we went upstairs to his room; my heart was pounding fast for a few minutes. When we got inside, he sat on the bed and motioned for me to come over and sit on his lap. We started kissing passionately. He laid me down on his bed got on top of me. He unzipped my pants, put his hands down there and started playing with me. He pulled down my pants got lower on the bed and started eating me so good. I thought we were already having sex, a few minutes after and I'm wet as hell and already came. He gets back on top on me, continues to kiss me. We made love. I was so tired when we finished. We both just laid there with goofy ass smiles on our faces before we went back down to the party."

"Three weeks after our first time having sex I was having really bad headaches and fevers, Jeremiah was concerned so he urged me to go get myself checked out at the clinic, we both went together..."



My name is **Miatta**; I'm 22 years old and the mother of a beautiful 2 year old daughter. I came to the U.S 15 years ago from Ghana. I've never really had any interest in writing, and I was also never really good. I wanted to try something new and a bit out of my comfort zone and did a story writing game on facebook that got me to write this short story here. I don't really have any hobbies, but I do enjoy working with food. I'm currently working as a cook. I'm attending culinary arts school and I have dreams of opening up my own bakery/restaurant in the next 5 years.

<https://www.facebook.com/miatta.brown>

**AUTHOR
INTERVIEW 4**

Spotlight Author

DANIELLE BURTON



Liberian Literary Magazine conducted an interview with the DANIELLE BURTON 😊.

LLM: First, we would like to thank you for granting this interview. Let us kick off this interview with you telling us a little about yourself.... Tell us a little about yourself

I'm a native Detroiter. I lived a very sheltered life as a child, my mom was very over protective. I feel like that shaped me in many ways and has a lot to do with me being an introvert now.

Growing up I was an avid reader. A lot of my time was spent at libraries and I always went home with a huge stack of books, only to read them all in a week or two and be write back craving more.

Why writing?

As a child I was very anti-social, which was due to bullying I suffered from. That coupled with a less than happy home life caused me to become really closed off. To deal with my depression over situations out of my control I'd retreat to my own little world where I could be anything I wanted to be.

Before I even picked up a pen I was creating stories. Ones where I was the heroine and my life was anything I could imagine. It wasn't until I was 19 that I actually put words to paper. Over time my stories had begun to change and I was no longer the main character. The best way to describe it is mini movies playing in my head. This cast of characters was born and they were begging me to tell *their* stories. So I did.

I'm not sure where I would be without writing. It's so much a part of me now that losing it would be the equivalent to losing a limb.

What books have most influenced your life/career most?

Not so much books, than authors. Though romance is my main focus at the

moment I write a plethora of genres with my favorites being ones of the paranormal nature.

Horror and paranormal is what inspired me to write my first story (which I am still working 7 years later, I fear it will never be done). It's a dark fantasy or paranormal hybrid.

The authors which influenced my decision to get into the genre were L.A. Banks, Tananarive Due, Brandon Massey and TL Gardner. Up until that point I'd been reading either romance, or your run of the mill 'white hero' story.

Finding these authors and their books opened up a whole new world for me. Never before had I seen these types of books with black characters, characters who looked like me. I devoured everyone I could. It was when I ran out that I realized there weren't nearly enough of them. So with an idea in mind I sat down to pen my own.

I wanted to be like these authors, give something to the world, and show everyone that black people can be a whole lot more than what we are perceived as.



How do you approach your work?

I don't even know how to approach this question. I guess you can say I dive write in. I get bombarded with ideas on a daily basis.

If I'm already working on something I will jot them down and try to push them to the side and focus, but that doesn't always work.

I'm currently juggling 3 stories, 2 being my primary focus. I try to write every day when I can, usually with music in the background to set the mood for the specific story/chapter I'm working on.

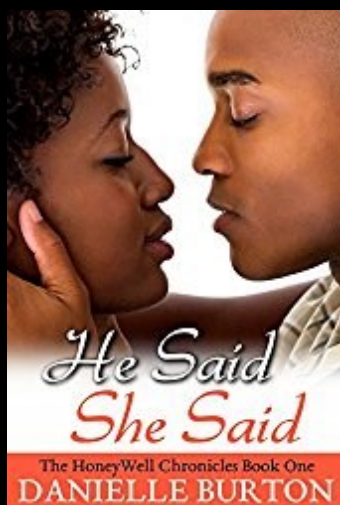
What themes do you find yourself continuously exploring in your work?

I've done a lot of parental angst, though it wasn't exactly planned. I think it has a lot to do with my own angst growing up.

Tell us a little about your book[s]- storyline, characters, themes, inspiration etc.

I'm currently working on a series titled College Daze. It centers around a group of students all from different walks of life and their time at college. My primary focus is the exploration of their lives outside of class so you won't see much of them actually sitting in a lecture hall, if ever.

I wanted to focus on the social aspect of college; relationships, friendships, family etc.



Book one of the series Excuse Me, First Love explores the lives of Jayson and Gabrielle, long lost childhood friends. They reconnect at college, thinking they'll slip right back into the easy friendship they once had but it's not at all what they

expected. With things like betrayal, misplaced loyalties, family drama, and a crazy girlfriend thrown into the mix, maintaining their relationship is no easy feat.

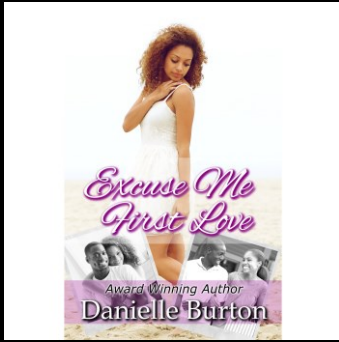
The story was inspired in part by Love & Basketball, in the respect of the childhood friendship.

What inspired you to write this title or how did you come up with the storyline?

I've always had a soft spot for love stories that begin as friendships, so it only felt right to create one of my own. I really don't know how I come up with my storylines half the time. They mostly just come to me, inspiration can strike out of anywhere.

Is there a message in your book that you want your readers to grasp?

My main goal in all my book is to showcase black characters in a different light. I want people to see that we are more than just stereotypes and that we come from all walks of life. We are gymnasts, scientists, dancers,



photographers, suburbanites, leaders, filmmakers, etc, and we all have a story to tell.

Is there anything else you would like readers to know about your book?

It's awesome! But seriously, I try to dig deep into the emotions of my characters in hopes of provoking the same within readers and I hope by story inspire someone.

Do you have any advice for other writers?

Write for yourself. Don't worry about trends or what others are doing. Nothing is cliché if you can put a new spin on. Most of all just write, get the story out and worry about making it pretty later.

What book[s] are you reading now? Or recently read?

Sadly, I am reading nothing right now. It's hard juggling so much and most of my free time is

spent writing. I do however have an extensive reading list I plan to dig into soon.

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

My debut novel, Excuse Me, First Love, will be available August 6th!

What are your current projects?

I am working on several things. A coming of age YA romance series, a romantic thriller, and the third installment of my College daze series.

Have you read book[s] by [a] Liberian author[s] or about Liberia?

Not yet.

Any last words?

Do what makes you happy and screw what anyone else thinks.



Bio



Danielle Burton is a native Detroiter and multi-genre novelist with deep appreciation for Black love. She's penned several novels, a few available online, but Excuse Me, First Love is the first on her publishing journey. Aside from her writing, Danielle is a self-taught graphic design artist and African culture enthusiast. She resides in Michigan with her beautiful, but troublesome toddler and her loving husband, though she has plans which involve world travel. An early version of her debut novel 'Excuse Me, First Love' garnered more than 1.8 million reads online in just a few short months and is winner of the Wattpad Hot New Adult Romance Award.

SHORT STORY

Althea Romeo Mark

Gone Up Country [Full]

Momolu had been sleepless for weeks. Thoughts of his nephew, Karpley, railroaded his mind. Karpley, like Momolu, had left his village, Selala, to come to the city with a dream and had lived only to fulfill it. Momolu knew that when Karpley at last returned up-country with the news of his accomplishments, he would never see him again.

Momolu parked his taxi, pushed the seat back, closed his eyes and prayed for sleep. But dissatisfaction and a bad stomach gnawed at him. He had come to the city to attend high school, had succumbed to its distractions and became a “gronna boy”—a street urchin. He had shined shoes, sold water to passengers in passing cars, ferried goods in wheel barrows from cargo ships to warehouses, fetched loads for anyone who

had a spare dollar. He, like the other “gronna boys,” had spent his earnings in rusty zinc shacks whose roofs were held down by stones. In these roadside watering holes, Momolu had drunk cane juice and wooed girls easily swayed by sweet-talk. Twenty years had passed. Now he was a father of six who occupied two rooms in a run-down country house* with no running water or electricity.

Someone knocked at the car window.

“Take me to Swaray Town,” the voice said.

Momolu recognized John Gbanga, the Deputy

Superintendent of Schools. He had come from the same county.

Momolu pushed the creaky door open and Gbanga sank into the frayed passenger seat. They snapped fingers in acknowledgement of each other.

“How yo’ family doin’ my man?” Momolu greeted.

“They alright.” John Gbanga went on to give a run-down on his family.

“You doin’ great, man.” Momolu praised him.

“Ah hear you nephew, Karpley,

graduated from University.”

“Yes, he went up-country to bring de good news”

“Ah yah, I can see de fellow now,” Gbanga said, “walking for hours through the forest to reach de village, chest poundin’ wid’ pride. Ah did the same ting.

Momolu, too, had dreamed of his people rushing towards him with pride, the way he knew they would now greet his lanky, nephew Karpley.

“I remember ma own home comin’,”

Gbanga’s voice dove into Momolu’s reverie.

“Man, dey set that village on fire with singin’, dancin’ and drummin’. They was so proud. When he comin’ back?”

“Ah don’ know.”

When he com’ back, tell him to drop by ma’ office. We need bright young men like him.”

“Ah will tell him.” Momolu couldn’t bring himself to tell Gbanga the news.

“Drop me in front of Tradevco Bank.” Gbanga ordered.

Momolu pulled over. The superintendent got out and tipped him ten cents.

“Cheap bugger,” Momolo muttered as he drove off. “Ah know he eating government

money*. Look at he big gut." He banged the dashboard knowing he would have to hand over most of his earnings to his boss-man.

Then, he drove around for another hour hunting for passengers. The night was deadly slow and after yawning repeatedly, he parked his taxi and tried again to sleep. But Karpley wormed his way back into his thoughts.

He remembered Karpley was not one to bear a grudge. Momolu hadn't offered his nephew shelter or food as tradition demanded. His nephew had embraced Momolu whenever he ran into him.

Told him how he washed, ironed clothes, cut grass, and cooked when odd jobs came his way. He laughed about scraping burnt rice crust from the bottom of pots in order to eat and quiet the growling in his stomach. He never seemed defeated. Ambition drove him forward.

Four months ago, Momolu had watched Karpley walk up to the podium in his purple gown and cap to receive his graduation

diploma. He had thrown his cap into the air like Americans do and shouted "hurrah!" along with four hundred graduates.

Karpley was proud of his B.A. in education.

Momolu had warned his nephew against going home to show off his university certificate when he had dropped by his home located in a slum.

It had been swamped in water and mud after a heavy downpour. Mosquitoes bred in puddles and tin cans. Karpley had walked on stepping stones to keep his feet dry, went past market stalls with leaky roofs, and market women swatting flies away from fresh fish, meat and greens.

"They goin' milk you like ah cow," Momolu had said. "Ask you for de world. Stick on you like ah leech or kill you."

"Uncle Momolu, you been in Walatayoo too long," Karpley had said.

"Ah not jokin'," retorted Momolu.

Karpley's narrow dark forehead wrinkled as he laughed. "Ah don't believe those stories of our people being jealous."

"Ah warnin' you oh."

"Why they goin' kill a relative who goin' help them?"

"Well, you goin' want to change them, take control of de clan."

"Why? No, ah won't do dat. You believe' all those foolish stories people tell to keep us from goin' back home and upliftin' our people. Is dat why you never went back home?"

"Yes," Momolu said, hanging his head.

"Ey!!" Karpley stared at him.

Momolu felt like a boy who had been caught naked in the moonlight. "Ah warning you," he said as Karpley departed. He knew Karpley was proud to be the vehicle of change. His heart burned whenever Karpley talked about his plans. He, Momolu should have been the one whose praises they would dance, sing and drum loudly to into the night.

Karpley believed he was the same man who ate rice and palm oil with his fingers while stooping round a large enamel basin with his clansmen. He believed he was the

same Karpley who hunted with his brothers and went to bush school to learn the ancient ways of his forefathers.

After the graduation ceremony, Karpley had travelled up-country on dusty unpaved roads to let his people know that he had fulfilled his dream, their dream. He wouldn't tell his clan how he had starved a lot of the time or how he had shared a room with others and sometimes a bed, when it was his turn. He wouldn't tell them how he slept on the floor and didn't complain about the candles he had used to read Shakespeare or work out geometric theorems.

But Momolu knew the clansmen would know Karpley had changed to a city man. They would see or imagine he moved differently, had a strange aura, another smell that set him apart from them. They would wonder if he had told ancestral secrets to the uninitiated—a betrayal unforgivable by their brotherhood. Would he take their wives away, meddle in things?

Momolu knew these thoughts would

ferment like palm wine in the village. He knew. He was one of the clan. They would feel that Karpley had betrayed them. They would organize a welcome party, wish Karpley a bright future, lay their expectations before him.

Momolu's stomach had churned the day he sat down and wrote the fateful letter about Karpley's intentions. His words had been venomous. A distant relative, Forday, who transported goods between Walatayo and Selala, had brought the letter with the news of Karpley's coming to the clan.

On Forday's return to the city, he had said that on the second day of celebrations and cane-juice-fuelled speeches in honor of the young man's success, Karpley keeled over while sipping his third gourd of palm wine. He had been complaining of a jabbing pain, had said that he felt his stomach was ripping apart. The clansmen told him that a little more palm wine would deaden the pain. After that he fell to the floor and began frothing at the mouth.

It's been months since Momolu wrote that letter to the clan.

It's been months since Momolu watched Karpley's lean, dark, face, and cheered him as he strode forward, towering above his mates, eyes sparkling with hope, ready to embrace destiny.

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1,361 words, revised
30.01.2015

***Country house** – a wood-framed house plastered with mud and cement and containing a long corridor that separated rooms on each side. It doesn't usually have electricity and running water.

***Ah know he eating government money**" - I know he is embezzling government money.

The end••••



Althea Romeo Mark

Herbert Logerie

Hebert Logerie

Please Show Up

Please show up
Wake up, get up
And speak up
Show your face
Be counted
And anointed
Leave a good trace
And a great behind
Be just, fair and kind
Fight like a winner
Like a brave soldier
Please show up
Wake up, get up
And speak up.

Please Show Up

Please show up
Wake up, get up
And speak up
Show your face
Be counted
And anointed
Leave a good trace
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Be just, fair and kind
Fight like a winner
Like a brave soldier
Please show up
Wake up, get up
And speak up.

Por Favor, Muéstrese

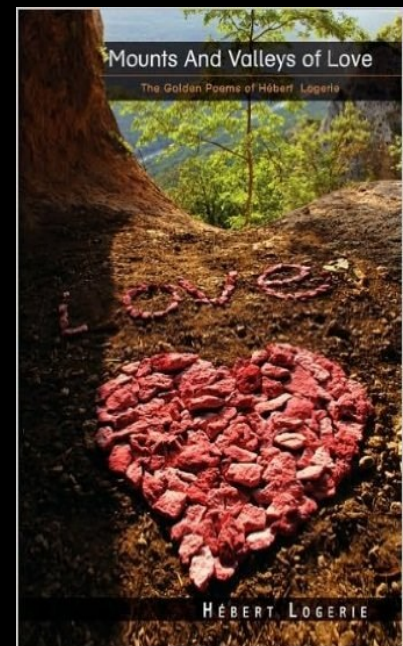
Por favor, muéstrese
Despiértate,
levántate
Y habla alto
Muestra tu rostro
Sé contado
Y ungido
Deje un buen rastro
Y un gran trasero
Sé justo y amable
Lucha como un
ganador
Como un valiente
soldado
Por favor, muéstrese
Despiértate,
levántate
Y habla alto.

This is a translation of
the poem [Please
Show Up](#)

Por Favor, Muéstrese

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Como un valiente
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Por favor, muéstrese
Despiértate,
levántate
Y habla alto.

This is a translation of
the poem [Please
Show Up](#)



Hebert Logerie

is the author of several
collections of poems.

Alumnus of: 'l'Ecole de
Saint Joseph'; 'the
College of Roger
Anglade'in Haiti;
Montclair High School
of New Jersey; and
Rutgers, the State
University of New
Jersey, USA.

He studied briefly at
Laval University,
Quebec, Canada. He's
a Haitian-American.

He started writing at a
very early age. My
poems are in French,
English, and Creole; I
must confess that most
of my beautiful and
romantic poems are in
my books.

<http://www.poemhunter.com/hebert-logerie>

<http://www.poesie.webnet.fr/vospoemes/logerie>

Hilal Karahan



Hilal is Turkish and has a known secret. She lives a triple life, all of which she is successful at, a mother, a poet and a medical doctor.

Göğün damarlarını gördüm

Çağladı gece:
gök yarıldı!

Sokaklarda cam kırsaklar...

Boşalmış zemberek!
gecenin yatağında
metal bir böcek: medeniyet!

Balkon ipinde kururken
gerçek, olağan karşılaşır
tanrılar da yasaklar da

Gecenin
kenti attığı yardan
hiçbir sabah çıkaramaz

“I saw the sky’s veins ”

Night splashed:
sky cracked!

Mares of glass in the streets ...

Relaxed spring!
civilization: metal insect
in the night’s bed.

While truth dries on a balcony rope,
we think that gods
and prohibitions are ordinary

No morning can save
from the cliff where
night throws the city

Ağır ağır indiniz merdivenlerini gecenin

Ağır ağır açılır kanatları gecenin:
ipek tül örter göğün yüzüne,
ateşli ağzına böceklerin

Sabret, değişir bir gecede,
sıkıntıya dönüşür her acı;

Bir gecede diner elbet
kalbi eriten
hesapsız sancı,

Geceye benzer aşk
içinden geçmeden anlaşılmaz;

Her acı anlaşılır
her geceye alışılır da
gece insana acımaz

“Slowly came you down the stairs of the night”

Wings of the night open slowly:
Covers with a silk veil the face of sky,
fervent mouths of insects

Be patient, in a night everything
changes,
each grief turns into boredom;

Indeed in one night stops
the vast pain
that melts the heart,

Love looks like night
You can’t get it unless you run through;

Every grief is undestood
every night loses her novelty
but night shows no mercy to man

Purgatory Poems

1/

Time is over... movement
hastily collected the streets
to bring at home;

Scattered with the Gaze,
images... figures... those curses
dancing in the mirror of attention
have revived

Being tired of confrontation
to rancor and insolvency,
the civilisation, this carrion bazaar,
comminuted the cities
and made their dust fly to sky!

Universe blenched from this fury,
kneeled down on its dark prayer rug,
faithfully turning prayer beads of objects
to beginning:

—Let's wait... wait...
waiting is safe.

2/

Time is over... the cloth of presence
wrinkled, perceptions and
judgements mixed together;

Were the skys metal, what was melting
and flooding in doomsday, through
fire balls and pouring in front of
guards of earth like colorful wools?

Fearful because of its wings,
as if a silly bird,
human, waiting inside ego cage,
how can be a remembered thing?

Suspecions, the bone migs
rolling inside the skull,
spoiled both rights and faiths

3/

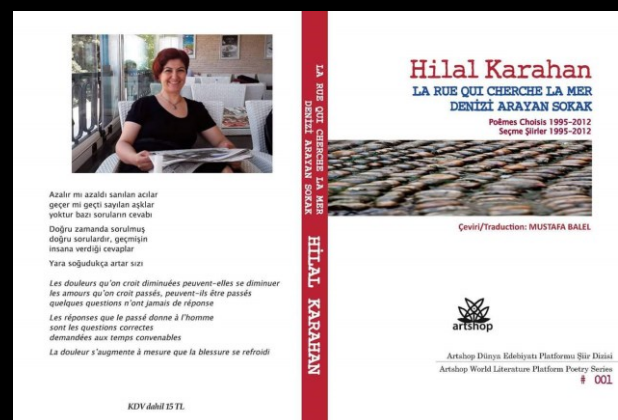
Time is over... you were a hidden
treasure, you wish to be seen,
neither known nor seen

There was so much secret
so many you we would see
if we waited with patience

We shook your delicacy
you are really made of
instead we loved your shell

4/

Time is over...



Alonzo "Zo" Gross

Ghetto TaleZ

He & his brother Alvin~
Hittin the block,
Scoutin'~
Young ThugZ,
Ta sell drugZ,
(I mean That White Talcum~)
ClotheZ,
Designer jeanZ,
Ta stay fly,
Jus Like a falcon ~
Servin fiendZ,
By any meanZ,
Jus Like Malcolm ~
So how come~?
They would then,
Hit a liquor store>
(So Brazen|)
High on more treeZ,
Than sycamore>
Wit CopZ chasin|
BulletZ racin|
Shell casingZ|
Till they both got hit,
The End of their hell raisin|.
Losin their heartbeatZ ()
Bloody Chests,
On the concrete ()
Guess they gave their heartZ,
2 tha streetZ ().
Mom on the corner waleZ----•
She lost,
a son plus a son+
So many ghetto taleZ---•
A ghetto tellZ---•
HereZ just one+.
zO



Alonzo "Zo" Gross

Born in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, raised in Allentown Pa. Zo graduated from William Allen High School. He went on to graduate from Temple university with a BA in English literature and a Minor in Dance. Zo started Dancing, writing songs, poetry, and short stories at the age of 7. Zo successfully performed at the Legendary Apollo Theater as a dancer at 18. Zo signed a contract with Ken Cowle of Soul Asyum Publishing in 2012, & released the book of poetry and art "Inspiration Harmony & The Word Within" Noveber 2012.

On December 2nd 2012 he won the Lehigh Valley Music Award for "Best Spoken Word Poet" at the LVMAS. In October 2014 Zo traveled to Los Angeles, California to be one of the featured poets/musicians in a documentary film called "VOICES" Directed by Gina Nemo. The Film is slated to be released in 2016. Zo was again Nominated for "Best Spoken Word Poet" again in 2016. Zo's Poetry has been featured in several anthologies, as well as magazines.

Zo's New Book of Poetry & Art "Soul EliXiR"... The WritingZ of Zo will be released in 2016, along with His Debut Rap CD "A Madness 2 The Method" to be released the same year.

Renee' B. Drummond-Brown

One on One

Just saw this photo
of Ty,
and
reminisced
in my head
'ov'r'
the years;
O'
them gyms
we played in.
Schenley High;
Fall league,
comes to mind.

Basketball
in her head,
heart,
and
hands.
Two thumbs up!!
Awesome layups
free throws,
foul shots;
always on point
'whomever'
she guarded.
'Ev'n' when
against
my very own daughters.
Yeah
her cousins;
now that's what's up!!!

I recollect
Ty holding
her coaches baby
on her lap,
if
given a break.
Then
guarding her opponents,

rotating back
'ov'r' to us
WITH A KISS
'anna'
SMILE
saying
"I'll be back at half time"
'ev'n' if
for
a lil' while!

Well God kept
Ty's score.
Now she's
on
point,
dribbling
The Fathers' ball
halfway down court,
guarding His gate;
never needing
time out,
nor
worrying
'bout'
who
she has to fake
out.

Score is never kept,
cause
she's on
that
winning team:
"The Heavenly Host"
with none other
than
her Father,
His Son,
and the
Holy Ghost
AKA
The Trinity.
What a dream
on Ty's team!!!

Ty
I 'seen' you play today
"One on One"
if only
a "cherry pick" away.

Dedicated to: LaShawn Lewis, in memory of her beloved daughter "Ty"
(HAPPY 27th BIRTHDAY TYLER "Ty").

A B.A.D. poem

Authored: "The Power of the Pen"
"SOLD: TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER"
"Renee's Poems with Wings are Words in Flight-I'll Write Our Wrongs"
and "Renee's Poems with Wings are Words in Flight".

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There's NO PLACE Like Home

Abuse is shown
fist are thrown
lies have grown
faces are frowned
money stolen,
far from a loan
Absolutely NO love shown
Unwanted babies born
Click your heels three times...
'An' run away
(IF ONLY IN YOUR MIND)
fast as you can
from home!

Author: Renee' Drummond-Brown
(Renee's Poems with Wings are Words in Flight)

Dedicated to: 'Dem' kids 'livin' on 'dem' streets

Poem #4 Poetry Challenge (day 4)

Thinking Out-loud

Think 'thunk'
Words lost
Lost words
Reflect trust
Hearing deliberate reasoning's
contemplated
pondering
seasons
JUST
THINKING
OUT-LOUD

Author: Renee' B. Drummond-Brown

Dedicated to: Poetic thoughts...



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Thelma Teetee Geleplay

PRISON BREAK

For so long we have been imprison
by fear and doubt
We always thought that we were
too little to be great
This sentence seemed like a life
time

Oh how miserable it felt to have
been locked up
Fear and doubt seemed mightier
than we ever imagined
Squeezing the strength of our
talents and imaginations.
They felt strangled within us.

The mind is the most powerful
workshop a man owns
But it can become weak once hit
by the chains of inferiority
Inferiority makes a man neglect his
great workshop to be messed up
by the dust of fear and cobwebs of
doubt

This makes him forget that he is the
artist of his beautiful future.
When left alone in this state, man
becomes a stranger to his
workshop
He looks on at it with disgusted
face but feels more comfortable in
others'.

Hit by wars and pestilence we
became prisoners

Beaten with whips of frustration and
stigmatization
It felt horrible to have a scar of our
own evil deeds
With broken hearts we bore the
pains that we felt
How long? How long? We cried
Time could not dry our wet face
nor mend our broken hearts
The quest for release became
stronger as the years passed by.

At last freedom decided to bill us
out
Our hearts melted at the news,
smile felt inevitable this time
Oh what joy freedom brings!
Finally the chains of negativity and
pessimism are loosed

The locks of fear and doubt are
broken
The gate of freedom is wide open
We are free to sketch the pictures
of our great future
To beautify it with the colors on our
mind
We can now have the experience
of a Prison Break
We are free at last.



Hasan ERKEK



DİLEK

Ah benim kırkık saçlı, ritmi aksak
ölçüsüz, uyaksız hayatım
çarpıp durma ruhumu kaldırım taşlarına
öpmelere, sevmelere açken her yanım
götürüp götürüp ölümün yatağına bırakma

WISH

Oh my rhymeless meterless life,
My arhythmic life with trimmed hair,
don't keep banging my soul on to sidewalk
stones
when all my being strives for kisses and lovely
touches,
don't keep taking me to the bed of death

English translation from Turkish: Tarık Günersel

Hasan ERKEK Prof. Dr. Erkek, is a poet, a playwright and a professor of drama. He has been awarded more than 20 prizes.

He published 25 artistic and scientific books in 12 different countries. He is a full professor at Anadolu University, Turkey.

He has written over twenty books, thirty plays for adults and children and won numerous awards.

He is a highly distinguished Turkish poet.

herkek@anadolu.edu.tr

hasan_erkek@yahoo.com

IF GOD WAS MAN

If God was a man,
I wonder how he would treat us
The way we lie through our teeth
The pretense of being godly Holy
Ghost Filled water baptized Sunday
Christians

If God was a man,
I wonder how he would treat us
Sinners judging other sinners who sin
differently
Sinners with weighty wallets and purses
are honored as moral examples to
follow

If God was a man,
I wonder how he would treat us
When the focus of today's messages
Are more on the Gospel of Prosperity
Than on the 'Salvation of the Soul'

If God was a man,
I wonder how he would treat us
When people select churches that
Tell them what they wish to hear
Rather than what the Bible says

If God was a man,
I wonder how he would treat us
The way we look down on other
people we think, they are not of our
social class
The way we insult God's handy works

If God was a man,
I wonder how he would treat us
Would he judge us as instantly as we
pass judgement on others?
Unforgiving and bitter as we are
Taking an eye for an eye and a tooth
for a tooth
How would God treat us, if he were
man as we are?

Kpana Nnadia Gaygay

Fethi Sassi

شَاهِدْتُهَا

كَانَتْ تَسْرِي دَاخِلَ جُبَّةِ
عُرُوبِ

شَاهِدْتُهَا
مَرَّةً تَجْرِي خَلْفَ شَقَائِقِ
الْعُرُوبِ
ثُمَّ اخْتَفَتْ

SUNSET

I have seen her
...
running behind
anemone sunset
and she was
disappeared .

City Lights 1961

Diane di Prima, 1934

Going there for the first time
it was so much smaller then
that crowded downstairs full of
poetry
racks of tattered little mags against
the wall
those rickety white tables where
folks sat reading/writing
Vesuvio's was like an adjunct office

Arriving again a year later, two kids
in tow
Lawrence gave me a huge stack
of his publications
“I've got books” he said “like other
people have mice”
And North Beach never stopped
being mysterious
when I moved out here in 1968
that publishing office on Filbert &
Grant was a mecca
a place to meet up with my kids if
we got separated
during one of those innumerable
demonstrations
(tho Lawrence worried, told me I
shd keep them
out of harm's way, at home) I
thought they shd learn
whatever it was we were learning—
Office right around the corner from
the bead store
where I found myself daily, picking
up supplies
How many late nights did we haunt
the Store
buying scads of new poems from
all corners of the earth
then head to the all-night Tower
Records full of drag queens
& revolutionaries, to get a few
songs
And dig it, City Lights still here, like
some old lighthouse
though all the rest is gone,
the poetry's moved upstairs, the
publishing office
right there now & crowds of people
one third my age or less still haunt
the stacks
seeking out voices from all quarters
of the globe

From *The Poetry Deal* (City Lights Books,
2014) by Diane di Prima. Copyright © 2014
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You Foolish Men [full]

Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz [1651- 1695]

You foolish men who lay
the guilt on women,
not seeing you're the cause
of the very thing you blame;

if you invite their disdain
with measureless desire
why wish they well behave
if you incite to ill.

You fight their stubbornness,
then, weightily,
you say it was their lightness
when it was your guile.

In all your crazy shows
you act just like a child
who plays the bogeyman
of which he's then afraid.

With foolish arrogance
you hope to find a Thais
in her you court, but a Lucretia
when you've possessed her.

What kind of mind is odder
than his who mists
a mirror and then complains
that it's not clear.

Their favour and disdain
you hold in equal state,
if they mistreat, you complain,
you mock if they treat you well.

No woman wins esteem of you:
the most modest is ungrateful
if she refuses to admit you;
yet if she does, she's loose.

You always are so foolish
your censure is unfair;

one you blame for cruelty
the other for being easy.

What must be her temper
who offends when she's
ungrateful and wearies
when compliant?

But with the anger and the grief
that your pleasure tells
good luck to her who doesn't love
you
and you go on and complain.

Your lover's moans give wings
to women's liberty:
and having made them bad,
you want to find them good.

Who has embraced
the greater blame in passion?
She who, solicited, falls,
or he who, fallen, pleads?

Who is more to blame,
though either should do wrong?
She who sins for pay
or he who pays to sin?

Why be outraged at the guilt
that is of your own doing?
Have them as you make them
or make them what you will.

Leave off your wooing
and then, with greater cause,
you can blame the passion
of her who comes to court?

Patent is your arrogance
that fights with many weapons
since in promise and insistence
you join world, flesh and devil.

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and Shearsman Books Ltd.**

One race, one blood one Liberia

Oh children, you are one race, one blood all Liberians
All of you came from distant lands and found this country...all Liberians
Fate took some in chains to foreign plantations working hard, building the lands of strangers...but you are all Liberians
Some of your brothers remained here keeping your country, your heritage left by your ancestors, your common patrimony you are all Liberians.

Oh children, you are one history, one culture, one koloqua, all Liberians
After years of segregation, some on foreign plantations others here, you had a family reunion, first in 1822 ...all Liberians.

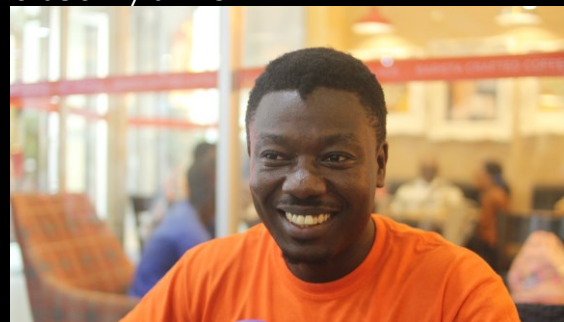
The mystery of time and distance made you fought, divided and separated, please remember you are one family bound by history & heritage...all Liberians

After building distant lands, please join hands with thy brothers that kept your lands and build your world.

Oh children, one family, one color, one country, one world...please know that you are all Liberians.

Scanty Smiles

Ever seen a smile that cuts short with a sigh?
It glows like lightening
Stands upright and flows beautifully like a fountain
And drops in glamour, splashing its body on earth's treasure
Beneath those smiles is a dark, wicked, omen
Teary, dark eyes, red like vampires
The finesse of the face that sparks with splendor
Holds a mouth filled with venom
Desperate to strike and clutch a prey
Trust those smiles boy?
But, oh boy, keep one eye open
Lest you sleep and yea a strike, stiff like a cobras' sting
Brings you crushing beneath earth's untrusted brink
And those smiles stare at you and sigh
Small, foolish boy, who told you thou were great?
You'd rot below my feet and I'd triumph over your face
Feigning my tears from a crocodile's eyes
Next time, oh yea, you'd never trust a scanty smile



Lekpele M. Nyamalon

I. Family Trees [P2]

(3)

father, an acacia, was just the same only he herded cattle while brother hustled steel. and he handed out proverbs with a largess too tardy to make anyone fluent. there was always a tangle of thornwire barbed under his skin. i cannot remember the history of the scars, except to know that it was our own uncles who lit the fire. the acacia, then, is a tree that survives immolation, that screeches with laughing children, and that cries like a man, pregnant with meaning.

(4)

the sister is difficult. she is dropping frangipani blossoms on the soil-red plot while things fall apart. her ivory bloodlets are the inverse of the mother's. everything is chilled, yet somewhere within, sun coals burnish her buds. she is a locked bowl of bee's gold. she is equally silent, equally flammable.

*Tsitsi Jaji*Culled from **Carnaval** © 2014

How to Make a Shadow

Give her the spirit of a dog,
a black dog with a sword in her paws.
Tether her. Put Position
at the bottom of a well filled with rats,
rats with shining backs, their eyes shillings
in the pocket of a man who sweats,
sweats at the ass crack for Position.
Say to her, *bark*, and she moans. Sudden chorus.
The grass sits up to listen and asks:
Who is the weed that will not sever?
Why won't the earth take water? Say, *bark*,
and she bites the space between ankle and sole.
Say, *no*,
to her. *Be quiet*. Like, may the seed stop up your
throat.
Or, hold the sword between your teeth. Cut your
tongue.
Say, I nigger your heart, I eat your sleep. I give you the
dream
where you kneel and can't straighten.
Get down from here, into the well.
Fight the rat or let him ride
like a disaster on your shoulders. Say, *no*.
Say, *don't open your mouth again*. Or try to open it
with a bridle there. I ride you when you're so
small, small beast.No.
It will ring as omen: smiling dead squirrel at the
curb,
shining scythe under a bus bench,
dead birds in a nest, dark feather under the
doormat.
Black tongue, black roof of mouth, black paw pads,
black nails, black snout, black spit.
Say, *die*, and she comes like a jinn,
silk shadow at your bedside:
I nigger your dreams,
bitter seed in the well of your throat. I will not
scatter
from your heart. I grow a tree there.
I rest in its shadow.

Ladan Osman © 2014Culled from **Ordinary Heaven**

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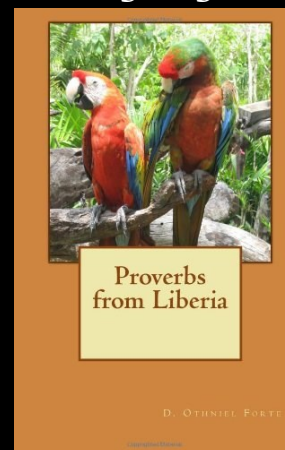
1. The roof of the house fights with the rain, but those it protects ignore it until it starts to leak. We tend to ignore the importance of some people or things in life. They seem so easy or they are so readily available that we do not consider the actual amount of work that goes into it. It is only when it loses the battle with the rain and starts leaking that we know how much value it had.

2. The walls have ears. Our elders caution people to be careful of what they say and where they say it. If one thinks that the comfort of a room is enough, then one is mistaken. Anything that is said to another person, eventually finds its way out. The best way to avoid this is to say what one means. If you say something privately, be willing to defend it publicly. Do not spread lies. Although it may in secrecy, if it comes out, you will be embarrassed.

3. When a group of people eat, the one who is too talkative leaves with his stomach empty. It is not good to

eat and talk. Apart from the health reasons, the one who talks hardly has time to put food in his mouth, by the time he is finished talking, he realizes that the food is finished and he is hungry. There are times when we should focus on one thing and complete it before we do another.

4. When the cock drinks water, it raises its head to God in thankfulness. Here again we see religion surfacing. The value of gratitude is priceless in our culture. If the cock can be grateful for its provision, what about you? This is a question for all to ponder. When people provide for us, we must endeavor to show appreciation for it. When they help us, we must be thankful and try to keep the circle going.



D. Othniel Forte

GIFTS OF THE MASTERS

In this segment, we run poems from some of the greatest literary masters that ever lived.

Night Funeral in Harlem

Langston Hughes

1902 - 1967

Night funeral
In Harlem:

Where did they get
Them two fine cars?

Insurance man, he did not pay—
His insurance lapsed the other
day—
Yet they got a satin box
for his head to lay.

Night funeral
In Harlem:

Who was it sent
That wreath of flowers?

Them flowers came
from that poor boy's friends—
They'll want flowers, too,
When they meet their ends.

Night funeral
in Harlem:

Who preached that
Black boy to his grave?

Old preacher man
Preached that boy away—
Charged Five Dollars
His girl friend had to pay.

Night funeral
In Harlem:

When it was all over
And the lid shut on his head
and the organ had done played
and the last prayers been said
and six pallbearers
Carried him out for dead
And off down Lenox Avenue
That long black hearse done sped,
The street light
At his corner
Shined just like a tear—
That boy that they was mournin'
Was so dear, so dear
To them folks that brought the
flowers,
To that girl who paid the preacher
man—
It was all their tears that made
That poor boy's
Funeral grand.

Night funeral
In Harlem.

Life is fine! Fine as wine! Life is fine!
From *The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes*,
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COUNTEE CULLEN

1903 - 1946

I Have a Rendezvous With Life

I have a rendezvous with Life,
In days I hope will come,
Ere youth has sped, and strength
of mind,
Ere voices sweet grow dumb.
I have a rendezvous with Life,
When Spring's first heralds hum.

Sure some would cry it' s better
far
To crown their days with sleep
Than face the road, the wind and
rain,
To heed the calling deep.
Though wet nor blow nor space I
fear,
Yet fear I deeply, too,
Lest Death should meet and claim
me ere
I keep Life' s rendezvous.

Bob Blackwell

Spirit Of Africa

To
visit Africa,
to spend time
to notice
beauty of the land.
To feel its heat,
to drink it' s waters,
to observe, to marvel,
at its creatures,
great and small.

To see the diversity
of its people, in all
their rainbow shades,
to feel their warmth,
their love, their
big-heartedness.

Means Africa,
has touched your soul,
you have breathed in
a love of Africa, a love
that never ceases,
a love that never
goes away.
you have been

delighted, charmed,
have become
enchanted by
The Spirit of Africa.

For Africa is a
land of spirits,
they occupy dirt,
soil, trees, flowers
fruit, food that feeds;
the mountains, streams,
rivers, seas, oceans,
air, the breath of life, and
all the people of its land.

Africa believes,
that before time,
before,
things began,
there was nothing,
save for a void,
a sphere of spirit
that knew no limit;
it did not have a name.

This one spirit split
broke up, spread,
to change, to
create our world,
and all that' s here.
This one spirit
known to us as love
stays the same, to
invade all it made,
all that visit, especially
those that stay.

Now if you leave,
you' ll always
yearn, you' ll hunger
you' ll always
have that longing
to return.

Phyllis Wheaton

**On Being Brought From
Africa To America**

'Twas mercy brought me from my
Pagan land,
Taught my benighted soul to
understand
That there's a God, that there's a
Saviour too:
Once I redemption neither sought
nor knew.
Some view our sable race with
scornful eye,
"Their colour is a diabolic die."
Remember, Christians, Negro's,
black as Cain,
May be refin'd, and join th' angelic
train.

Claude McKay

Africa

The sun sought thy dim bed and
brought forth light,
The sciences were sucklings at thy
breast;
When all the world was young in
pregnant night
Thy slaves toiled at thy monumental
best.
Thou ancient treasure-land, thou
modern prize,
New peoples marvel at thy
pyramids!
The years roll on, thy sphinx of riddle
eyes
Watches the mad world with
immobile lids.
The Hebrews humbled them at
Pharaoh's name.

Cradle of Power! Yet all things were
in vain!
Honor and Glory, Arrogance and
Fame!

They went. The darkness swallowed
thee again.
Thou art the harlot, now thy time is
done,
Of all the mighty nations of the
sun.
Truth

Lord, shall I find it in Thy Holy
Church,
Or must I give it up as something
dead,
Forever lost, no matter where I
search,
Like dinosaurs within their ancient
bed?

I found it not in years of Unbelief,
In science stirring life like budding
trees,
In Revolution like a dazzling thief-
Oh, shall I find it on my bended
knees?

But what is Truth? So Pilate asked
Thee, Lord,
So long ago when Thou wert
manifest,
As the Eternal and Incarnate
Word,
Chosen of God and by Him singly
blest:
In this vast world of lies and hate
and greed,
Upon my knees, Oh Lord,
for Truth I plead.

Anne Spencer

(1882-1976)

Black Man o' Mine

Black Man o' Mine,
If the world were your lover,
It could not give what I give to
you,
Or the ocean would yield and you
could discover
Its ages of treasure to hold and to
view;
Could it fill half the measure of my
heart's portion. . .
Just for you living, just for you giving
all this devotion,
Black man o' mine.

Black man o' mine,
As I hush and caress you, close to
my heart,
All your loving is just your needing
what is true;
Then with your passing dark comes
my darkest part,
For living without your love is only
rue.
Black man o' mine, if the world
were your lover
It could not give what I give to
you.

Jessie Redmon Fauset

(1882-1961)

Rencontre

MY heart, which beat so
passionless,
Leaped high last night when I
saw you.
Within me surged the grief of years

And whelmed me with its
endless rue.

My heart which slept so still, so
spent,

Awoke last night-to break
anew."

Sterling A. Brown

(1901-1989)

Mose

Mose is black and evil
And damns his luck
Driving Mister Schwartz's
Big coal truck.

He's got no gal,
He's got no jack,
No fancy silk shirts
For his back.

But summer evenings,
Hard luck Mose
Goes in for all
The fun he knows.

On the corner kerb
With a sad quartette
His tenor peals
Like a clarinet.

O hit it Moses
Sing att thing
But Mose's mind
Goes wandering;--
And to the stars
Over the town
Floats, from a good man
Way, way down—

A soft song, filled
With a misery
Older than Mose
Will ever be.

Angelina W. Grimke

[1880–1958]

The Black Finger

I have just seen a beautiful thing
Slim and still,
Against a gold, gold sky,
A straight cypress,
Sensitive
Exquisite,

A black finger
Pointing upwards.
Why, beautiful, still finger are you
black?
And why are you pointing
upwards?

Gil Scott-Heron

The Revolution Will Not Be Televised

You will not be able to stay home,
brother.
You will not be able to plug in, turn
on and cop out.
You will not be able to lose yourself
on skag and skip,
Skip out for beer during
commercials,
Because the revolution will not be
televised.

The revolution will not be televised.
The revolution will not be brought
to you by Xerox
In 4 parts without commercial
interruptions.
The revolution will not show you
pictures of Nixon
blowing a bugle and leading a
charge by John
Mitchell, General Abrams and Spiro
Agnew to eat
hog maws confiscated from a
Harlem sanctuary.
The revolution will not be televised.

The revolution will not be brought
to you by the
Schaefer Award Theatre and will
not star Natalie
Woods and Steve McQueen or
Bullwinkle and Julia.
The revolution will not give your
mouth sex appeal.
The revolution will not get rid of the
nubs.
The revolution will not make you
look five pounds
thinner, because the revolution will
not be televised, Brother.

There will be no pictures of you and
Willie May
pushing that shopping cart down
the block on the dead run,
or trying to slide that color television
into a stolen ambulance.
NBC will not be able predict the
winner at 8:32
or report from 29 districts.
The revolution will not be televised.

There will be no pictures of pigs
shooting down
brothers in the instant replay.
There will be no pictures of pigs
shooting down
brothers in the instant replay.
There will be no pictures of Whitney
Young being
run out of Harlem on a rail with a
brand new process.
There will be no slow motion or still
life of Roy
Wilkins strolling through Watts in a
Red, Black and
Green liberation jumpsuit that he
had been saving
For just the proper occasion.

Green Acres, The Beverly Hillbillies,
and Hooterville
Junction will no longer be so
damned relevant, and
women will not care if Dick finally
gets down with
Jane on Search for Tomorrow
because Black people
will be in the street looking for a
brighter day.
The revolution will not be televised.

There will be no highlights on the
eleven o'clock
news and no pictures of hairy
armed women
liberationists and Jackie Onassis
blowing her nose.
The theme song will not be written
by Jim Webb,
Francis Scott Key, nor sung by Glen
Campbell, Tom
Jones, Johnny Cash, Englebert
Humperdink, or the Rare Earth.
The revolution will not be televised.

The revolution will not be right back
after a message
About a white tornado, white
lightning, or white people.
You will not have to worry about a
dove in your
bedroom, a tiger in your tank, or
the giant in your toilet bowl.
The revolution will not go better
with Coke.
The revolution will not fight the
germs that may cause bad
breath.
The revolution WILL put you in the
driver's seat.

The revolution will not be televised,
will not be televised,
will not be televised, will not be
televised.
The revolution will be no re-run
brothers;
The revolution will be live.

James Weldon Johnson

[1949–2011]

O Black and Unknown Bards

O black and unknown bards of
long ago,
How came your lips to touch the
sacred fire?
How, in your darkness, did you
come to know
The power and beauty of the
minstrel's lyre?
Who first from midst his bonds lifted
his eyes?
Who first from out the still watch,
lone and long,
Feeling the ancient faith of
prophets rise

Within his dark-kept soul, burst into
song?

Heart of what slave poured out
such melody
As "Steal away to Jesus"? On its
strains
His spirit must have nighly floated
free,
Though still about his hands he felt
his chains.
Who heard great "Jordan roll"?
Whose starward eye
Saw chariot "swing low"? And who
was he
That breathed that comforting,
melodic sigh,
"Nobody knows de trouble I see"?

What merely living clod, what
captive thing,
Could up toward God through all
its darkness grope,
And find within its deadened heart
to sing
These songs of sorrow, love and
faith, and hope?
How did it catch that subtle
undertone,
That note in music heard not with
the ears?
How sound the elusive reed so
seldom blown,
Which stirs the soul or melts the
heart to tears.

Not that great German master in
his dream
Of harmonies that thundered
amongst the stars
At the creation, ever heard a

theme
Nobler than "Go down, Moses."
Mark its bars
How like a mighty trumpet-call they
stir
The blood. Such are the notes that
men have sung
Going to valorous deeds; such
tones there were
That helped make history when
Time was young.

There is a wide, wide wonder in it
all,
That from degraded rest and servile
toil
The fiery spirit of the seer should
call
These simple children of the sun
and soil.
O black slave singers, gone, forgot,
unfamed,
You-you alone, of all the long, long
line
Of those who've sung untaught,
unknown, unnamed,
Have stretched out upward,
seeking the divine.

You sang not deeds of heroes or of
kings;
No chant of bloody war, no
exulting paeon
Of arms-won triumphs; but your
humble strings
You touched in chord with music
empyrean.
You sang far better than you knew;
the songs
That for your listeners' hungry hearts
sufficed
Still live,--but more than this to you
belongs:
You sang a race from wood and
stone to Christ.

James D. Corrothers

[1869–1917]

An Indignation Dinner

Dey was hard times jes fo'
Christmas round our neighborhood
one year;
So we held a secret meetin', whah
de white folks couldn't hear,
To 'scuss de situation, an' to see
what could be done
Towa'd a fust-class Christmas
dinneh an' a little Christmas fun.

Rufus Green, who called de
meetin', ris an' said: "In dis here
town,
An' throughout de land, de white
folks is a-tryin' to keep us down."
S' 'e: "Dey's bought us, sold us, beat
us; now dey 'buse us 'ca'se we's
free;
But when dey tetch my stomach,
dey's done gone too fur foh me!

"Is I right?" "You sho is, Rufus!" roared
a dozen hungry throats.
"Ef you'd keep a mule a-wo'kin',
don't you tamper wid his oats.
Dat's sense," continued Rufus. "But
dese white folks nowadays
Has done got so close and stingy
you can't live on what dey pays.

"Here 'tis Christmas-time, an',
folkses, I's indignant 'nough to
choke.
Whah's our Christmas dinneh
comin' when we's 'mos' completely
broke?
I can't hahdly 'fo'd a toothpick an'

a glass o' water. Mad?
Say, I'm desp'ret! Dey jes better
treat me nice, dese white folks
had!"

Well, dey 'bused de white folks
scan'lous, till old Pappy Simmons
ris,
Leanin' on his cane to s'pote him,
on account his rheumatis',
An' s' 'e: "Chilun, whut's dat wintry
wind a-sighin' th'ough de street
'Bout yo' wasted summeh wages?
But, no matter, we mus' eat.

"Now, I seed a beau'ful tuhkey on a
certain gemmun's fahm.
He's a-growin' fat an' sassy, an' a-
struttin' to a chahm.
Chickens, sheeps, hogs, sweet
pertaters-all de craps is fine dis
year;
All we needs is a committee foh to
tote de goodies here."

Well, we lit right in an' voted dat it
was a gran idee,
An' de dinneh we had Christmas
was worth trabblin' miles to see;
An' we eat a full an' plenty, big an'
little, great an' small,
Not beca'se we was dishonest, but
indignant, sah. Dat's all.

Sonia Sanchez

Tanka

i kneel down like a
collector of jewels before
you. i am singing
one long necklace of love my
mouth a sapphire of grapes. ■

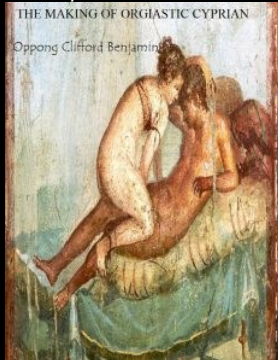
SHORT STORY

The Making Of Orgiastic Cyprian

Oppong Clifford Benjamin

The Making Of Orgiastic Cyprian is an episodic fiction by Oppong Clifford Benjamin which focuses on educating its readers on the sacredness of sex and how the pleasurable act can be a divine form of prayer between a creature and its creator. The story centres on a mysterious sect of young women between the ages of seventeen and thirty called The Ancient Aphrodisiac Cult (The AAC). The cult invented out of the creativity of the writer. However, some settings in the story are real.

We hope you enjoy this episode as much as the episodes to come.



Episode I.

Remembering how timid she was on the first day she was invited into the temple of Ishtar for her initiation, Miss Juan Onifat smiled, and held the very tip of the giant penis which welcomed her and every visitor to the extremely dangerous, yet ineluctably romantic designs of the interior. She heaved a heavy relief, and it echoed in the somewhat sempiternal gallery of the temple of sex and she looked down at her shadow which was telecasted on the walls by the sun, the sun was at its meridian. She couldn't believe she was the Grand Architect of the Qadeshes and by virtue of the recent ceremony

she was the sacred custodian of the recherché temple and all its traditions. It had happened too fast, she thought. She was a little above three years in the Ancient Aphrodisiac Cult (The AAC), and just in the morning of that day, she had been installed the Most Perfect Chiliad, an enviable position which took other ladies, between the ages of seventeen and thirty, ten or more years of hard labour in sexual affairs with hundred strange men from all the seven selected corners of the world.

"Congratulations, Most Perfect Chiliad, Grand Architect of the Qadeshes, The Sacred Custodian of the temple of Ishtar and all its traditions" a half dressed blond lady went down on her left knee and perfectly erected her right leg to form a square with the left, and gave a court bow in salutation to Miss Juan. In response to the cordial felicitation, Miss Juan smiled and carefully lifted her right hand off the statue of penis and placed it on her well shaved vagina, she in-fixed the middle finger into her organ for a short while and removed it, and placed the hand on the left shoulder of the lady who upon rising to her full length, took a short pace with her left foot towards her superior, bringing the right heel to the hollow of the left to form a square, she then lapped the wet middle finger of Miss Juan. The blond lady licked the finger like it was the best thing that had ever entered her mouth; a sacred licking with saliva leaking off the lips, very passionate.

The Qadeshes (members of the cult) have a religious belief in amorously passing their tongue about the always wet organ of their Most Perfect Chiliad and sucking the sweet scented liquid off her middle finger. It was a hallowed mean of communication between them and God. And She who did it passionately saw the face of God, or so it was bruited.

Stories were told of a sexy black qadesh who once visited the Heavens

and had an idyllic sexual encounter with a celestial body believed by the qadeshes to be God. The rumours had it that the black lady, Hamamat, when she was only a girl of twelve years, was visited in her dream on a certain midnight while she slept on a small mat, in a muddy hut at a cute arenaceous village of Bolgatanga, Ghana.

She saw in her dream a middle finger of a white lady. Hamamat could not appreciate the face of her guest but she clearly recounted the sacred element; a 7.44 inches long middle finger which had the image of an opened vagina receiving penetration from a perfectly erected penis tattooed across the length of the finger, starting from the proximal to the distal phalanxes. It was recorded in the chapter 16 of the book *Blue Rituals of The Sex Cult* by Linda Longman, a Most Perfect Chiliad of the order who reigned from 1656 to 1701 that, the white lady rudely ordered Hamamat to lick her tattooed middle finger like how a sexually hungry woman suck the hell out of a lustful penis, which Hamamat did after what seemed to be a struggle in the dream. And when she did, Linda Longman in her book described the process as nonesuch, which in modern theological philosophy is synonymous with apotheosis- the process of transforming a man into a god. Linda said in the *Blue Rituals of the Sex Cult* that, Hamamat after many hours of massaging the finger with her tongue, the mysterious entity who appeared in her dream vanished into nothingness for out of nothingness she had appeared, but Hamamat woke up the next day in the ancient city of Cyprus, precisely in the temple of Ishtar with no cloths to shield her nakedness from the full sight of hundred men who had their hard members aimed at her sorry self. Such, Longman wrote in her book, was the orphic means by which we (qadeshes) are all invited to a

participation of the ancient mysteries and sacred secrets of sex.

"Cyprian Louiselle, may God strengthen thy waist to fuck your way to eternal glory"

"So Mote It Be" the blond lady whispered into air. It was the sect's peculiar response to a prayer.

Miss Juan blessed the blond lady, Louiselle. Louiselle made for the south side gate of the temple and just at the threshold of the exit, Miss Juan called her name aloud, prompting her to keep the traditional form of exiting; sitting on an erected penis carved out of batholiths rock and positioned at each of the four exits of the temple.

"Ah Huh! Before you leave, please remind me of the name of the African girl you mentioned to me this morning"

"Hamamat, Most Perfect Chiliad"

"Hamamat!" Miss Juan exclaimed out of surprise. She read the *Blue Ritual* when she was the Most Wise Lady of the cult. The *Blue Ritual* was only accessible by the Most Wise Lady. The duty of the Most Wise Lady in the AAC was to write the proceedings of the Ancient Aphrodisiac Cult in a chronological records so the history of the cult doesn't get lost in antiquity like many sects of the then known world. During her office as Most Wise Lady, Miss Juan seized the opportunity to read extensively on their ancient art, the mysteries and history of having sex with strange men in the temple and the one that caught her interest the most was the mysterious invitation.

"Where precisely is she from?" Her eyes were widely opened and staring at Louiselle at the far end of the gallery.

"West Africa, Ghana. In a small sandy city called Bolgatanga."

There was earsplitting silence for quite a while in the space between them.

"Are you okay, Most Perfect Chiliad?"

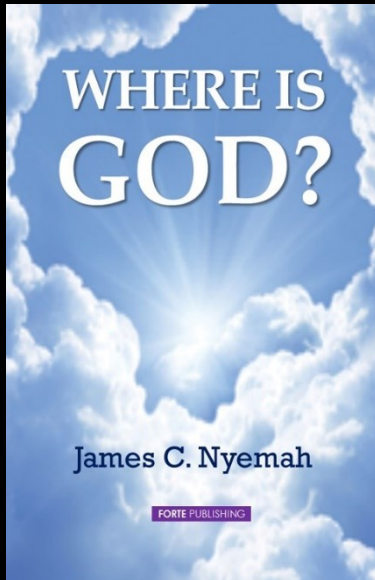
"Get me her picture, I will prepare for her invitation"

Recommended Reads

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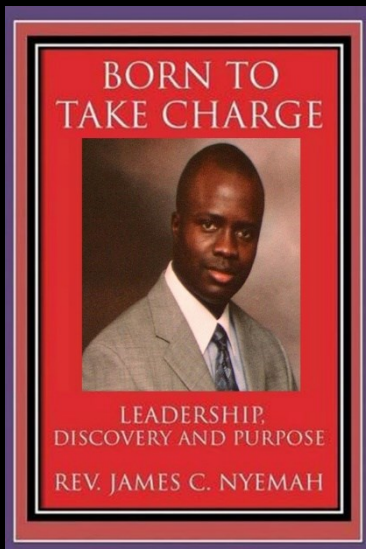
WHERE IS GOD?

“Where is God?” A most difficult question no doubt but a necessary one about God and life. If things are worse, we even go further and ask all sorts of questions. For example, “If God is such a loving and caring father, why does he allow bad things to happen to good people, including Christians?”



We were all born to do something or for a reason, even if one does not know or has not yet figured out theirs. Grab a copy of this book and be inspired.

Pastor James Nyemah writes a powerful motivational book that spurs one to do one thing... **TAKE CHARGE.**



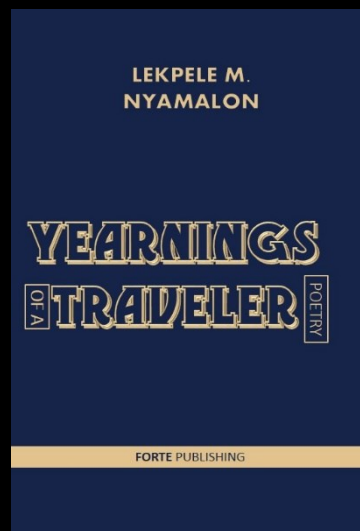
Recommended Reads

MOMOH SEKOU DUDU takes us on a mental journey in his latest release, *When The Mind Soars, poetry from the Heart*. He exposes us to a Liberia as freshly, honestly and chaotic as he sees it. He presents us a broken Liberia that is pulling herself up by its own boot straps. Let your minds fly, soar with ideas.



Yearnings of A Traveler

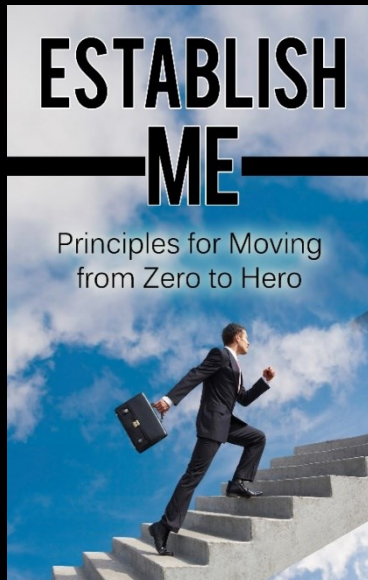
We all have a yearning for something. For Lekpele, his has been a message of self worth, as we see in his signature piece, My Body is Gold; one of patriotism, as in Scars of A Tired Nation; one of Pan Africanism as in the piece, Dig The Graves. He also has a message of hope as seen in his award winning poem, Forgotten Future. He is an emerging voice that one can't afford to ignore. Yearning is the debut chapbook by Liberian poet, Lekpele M. Nyamalon.



Recommended Reads

**ESTABLISH ME Principles
from Zero to Hero**

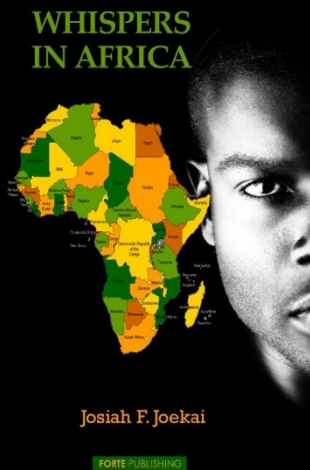
WE GET BROKEN, DAMAGED, THORN UP BY THE DIFFICULTIES OF LIFE. IT RIPS US APART, IT SQUASHES US. WE FEEL DEJECTED, REFUSED, ABUSED AND USED. WE OFTEN DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH OUR SHATTERED SOULS. WE SEEK A PLACE OF REFUGE, OF CALM, A PLACE TO MEND THOSE PIECES. WE SEARCH FOR A PLACE SET APART FROM THIS WORLD TO PULL US TOGETHER



JAMES C. NYEMAH

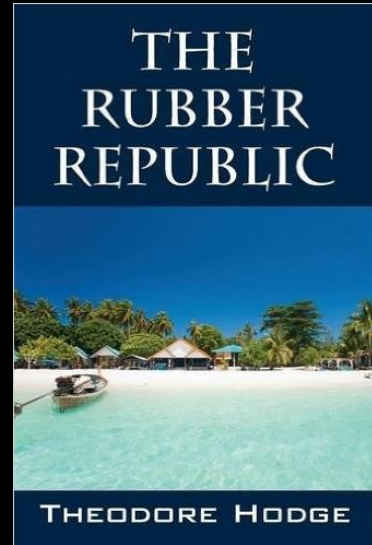
In his latest work, Ps. Nyemah lets us know that God can **Fix Us, Mold Us, Create Us** and then **Establish US**.

Available now from FORTE Publishing



The Rubber Republic

From relative stability to upheaval, military coup, violence and revenge. . . **The Rubber Republic** covers two decades, the late 1950s through the 1970s. Set mainly in West Africa, the story takes the reader to the United States and a few other stops along the way. The story is mainly about the intriguing and fantastic lives of two young men, Yaba-Dio Himmie and Yaba-Dio Kla, who leave their parents' farm in search of enlightenment and adventure. But the story is also about their country, the Republic of Seacoast, and a giant American Rubber conglomerate, The Waterstone Rubber Plantation Company.

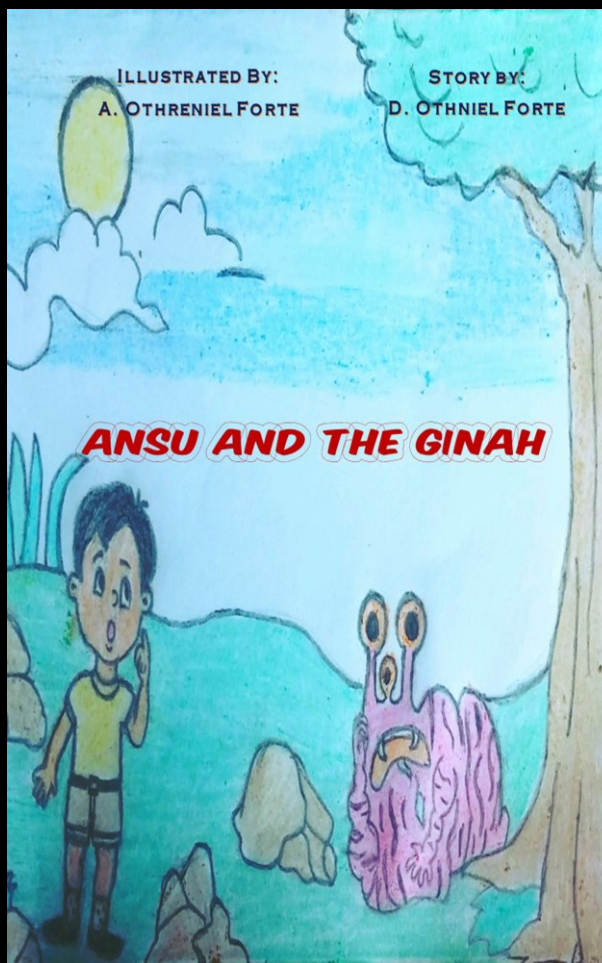


Mohammed Dolley Donzo

In his debut endeavor, *Our Future Today*, the author writes about things that should unite not just Liberians but Africans as a whole. He encourages African youths to stand firm and revive the strong warrior spirits of their ancestors.



Available now from FORTE Publishing by Mohammed Dolley Donzo



Ansu, is a stubborn boy, he doesn't like to listen to his parents. He prefers to do naughty things.

He runs off to avoid working and encounters a strange creature. What will happen?

Follow Ansu as he journeys through the deadly Liberian forest. **Ansu And The Ginah**, is a part of the **EDUKID Readers Series**.

In this book, the father and daughter duo combine to bring a great reading experience to little ones as they begin their life's journey of reading.

FORTE Publishing Int'l

Miatta, an orphan, lives with her foster parents. She is hardworking and focuses on her studies. Life is dull, boring and quiet. She is ordinary, or so she thinks. Accidentally, she stumbles on a magical kingdom deep in the Liberian countryside where she learns that not only is she welcome, she is a princess.

Miatta The Swamp Princess recounts her adventures into the African forest.

Belle Kizolu is one of the youngest published Liberian authors. She lives in Monrovia where she attends school. She is in the 7th grade.

FORTE Publishing Int'l



President Ellen Sirleaf

**Happy
Valentine's
to the
People of
Liberia**

**Happy
Valentine's
to the
Liberian
People**



VP Joseph Boika

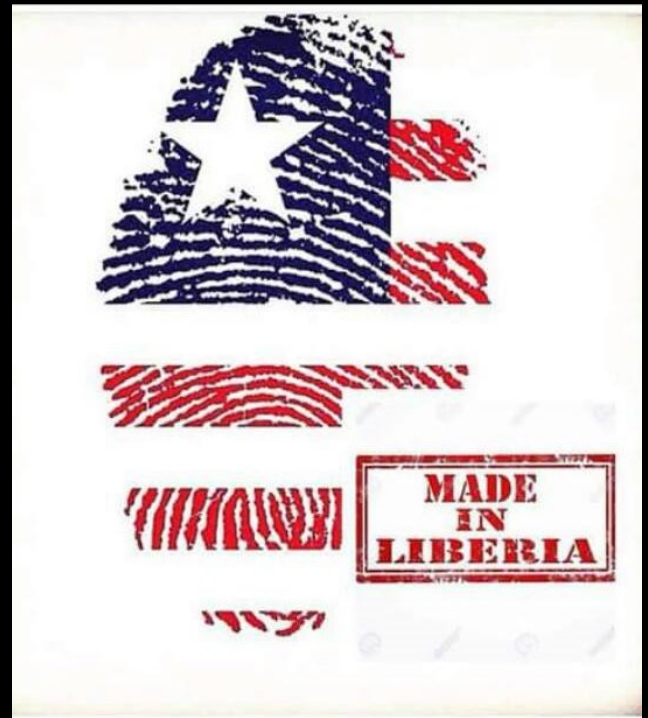
AROUND TOWN



Cozy Evening



Local beach



When water business gets tough, these are the lifesavers. They charge like hell 😊



An old house in true form to the Settler's tradition



Baboon Worm, a local delicacy



A Powerful message in support of arts/artists



Traditional Dancer from the Gio Tribe



Photo: S. Mark

City Center



Bomi County, a perfect view



Famous Liberian Piggy Hippo



Kpwete exotic waterfall is a great opportunity to expand tourism.



Down town Pehn Pehn Hustle



The People's Monument
Centennial Pavilion



Forget us not



Local sellers; Hustle; real life situations

Credit: Darby Cecil & Daily Pictures from around Liberia

MEET OUR TEAM



PATRICK BURROWES
CONTRIBUTOR



HARRIET AGYEMANG DUAH
STAFF REVIEWER CHILDREN'S BOOK



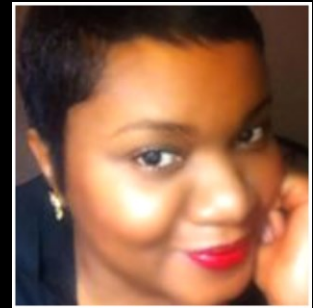
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PHOTO BY: Melisa Chavez

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, not all is 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.

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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Liberian Literary Magazine

Feb Issue

0217

Author of
the Month




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Barclay



Ruby
Goka

BLACK ISSUE



Aryanna



Danielle
Burton