

K

Liberian Literary Magazine

WEE

JAN Issue

2217

HAPPY
NEW
MONTH

**NANA
AWERE
DAMOAH**

**Author of
the Month**

**Liberian
Proverbs**

**Liberian Classics
Gifts of the Masters**

Featured Poets:

Althea Romeo Mark
Richard Wilson Moss
Aken Wariebi

Cher Antoinette

John Eliot

Hilal Karahan

Hasan Erkek

Jack Kolkmeier

Kpana Nnadia Gaygay

Thelma T. Geleplay

Lekpele M. Nyamalon

Alonzo Gross

Renee' D Brown

Fethi Sassi

**COLLOQUA
TAKEOVA**

Featured Poets:

F. S. Flint

Ezra Pound

Georgia Douglas

Langston Hughes

H. D.

Jupiter Hammon

Claude McKay

Quincy Troupe

Ladan Osman

Cynthia Cruz

Isiisi Jaji

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.

Contents

Segments
From the Editor's Desk
Diaspora Poet Althea Mark
Everything Moore [Bai T]
ColloquaTakeOva
Guanya Pau: Story
Authors' Profiles
Nana Awere Damoah's
Interview
Book Review
Resurrected Masters
Random Thoughts
Short Stories
Derek Chatman's Interview
Finding Meaning in Everyday
Living – Janice Almond
Unscripted: Cher Antoinette
Articles
'Twas Briggling
Liberian Proverbs
Rebekah Nored's Interview
Words of Nia
Aken-bai's
According to Eliot
Poetry Section
Scott A. Borgman's
Interview
Gifts of the Masters
New Releases
Meet the Team
Around Town

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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

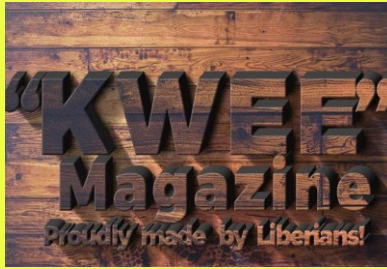
Our desire to constantly find literary talent remains a pillar of our purpose. We know the talent is there; we look for it and let you enjoy it. We find them from all over the country or diaspora and we take particular care to find emerging talents and give them a chance to prove themselves. Of course,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

RECAP From PART IV

KAI KUNDU'S VISIT

Finding argument useless, Kai Kundu made himself comfortable, and grinned more than ever.

The two together certainly resembled Dr. Talmage's "hawk courting a dove."

Finally, he mustered up enough courage to tell her his purpose for coming to see her, winding up with

"I have watched and cared for you, Guanya, since you were a baby; O, my joy, when a very small girl, your mother consented to my having you, and fixed the dowry.

I was SO elated that I paid her more than what she asked. I shall make you my head wife. I have cassava and rice farms all along the Marphar, have men and women gathering my nuts and making my oil. I have several large canoes which carry my produce weekly to the Beach — oil, kernel, wood, ivory, cloth, hides, rice, etc.

Now, Borney, my child," this time grinning with his whole face, "tell me what you think of me."

"When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul Lends the tongue vows: these blazes, daughter, Giving more light than heat, — extinct in both, Even in their promise, as it is a-making,—

You must not take for fire."

Guanya Pau with all the contempt of which her full, strong voice was capable, replied, "Elombey' etc.

"What do you mean? Believe me if I tell you the truth from my heart, will you? I have not cared to think about you in any way except to hate you. As to loving you, I'd just as soon love a monkey. I shall never be your head wife, I don't care if you own all Marphar and Pisu put together, and you may convey this intelligence, if you choose, to my mother."

Kai Kundu contracting his grin into a small compass, assured her that she would rue such expressions when she was in better spirits; but finding all attempts to make her believe this futile, he took up his ungainly body, grinned like a chess-cat, and stalked out of the room.

Chapter V.

GUANYA PAU RUNS AWAY.

IMMEDIATELY upon Kai Kundu's departure, Guanya Pau looked up Jassah, and told her all that had happened, assuring her that the time was ripe for their departure, and that they should use all possible precaution so as to leave behind no clue as to where they had gone.

The girls were wholly inexperienced to traveling and to the country around, not having gone ten miles from their home in all their life.

After debating the question of the road, they finally concluded to take the country highway, going north, and making for the woods, several miles beyond, trusting in the Gregrees to make whatever disposition of them they will. Soon all was settled, and the two made hasty and secret preparations to run away.

That night, when it was quite dark, and the little village was buried in deep sleep, the two spirited maidens set their plans in motion. After arranging their beads, disrobing themselves of those, which would give a clue to their identity, they came out into the open air. Next, they invoked the Gregrees to protect them from harm. They came with uplifted hands, looked up into the sky and made a deep, prolonged sigh.

Was it our God they thus invoked in the silent recesses of their souls? Was it to Him who has said, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you

rest," that these poor girls in the solemn hush of that midnight hour, their souls tossed heavily by fears and apprehensions because of the risk they were about to take, leaving home and friends to go they knew not where, and that too when their whole country was pervaded with the same sentiments respecting woman; was it to Him that they went for help? Did they lift up their eyes unto the hills from whence cometh our help? I know not.

They had never heard the sweet call of the church-bell, nor soul-stirring words fall from the lips of some Kanabah-Kai (God man), nor the inspiring strains of the Sabbath-school. No one with heart full of love for God, and with deep solicitude for souls had come among them and told the old, old story of Jesus and His love.

Never had a missionary, the herald of good tidings, trod this part of the world; and oh, how true is this the case of many of the tribes of West Africa, yea, of all that continent!

Jesus Christ died to save them nearly nineteen hundred years ago, and yet there are millions in that dark land dying ignorant of His great sacrifice and love. Dying without hope, without Christ, within Heaven!

Truly, darkness covers the land, and gross darkness the people. Oh, Lord, how long? When will this gloom dissipate and the light from the Sun of Righteousness flood the land?

When, blessed Saviour, will Thy promises concerning Ethiopia be verified? No, her sad condition is not organic, and it is possible to turn the tide from the channel in which it has flown for ages.

"The night is long that never finds the day."

"Though ye have lain among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold."

"For your shame ye shall have double."

"Shall drink at noon

The palm's rich nectar; and lie down at eve

In the green pastures of remembered days;

And walk, to wander and to weep no more

On Congo's mountain-coast, or Guinea's golden shore."

Hark! Methinks I hear a voice from the clouds, which says: "Give ye them to eat," implying that no angelic band will descend from the skies who, with one spark, will set that land aflame with the fire of the Gospel.

But ye, men and women of flesh and blood, having but five loaves and two small fishes. Yes, yes, this stupendous work, the evangelization of Africa, must be done by human agencies.

Another fact is worthy of note here, and that is, civilization is never indigenous, but conditioned on the contact of races, "There is not in history a record of a single indigenous civilization; there is nowhere in any reliable document

the report of any people lifting themselves out of barbarism. The historic civilizations are all exotic. The torches that blaze along the line of centuries were kindled each by the one behind." *

Pardon, dear reader, these occasional digressions. They are impromptu outbursts of a soul that is full of enthusiasm for his native land.

After the Borneys had finished these invocations, they took their little bundles and struck out upon the country road for the distant woods, which they reached as the first streaks of the morning reddened the eastern sky.

Through fear of detection, they crept into one of those "bugbugs" in which that country abounds, and after a refreshment of some of the cassavas and dried fish, with which they had provided themselves, they remained quiet.

When the sun had set, they crept out stealthily, made a brief and hasty survey of the woods, then went on, going they knew not where, but with the satisfaction that the distance between them and their home was becoming every minute greater.

But they had not proceeded far before they heard the fall of footsteps in the distance, and soon voices of men greeted their ear.

They started, looked hither and thither, but there was no place for concealment. In their extremity, with their hearts in their mouths, they retreated double-quick to the place of "bugbugs," and were soon swallowed up in one of those hospitable caverns. How they blessed the little insects for building these strongholds.

"There is a spetial providence in the fall of a sparrow."

The voices came nearer and nearer, ever increasing in volume, from which it was evident that they were disputing.

As they approached the mound in which the girls were concealed, they stopped and took their bearing. Then they came up to it, lay down their spears and other hunting outfit, took down from their shoulders bunches of country bread, then set to making a voracious dispatch of its contents.

Then one went a few feet away, cut a peculiar kind of vine, which grew suspended from a limb of a tree, from which they got a supply of water.

They then talked over their plans, and again tried to ascertain their whereabouts. They were two Vey men from a town several miles away on the chase of a wounded elephant. You may imagine what

relief the Borneys felt when such discovery was made.

But they soon became anxious, when one of the men intimated his intention to crawl inside the same hill and take a nap he was on the point of suiting the action to the word, when his companion dissuaded him, saying that they had no time to lose, and that he could hear the horns of their comrades calling.

The two hunters had not gone ten minutes, when there was a loud peal of a horn, which was repeated again and again, in the direction they had gone; and presently there was a tearing, bellowing noise, as if the trees of the forest had been uprooted, and the mountain was tumbling down.

The roar, mingled with the yells and screams of men, made the solemn aisles of the wood echo and re-echo. To the girls it brought unspeakable anxiety.

Every moment the tumult increased in force and intensity, and seemed to be making straight for the ill-fated "bugbug".

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.

* Niebuhr.

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

EDITORIAL



Gambia & ECOWAS

The recent situation in Gambia was quite scary, and I was vehemently against military intervention. It would have led to wasted lives and ruined an otherwise peaceful nation. Thankfully, things worked out without resulting to that.

However, before going any further let me take this time to thank the ECOWAS and AU, yes, I'm not ALL that petty [okay, not THAT petty]. Nor do I seek the failure of these institutions. I simply call a spade for what it is. In true fashion to that,

Now, we watch and help the new leader in getting his country on track. Although I must say, the idea to relocate or find some form of employment there is high on my mind. Seeing how president Barrow is a

polygamist, chances are high one could indulge and get away with it [whispering here now]. I'd not hesitate denying this is the 'wrong' person reads it. ☺

US & President Trump

Okay so president Trump was sworn in and the new controversy is the crowd that attended his inauguration. Apparently he claimed a million plus attended only to be shown that the number of attendees were nowhere near that. Somewhere in all the hullabaloo, a new word surfaced, *alternative facts*. Yeah I know, "What the heck is that?." A good question, you're just asking the wrong person. One has to love the creativity it took the White House staffer, Kelly Anne, to coin this one. No, I don't care if it means LIE, I am admiring the genuineness of it. At least now I can spare myself much stress and tell the madam some alternative facts if ever I need to wiggle out of something

Anyways nothing is new on that front. By nature, we're not ever going to agree on everything so, big deal when folks are all over the place disagreeing with how many folks attended or not. That, to me is not supposed to be newsworthy.

Now here is the kicker; one would recall how there was this message being circulated on social media requesting a boycott of the inauguration because president Trump loves ratings and some thought he should be denied that gratification. It's been a while since I heard something that stupid go viral. The choice in and of itself is not stupid, it is the solicitation I find appallingly amusing. Somehow, it is okay to make a choice to boycott but others shouldn't be allowed same? Really? So what if Trump loves ratings, the man is full of ego, that is not news. How will not watching really change anything other than dent his ego? Who doesn't have ego, I know many folks who do.

As if this is not bad already, there is this other 'movement', He's not my President". One has to love our American friends. What in the world will that change? How will reciting that thing a million times change the fact that Donald Trump is the 45th president of the United States of America?

Delusion is a most powerful thing. So here we have folks going around here soliciting others to join their delusion. It reminds me of a little girl, she's about twenty now and is doing well by the way. But when she was little, we played peekaboo. She'd squeeze into a corner of the bed, cover her face and truly believe that she had disappeared; she was well hidden. It got me every time. Her mom and grandma soon came around to sharing the good laugh e had. In her little mind, because her eyes were closed and she saw nothing, we must also be seeing nothing. There's no way I would have won

peekaboo with that chic. Unfortunately, I had to relocate before she grew enough to understand. What I would not have given [still would not give] to see that look on her face when she finally realized that she was as glaring as the sun whenever she closed her eyes?

To those delusional enough to think that whatever solice they get from shutting out reality, I say this, grow up. Trump runs things now. The sooner you accept this, the better it would be for your heartache.

US & Democracy

The United States has always carried itself as the epitome of democracy. She's sang this song so long, the foolery has imprinted on the minds of many of its citizens. Some are even brave to think that the world revolves around their country. Considering this, I would say it is a darn shame that the recent election resulted in seating a person who did NOT win the popular vote. As with George Bush, Donald Trump did not

win the popular vote, yet he is the president. How that is democratic beats me.

For too long, the USA has been going around and peddling 'democracy'. She's destabilized many nations in the name of popular democracy only to bare her truth that her electoral system is anything but democratic. Don't get me wrong, the US still practices one of the most successful forms of democracy. It is just that what she practices, is so not what she preaches. At least now we know why she supports some dictators that do their biddings and remove others that refuse to do so. It's a big scam show.

US & Election Violence

A sad thing noticed during the US election was the violence. I mean it was just MEAN. The insults, dirty playing hands, the backstabbing moves and the outright street violence in parts of the country, was just hard to ignore. Even the presidential

candidates spared no punches.

Had this been any other country, the liberal media would have gone on strike and given commentaries about every aspect of democracy not being followed. The conservatives, well, they would have just been, tea partyish.

Yet, they all choose to skip this in hopes of others forgetting it. Well now, it has resurfaced. On inauguration day, we saw some cities torn apart and cars set ablaze and for what? To demand rights they say. Others say to remind the incoming administration that they must uphold their rights as enshrined in the Constitution and Bill Of Rights. I feel this is unnecessary. The US governance system is solid enough to resist any dictator I believe. I may be overoptimistic but I do believe so. I fail to see how even an egoistic Trump can wire the system to trample the basic rights of his people. Even the orange hair man knows that he

can't be king. He will settle for being an Earl of DC at best.

It is ironic that some would think they need to resort to violence to demand rights that have not yet been taken. This does not mean they can't be proactive but they seem to be doing a great job of destroying America without Trump's help. They prophesized that his election would lead to the destruction of the country and it is coming true; at least if they continue along this slippery road. Interestingly, Trump ain't got nothing to do with it.

But what hurts me most is the fact that these kinds of unacceptable behaviors take away from the genuine protestors. The women and immigrants who fear what could happen to them. It is not as if they have no basis to be fearful. Candidate Trump made no secrets of his distastes or disgust for one group or the other. He minced no words in threatening their livelihoods. He held nothing back. He

spoke plainly, loudly and repeatedly. These are the people whose voices are being silenced or sidetracked by these hooligans who are masquerading as protestors.

Rest of the World

Meanwhile, in the rest of the world, life goes on as usual with but one twist. The comedy show our US friends are shooting. I prefer to call it **STRAIGHT OUTTA HELL** [oops, Helltom]. All their characters come from hell. The conservatives said the world was ending because Obama was the Anti-Christ; the liberals are now saying that Trump is the Devil himself. At this rate, no one would be left in hell. Imagine each of these guys accompanied by hosts of demons.

Right now, the world is waiting for the rapture 😊



D. Othniel Forte
Managing Editor

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 [Verse IV]

Gola** Version



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

Ko Bomi Hee M Koa

English Version

go tell my mambu
to stop worrying
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

NANA AWERE DAMOAH

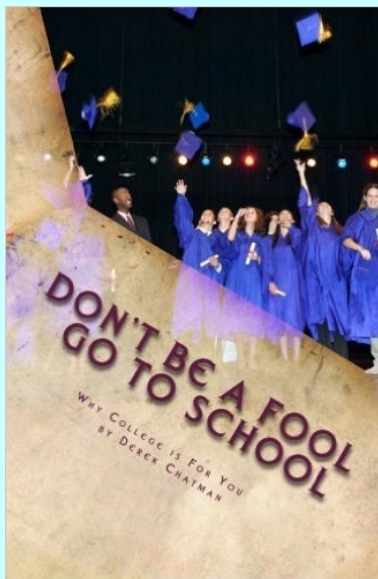
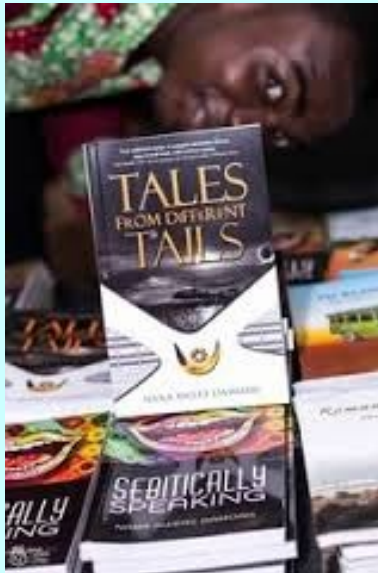


Nana Awere Damoah

Nana Awere Damoah holds a Master's degree in Chemical Engineering from the University of Nottingham and a Bachelor's in Chemical Engineering from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST).

A British Council Chevening alumnus, Nana works with PZ Wilmar in Nigeria as the Technical Manager. In 1997, Nana won first prize in the Step Magazine National Writing Competition.

He is the author of six books: Nsempiisms, Sebittically Speaking, I Speak of Ghana, Tales from Different Tails, Through the Gates of Thought, and Excursions in my Mind. Nana Awere Damoah is married with three children. He divides his time between Lagos and Tema. launched the youth magazine, *African Moment Magazine*.



DEREK CHATMAN



DEREK CHATMAN

Derek S. Chatman is writer a born in Springfield, Massachusetts, the home of Dr. Seuss and the Basketball Hall of Fame.

While working as a Security Guard for a major paper manufacturer, he dreamed of one day leaving his dead end security job and having an actual office in the building he was protecting.

While working security Derek would return to school and pursue his passion of obtaining a Bachelor's Degree and a job in corporate America.

Believing that any and everything in life is attainable if you stay focused and believe in yourself and your abilities. Derek would earn a Bachelor's Degree in Business Management from American International College. His passion didn't stop there; he would continue the education momentum and obtained an MBA from his alma mater, As well.

Derek used his degrees and his business knowledge to successfully climb the corporate ladder and currently has an office in the exact location that he dreamed of years before.

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

NANA AWERE DAMOAH

**AUTHOR
INTERVIEW**



Liberian Literary Mag conducted an interview with

Nana Awere Damoah

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

Thanks for this interview, it's an honour. Born in Kotobabi, a suburb of Accra, capital of Ghana, I schooled in Ghana and UK, at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) and University of Nottingham, respectively. My first and second degrees were in Chemical Engineering. I have worked in manufacturing industries since

graduating from KNUST, and writing is a passion, which has overtaken my life!

I am an author of six books. I write mostly socio-political non-fiction, short stories, reflective essays based on lessons distilled from everyday life experiences, and poetry.

I am married with three children.

I started writing seriously in 1992, got my first short story featured in The Mirror (Ghana's leading weekly) in 1995, won a national story writing competition in 1997, and had my first book published in 2008.

Why writing?

I see writing in three dimensions: as a passion and hobby, as a ministry and vehicle through which I can affect my society and generation, and, finally, as a conduit to distress after the rigours of my regular day job as an engineer.

I have been a voracious reader since childhood and been involved with stage acting and poetry recitals since my primary school days, which continued through secondary school and the University. Progressing from reader to writer seemed a natural process!

In the preparatory school, all pupils were involved in poetry recitals and plays. In our school, a class had to stage a play a day before vacation. Every term.

So that is where my love of the literary started. I continued this in secondary when I joined a singing/drama group of the Scripture Union. I also loved to read, a lot. I always had a fat novel with me, even as a Science student. In Sixth form, having started reading a lot of non-fiction particularly of Dale Carnegie and Robert Schuller, I started dabbling in articles and poems. In 1995, when I was home during University lecturers' strike during our first year, I submitted a short story titled 'The Showdown' to The Mirror through a family friend who used to work with Graphic. It was published! That is the first time it dawned on me that I could write – it was a great affirmation.

In 1997, whilst in KNUST, I submitted a true story for the annual Step Magazine National Writing competition. I won the 1st prize! I haven't looked back since then.

What books have most influenced your life/career most?

For non-fiction writing, Dale Carnegie's "How to Make Friends and Influence People" impacted me greatly, teaching me the power of simple, conversational writing, about the seemingly-simple lessons in our daily lives. Uncle Ebo Whyte, a playwright in Ghana, influenced me similarly with his writings which he read weekly on radio and published in a magazine. Then there is Prof Kwesi Yankah's *Woes of the Kwatriot* series in The Mirror which I never missed and which style I may have unconsciously copied!

Recently, I was able to procure the two compilations of these writings: "Beloved, Let Us Laugh" and "No Big English". In the past five years, award-winning Ghanaian culture and travel writer, Kofi Akpabli, has influenced me very much with his style and writing. It was Kofi who taught me that just as a doctor has his medical licence and a lawyer her legal licence, so does the writer have his literary license, to create and create. I have been bolder since then!

With fiction, "Things Fall Apart" had a massive influence on me. Especially the infusion of African proverbs in the narrative.

For poetry, I really can't count specific influences. I look up to a number of spoken word artistes currently in Ghana such as Nana Asaase and Fapimpong, as well as many who I rubbed shoulders with especially during my undergraduate days, and then to legends such as Prof Atukwei Okai who teaches me about how to create unique traditional words and sounds, and not be afraid to experiment. Last, I attended a book reading by Prof Kwadwo Opoku-Agyemang organised by the Writers Project of Ghana and was immensely affected. The good Prof gave me a new insight into writing poetry to capture events.

How do you approach your work?

I am quite eclectic in my writings so I do get hit by multiple topics. I then muse over the issues in my mind and ruminate. I usually say that I do over 80% of the writing in my mind before I sit. It helps that I write standalone chapters and, even with fiction, I do short stories. So I write in chapters or an article at a time. My supporting research is also done and then I assemble the various component to write either the article or short story. When I have enough, I compile and publish as a book. I

usually give myself two years between publications. Except for 2011 and 2016 when I broke that rule.



Also, I share almost all my writings online (blog and social media) with my readers and fans so they always feel in touch.

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

Currently I find myself increasingly drawn towards socio-political commentary and within this space, no theme is taboo. Except perhaps for religion and love relationships, which I hardly write about. I also write about work/corporate world issues and the lessons young people can learn from my experiences.

Tell us a little about your books - storyline, characters, themes, inspiration etc.

I label my writings as eclectic. I have written six books so far. The first two books, *Excursions in My Mind* and *Through the Gates of Thought*, are

mostly reflective writings, where I distilled lessons from daily life's experiences. In these, I try to bring to readers the simple yet profound lessons that we fail to capture because of the fast pace of our lives. My third book is a collection of short stories, titled *Tales from Different Tails*, which explored themes of campus love, crime and forgiveness, travel in commercial vehicles (called *trotro* in Ghana) and a creation of the traditional folklore character in Ghana, Ananse, in contemporary terms – it was fun! My fourth and fifth books, *I Speak of Ghana* and *Sebitically Speaking* are satirical commentaries on social and political topics in Ghana and Africa. The last book, *Nsempiisms*, is a collection of short, straight-to-the-point, shot-from-the-hip flash non-fiction about various issues about Ghana and Africa.



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

Society and my desire to leave my thoughts for posterity inspire me to write. Take for instance, *Sebitically Speaking*, my fifth book. I wanted to experiment with traditional storytelling in creative non-fiction, so I took up the voice of a drunkard-Uncle and you know how bold drunk people are in speaking their minds! So, in Ghana, when you wish to speak boldly even to elders, you say ‘*sebi sebi*’, which can be translated as ‘I crave your indulgence to be bold to say...’. So that is where ‘*sebitically speaking*’ comes from – boldly speaking one’s mind. And the thoughts expressed in that book about Ghana and Africa shock me myself!

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

I write about Ghana and about Africa to provoke and to encourage. My mission in my writing is to change Africa, one mind at a time. I believe that Africans, Ghanaians, can till our land the best and that we have to be here, or supporting from wherever we may be, to build this continent. So even in satire, I get my readers to

laugh but also to pause and reflect. To think. And to take action, for the progress of Africa. I write so readers can see themselves and their actions in a mirror.

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

I have argued that it is not true that Africans don’t read; I believe that we don’t have enough books that speak to our minds and souls at the same time. It is like eating food you are not used to. You might be filled up physically but not satisfied emotionally. My books bring you both intellectual and emotional satisfaction and edification, because I write about issues that touch Africans and their situations and elicit positive actions.

Do you have any advice for other writers?

Keep writing. Each day, try to either read or write. Write what you enjoy and enjoy what you write.

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

I read multiple books at a time! I am currently reading primary-level

textbooks on my native Twi language, as I incorporate that in my writings and this year I want to improve my writing proficiency, especially in syntax.

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

With my reading partner, Kofi Akpabli, we have been running quarterly book readings across Ghana, which we call DAKpabli Readathons. We also had guest authors joining us on this journey. We started this collaboration in 2015 and took it to a higher level in 2016. In 2016, we held seven public book readings in Accra, Kumasi, Ho and Tema (for the first time taking the readings out of the capital city).

These readings received coverage by national newspapers and radio stations. For one of the readings, we recorded numbers close to 200! You can check out our Facebook Page with the same name. In 2017, we wish to continue and extend to more regions.

What are your current projects?

There is a project DAKpabli is working on as well, to take 10 authors to 10 cities in 10 regions in Ghana.



We are quite passionate about this, with the aim of making book reading hip again, encouraging reading for pleasure and not just for academics and raising the reading culture to the level of hip culture.

I am also working on a number of books simultaneously. For instance, I have resumed the Sebitically Speaking series and already have five chapters, some of which are hilarious already and capture the closing parts of the Mahama administration and the start of the Akufo-Addo government. There is always good material for satire in Ghana and Africa!

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

Most of my readings about Liberia have been through news stories and Liberian friends I met either in school abroad or in Ghana during the tough days after the war. I am ashamed to say I haven't read any books by Liberian authors. I promise to rectify this.

Any last words?

Let me conclude with some thoughts for young writers and young people generally who have dreams. For writing, approach has been to draw an analogy with eating an elephant: no sane person attempts to eat an elephant at once; you do it one bite at a time. Start publishing in magazines, in newspapers, on social media (Facebook notes, blogs).

Learn to hone your skills – keep writing. Share your writings for continuous feedback. Either write or read every day. Exercise your creativity every day, even in your Facebook or Twitter updates. Play with words, create.

As you evolve, your confidence will increase as well. Read widely and develop your style – don't be afraid to experiment.

I don't know where I got this lesson from: 'Learn from the masters, but develop your own voice'. My mantra in life applies here as well: dream big, start small, move fast. Keep on.



Diaspora Poet

Cat and Mouse

Winter Night.
Young, brown men
pace sidewalks
in the stabbing cold.

Shoulders are
hunched.
Hands are embedded
in pockets.

They tread like a
worried parent
Keeping vigil for a
child
late beyond reason.

The eyes of
policemen
pierce the backs
of the edgy plodders.
They gleefully ogle
another their next
prize catch,
are ready to pounce.

I hurry by,
trolley rattling the
quiet night,
eyes focused ahead.

I wrestle with
the thought of
profiling
but soon shrug off
prospects
of innocence.

Our street
plague by addictive
substances,
must be purged.

© Althea Romeo-Mark
,2011

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.

Arise, O Love

Awake, O Love, the dream is o'er!

Awake to a redeemed earth, —

A world whose beauty has its birth

In thy sweet influence and power!

Awake! the horrid nightmare past!

For Faith and Hope, they shall not die!

Thy prayer has reached the realms on high,

And Truth is conqueror at last!

Thou trod'st, ere while, a realm of sin;

Thou treadest now a Paradise, —

The triumph of thy sacrifice, —

Awake, and thy new reign begin!

Arise, O love, in sleep is death!

Awake to life's extatic joy!

Up to activity 1 and toy

No more with dreams! . . .

Above, beneath,

And all around, ascends earth's call:

"Arise, O Love, and let us live!

Awake, awake no more to grieve!

Retrieve thou man's edenic fall!"

Arise, O Love

Awake, O Love, the dream is o'er!

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A world whose beauty has its birth

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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.

KORRUCION

Dah leh name we lor hear
 Wen leh fini eatin our moni dem
 Den lah big big book tym nah for dem
 Korrucion! Korrucion! Korrucion!
 Yor fini stealin den yor lor makey loo fine
 Makin us lookin for dicionary here en der
 So so tiefy tiefy neh we geh
 Whole day we lor jes be hearin dem
 Korrucion! Korrucion! Korrucion!
 Wetin we do to yor nah, dah becor we voo yor ehn
 Yor teh us stealin wor sopoto be enemy oh
 Buh yor nah marry her, she nah born en geh tiya
 Korrucion! Korrucion! Korrucion!
 We nah see all lor yor goo-goo oh
 Ehn nex year camin, yor wae noe
 We noe yor garlo en koloma toks dem
 We will tie yor bundle dem one by one
 En den we wae be singin behin yor
 Korrucion! Korrucion! Korrucion!

@ Kpana addresses corruption and some of its effects on society.



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."

JANUARY 2017

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 clothcover 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.

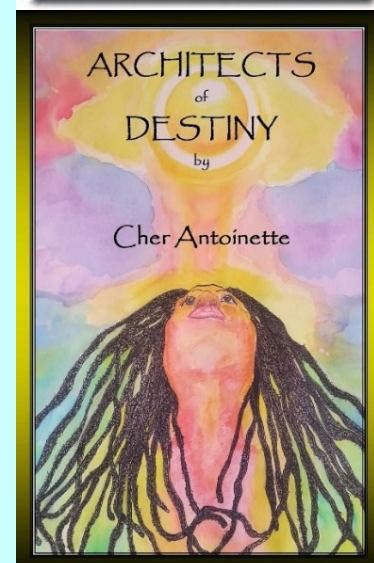
The rain started pouring, buckets-a-drops. It was just past four o'clock and I was sitting in the front room reading one of my favorite books, *Wind in the Willows*. Somehow this afternoon it was quite difficult to concentrate as every other line in the book seemingly started with the word "James".

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

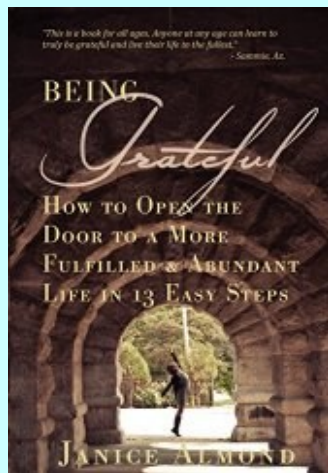
"Shut up, shut up," hands over ears.

To be continued

Cher-Antoinette ©Cher



Finding Meaning in Everyday Living



Janice Almond

Look to the Future

January 2017:

5 “Simple Ways” to Approach the New Year

Delight!

Determination!

Dream!

Decide!

Depend!

Delight!

The first thing you need to do is have a feeling or expectation of delight. You must have a “joy” for entering the new year.

A reason for this joy is that not all people made it alive to see this new year.

You were and are one of the blessed and fortunate ones to have made it. Count your blessings.

Also, joy is a quality you need to see your way through any obstacles and unforeseen events you may encounter as you progress through this year.

Without “delight”, you will be hindered, unable to COUNT IT ALL JOY, as mentioned in the Bible in James, Chapter 1.

As you enter this year, 2017, remember having the ability to be delightful shows the ability to have an “attitude of gratitude.”

Determination!

Secondly, you need some determination. Be determined to make a new plan or a new way for this year. This basically entails the ability to let go and forget what occurred or what did or didn't happen last year. I call this GRIT!

This past year, I wrote a book entitled, BEING DETERMINED: How to be Relentless in Pursuing Your Dreams in 15 Simple Ways. For this year, be determined to pursue a new avenue and stay committed to it!

You know what they say, “Rome wasn't built in a day!” Determination takes the ability to persevere and stay focused. O.S. Marden, the founder of Success magazine has said, “Most men fail not through lack of education, but from lack of dogged determination, from lack of dauntless will.”

Dream!

Third, you need to dream. You need a dream. What do I mean by this? You need a purpose, something to shoot for, an objective, some sort of aspiration, an aim, desire, goal, or mark.

Enter 2017 differently than how you entered 2016. Enter this year with an increasing awareness of how your life can be more and have more. Stop right now and think about it. Jot down some thoughts that come to mind.

American author, Henry David Thoreau, (1817–1862) once said, “Dreams are the touchstones of our character.” Ask yourself how your character is shaping up. My charge to you is to CHASE YOUR DREAM!

Decide!

Next, you must make a decision to enter this new year as you choose. Who will you be? What will you accomplish? What will you give? How will you get better? You decide.

If you can't make a decision, you will not be able to advance and take advantage of what this year can offer.

Choose if you want to pursue Love or Hate, Faith or Doubt, Forgiveness or Unforgiveness, Peace or Turmoil.

The quality of your life this year will be determined by what you

decide. It's up to you! As you enter this year, you can choose

BLESSINGS, THANKFULNESS, GRATEFULNESS, EXCITEMENT, and PERSEVERANCE.

Depend!

Finally, depend, rely or trust, put faith and have confidence in your goals you want to accomplish this year.

Whatever you decide to do, believe that you are capable of doing it.

Go after what you truly want in 2017. Just DO IT! Grab onto some "hope" .

In a devotional I was reading the other day, it said, “If we can't believe it, we can't have it.”

So, for 2017, Choose to Believe & Receive.

Your “attitude” matters!

HAPPY NEW YEAR



KWEE Promoting Liberian Literature, Arts and Culture

#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](https://twitter.com/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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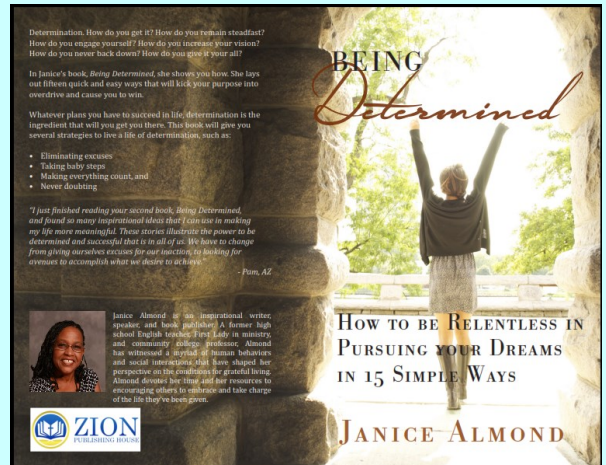
Janice Almond is the author of the *Being Grateful* book series. Her first book in the series, *Being Grateful: How to Open the Door*

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

DEREK CHATMAN



Liberian Literary Magazine conducted an interview with **DEREK CHATMAN** 😊

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

Hello, my name is Derek Chatman and I am a guy who spent a chunk of my life settling for the mediocre, until the moment I decided to follow my passion. I am a writer, lover of life, father, husband, and teacher. Deep down I love to inspire others to do what they love and to live the life of their dreams.

Why writing?

Writing is something that comes natural to me. It is my way of expressing the many stories and ideas bouncing around in my head. Writing is like therapy for me. I love getting up early on the weekend, when my family and the entire world is asleep and begin working on my craft. Writing allows me to focus on my art. It's my gift to the world, and I have so much fun doing it! I love it! I know I probably sound like a nerd, but it is who I am. It's my inner soul expressing itself.

What books have most influenced your life/career most?

I love to read, so there are so many books that have influenced me. My favorites are Harry Potter and the Philosophers Stone, The Green Mile, The Outsiders, The Secret, Think and Grow Rich, Unleash the Power Within, The Alchemist, Turning Pro... I can go on and on. Now that I think about it, the common theme in the books I love, is growth. They are all

about the journey into becoming a bigger you.

How do you approach your work?

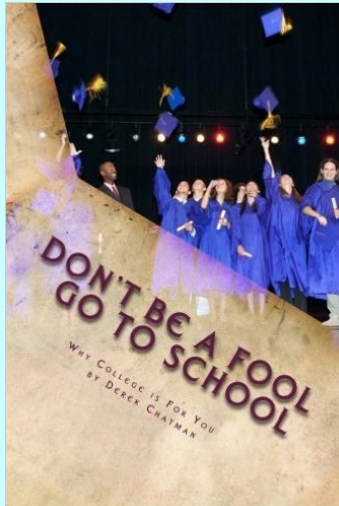
With all of my writing, ideas come to me as inspiration. It starts with an idea or a concept first, I am constantly coming up with ideas; however I only follow the ideas that excite me, the ideas that move me. I will usually have a beginning of a story with no a middle or ending. This is a great starting point and I don't let it deter me. I just sit down, write and let the story come through me, not to me. I will also go for walks and think out the story line. I like to call this my "walking meditation." Once I have a general idea, I will sit down and create an outline. The outline will be a guide to help keep me focused as I write.

What themes do you find continuously exploring in your work?

Growth! It is always about growth. I like to write on becoming the best person you can be.

Tell us a little about your book[s]

My book is called **Don't Be a Fool Go to School: Why College Is For You.**



It's a short read and I wrote it this way on purpose, because I wanted the book to get right to the point, with no fluff and extra words.

I set it so the reader feels like he/she is sitting down with me in their living rooms and we are having a conversation about the benefits of getting an education and changing your life. It's a very honest and personal story about taking a journey to greatness.

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

This book is about my life and about the lives of millions of us out there, who have settled in life and are unhappy. Who may dream of something bigger, but are afraid to do something about it.

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

Yes! We are all great! Don't be afraid to reach for something bigger. Get an education and change your life now. Don't listen to the naysayers who say you can't do it. Focus on your passion and then go get it.

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

Yes. Please go get the book. It will CHANGE YOUR LIFE!! I am not kidding or trying to brag or boast. This is what countless people have told me after reading it. It motivated them to change their life. There is nothing in the

world like having someone walk up to you and give you a hug and tell you how your book changed their life. I am smiling now, because my dream of changing the lives of others has come to fruition.



Do you have any advice for other writers?

Take your time. Be patient and find your writing voice. As a writer, you can use other writers to inspire you, but don't be afraid to be you. You owe it to the world. We want to hear your unique writing voice. Focus on your goal and don't let anything or anyone stop you. This is your idea and your life, so be true to yourself. If I had a

dollar from every person whom I met that said they want to be a writer, I would be a millionaire right now. Go out and do it. Don't wait. You may not know it all and you may make mistakes, but this is all part of the process of being a great writer.

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

I just finished reading the **Power of Broke** by Damon John. If you don't know Damon John, he is the founder of the fashion brand, FUBU and one of the Sharks on the hit television series, Shark Tank.

It is a great book about how you can accomplish your business goals by being resourceful.

Sometimes money can be a hindrance, in the fact that you may spend it unwisely when starting a business venture. This book stresses the power of being broke and making things happen because you have no other choice, because your budget is limited.

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

I am sooooo excited because I just finished my first novel called **The Legend of Virginia Smalls**. It is a



serial novel written in the grand traditions of the Green Mile by Stephen King, Harry Potter, Narnia and the Lord of The Rings. It's going to be a great one and a game changer, so please be on the look-out for the book. (Amazon.com)

What are your current projects?

See above ☺



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

Yes I have! I just purchased and I am currently reading **The Elders' Wisdom: Liberian Parables**, by D. Othniel Forte. It is a great book and I recommend everyone grab a copy. I absolutely LOVE parables. They are a great way to express a story. It reminds me of the **Alchemist** written by Paolo Coelho.

Any last words?

FOLLOW your passion, DREAM BIG, ACT BIG, LOVE BIG and ENJOY life. Don't be afraid to be you, because you are original. Share all you have with the world. Ps. If you want to change your life, grab a copy of my book "Don't be a Fool Go To School. Why College is for You." on Amazon ☺



'T'WAS BRIGGIN

**Richard Wilson
Moss**

The Year I Did Not Live

In the new year
I hope to find the year
I did not live
When all others had
thrived
Resolving nothing.
I hope to hold by
letting go
The year I did not live
Like clocks keep hours
Like winter graves
Keep summer flowers

Waiting

On electric wires
raindrops linger
The street below waits
for them
To wash away the liter
of last night
Someone waits there
too
For removal from their
shoulders
The dirt, the dust, the
burden
Of yesterdays dreams

Tower of Erudition

Balanced on a bar
stool
Used to trace the maps
of Europe
Using onion skin carbon
paper

My father stole from
work
Good way to learn
geography, he said
Tracing I learned also
of great empire
Surrounded by greater
seas and amazed
Had to ask out loud
Why is there so much
water?
Someone drunk
shouted
It comes from god
Who often turns his
head to spit
While endlessly
prowling
The sidewalks of our sins

This Separation

This separation, this
parting
It must not be allowed
again.
Is sea kept from its salt?
Day from its end?
These separate desires
What are they
But distant dying desert
fires
Lovers build and then
abandon.

The Dead Words of

Love
Those hung, speak.
Those shot, speak.
Those knifed, burned
alive, bombed,
shredded, beaten to
death

Their shouts disturb the
serenity
Of another cup of tea
On the front porch.
Do you hear ?
Do you hear them
Wrecking havoc
Inside the tenderness of
an ear?
Loud screams causing
a spot of blood
On clean pillows.
Their noise is the raging,
destructive stream
Barely held back by this
dam
Of disinterest.
And still they move, the
murdered
Without motion, they
move.
As it is life they adore
They wrestle with the
end
Like fish drowning on
the shore.
Laid out in their gold
coffins
Or in cardboard boxes
Can you see the cold
cheeks blush
Over the
embarrassment of
abrupt end?
The murdered, do you
feel them
Murdering your
resolutions of weight
loss
Of drinking less, of
helping the homeless
Hold their signs right
side up?
And the murdered
murderers

Recently shot, burnt,
beaten, drowned,
electrocuted,

Drawn and quartered
Do you hear them
Opening the fresh box
of corn flakes
In your cupboard
Fetching a bowl and
fresh milk
Do you hear them
chewing
And then rinsing the
bowl
To put it in the
dishwasher?

Their lips still move, the
murdered
They speak of injustice,
the murdered
murderers
In your kitchen, on your
front porch
Damn it, do you hear
them
Speak of injustice?
Press your ear against
the cold wind
Exhaled from the dry,
dead prairie
Of the nation of a
body.

Listen to the sovereign
words
No sentence shall ever
conquer
No poem shall ever
enslave
The dead words of love
Dared not even
whispered
By full, red lips.

96th Thesis

Up on the board
Someone wants yard
work
Another will care for
children
A dry rotted
Watchtower hangs by
a thread
Soap is now for sale,
good soap
Below that printed on a
piece of mail
It says cleanliness is
godliness
Also a sofa that
becomes a bed
Is now for sale.

There is the groan of a
faulty dryer
It is preparing to die
So it will not dry
The clothes are quite
wet
Someone bitches
There is yet soap after
the rinse
A crippled cart, the last
Is guarded by an army
vet
Who aches from
twenty years of digging
ditches

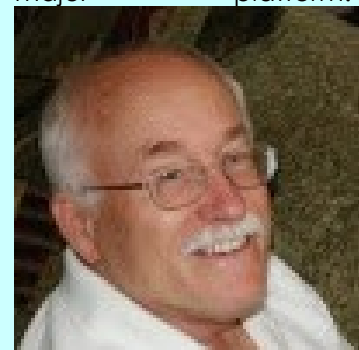
Someone comes in
holding the barrel of a
pistol
The handle pearled
And one sheet of
damp paper
Hammering, the walls
holding dryers and
washers

Shake violently as if
washing and drying
All the rags of the world
In dark coat and black
cap
Someone dares to
stare at the vet
Who turns his head and
spits blood
The blood of an inner
wound
Blood indelibly
doomed
Upon cold checkered
linoleum
There is the death of a
dream in some.

Up on the board
Next to the dying dryer
Held by three inch nails
Is drying paper of
penciled screams
It reads:
Make money working
at home!
Enough to retire!

© 2005 Richard Wilson Moss

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 Ten Best Books Read in 2016

A couple of issues ago my article was about the ten favourite books of President Obama. Here is mine, not of all time, but for 2016.

In no particular order, as I read them during the year. So number one was a Christmas present in 2015. Here goes.

1. The Mersault Investigation – Kamel Doud pub 2015

This interested me a lot when I was given it by my wife. She knew that one of my favourite novels of all time is *The Stranger* by Albert Camus. This book by Kamel Doud is the follow up to that novel. A brave piece of writing to follow up such an important novel in the history of literature. To read this, *The Stranger* must be read first. The story in *The Mersault Investigation* is told from another point of view, the brother of the murdered Arab; so the identity of the Arab is recognised as a human rather than just a victim.

2. M Train – Patti Smith pub 2015

Patti Smith, poet, rock star and author. Her autobiography *Just Kids* is superb and this as a follow is just as wonderful. The writing is very tightly controlled and well written giving the appearance of being off the cuff written in a café.

3. Bright Day – JB Priestley pub 1946

This is a novel that Priestley was particularly proud of. One of my favourite pieces of drama is *An Inspector Calls* by Priestley but I had never read any of his novels. *Bright Day* reads as a kitchen sink drama. I would imagine an author such as Alan Sillitoe in the 1960s be very inspired by it. The difference being Priestley's settings are very middle class whilst Sillitoe's very working. (Read *Saturday Night* and *Sunday Morning* by Alan Sillitoe.)

4. To The Lighthouse – Virginia Woolf pub 1927

On Goodreads review I wrote, "To The Lighthouse has sat on our shelves for many years, my wife's novel. Sometimes the age is just right to read it. I could not have coped with it at half my age. I love the poem *Prufrock* by TS Eliot and this novel reads as the *Prufrock* poem."

5. Train To Pakistan – Khushwant Singh pub 1956

This is an historical novel describing the events of partition in India in 1947. Khushwant Singh is one of the most respected writers in India and should be read by all. He is a superb author.

6. The First Circle – Alexander Solzenitsyn pub 1968

Solzenitsyn for me one of the world's greatest authors. You will notice there are two by him in this list and if I had read it in 2016 *A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* would have been there, my number one novel of all time.

The First Circle tells of a group of very skilled political prisoners in Moscow recognising a traitor's voice from a taped telephone conversation. Simple plot maybe, but it goes much deeper than that. It is about Russian society under the rule of Stalin.

7. The Tin Drum – Gunter Grass pub 1959

This would not be everyone's choice of novel. It is very long and involved and some might call it plain weird. It tells the story of a dwarf who plays a tin drum. But for originality and style it is a must read.

8. Cancer Ward – Alexander Solzenitsyn pub 1966

This is a truly magnificent novel. Telling the story of a cancer ward in a Russian hospital. That is the surface, but is of course Russian society under Communism and its equalities. Cancer is the great leveller and all the sufferers share the same fate.

9. The Thing Around Your Neck – Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie pub 2009

I'm not a lover of short stories, but Ms Adichie makes writing seem as easy as drinking a cup of tea. Quite simply superb.

10. The World of Jeeves – PG Wodehouse pub from 1934

This is a collection of the Jeeves and Wooster characters. Set in London, United Kingdom, in the 1920s and 30s. They are a selection of short stories about the scrapes that the rich young man Wooster gets himself into and his butler Wooster gets him out of. Very very funny. I laughed until I ached!

© John Eliot. 2016

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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 Mosaique Press of England" and are available on Amazon.

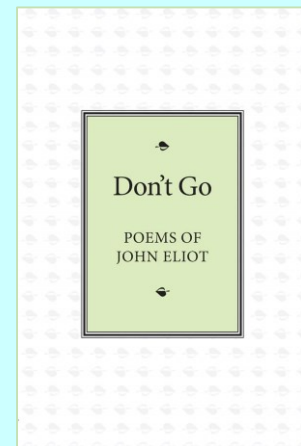
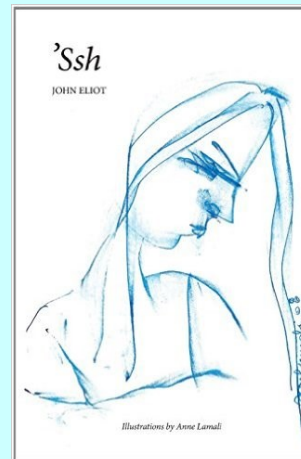
Any comments to

I will reply to all emails.

Connect here:

johneliot1953@gmail.com

John Eliot



"The photograph of John Eliot was taken by Dave Daggers 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 -**

I'm due to be on the radio in a few days. The presenter asked me to send him a few poems that I may read and something about them for discussion. In next months Kwee I'll tell you how the interview went.

The following poem I began to write when I was flying to Ghana. I had the window seat and looking out I saw that we were flying over the Sahara Desert.

I turn in my footsteps hearing
my protector still
keeping pace in disappearance
the depth
the chord
murmurs only
to me *om*

at the end of beginning
is light

I see blackness move
as a shade
across this red eternal desert
that some call heaven

Welsh photographer, Terri Hoskins, was having an exhibition of her photographs. She mainly takes photographs of trees. I was invited to the opening and to read a poem. The following poem was written especially for the occasion.

Crucifix

Out of wood
a Biblical carpenter
works a cross
for the congregated
in cavernous spaces
genuflecting as their murmurs
sound within the building
invocating deity's death
forgetting the forest.

Humbled before the tree
I kiss the roots,
touch the wound of the axe,
where sap flows
to outstretched limbs;
leaves reaching
with promise of eternal life
after death of Man.

Richard III was King of England from 1452-1485. He died in the Battle of Bosworth. His body was treated very badly after he had been slain and he was buried in an unmarked grave, not to be discovered until 5 years ago, 2012.

The school I attended as a boy historically lay close to a monastery and church, long destroyed. Tradition had it that he was buried there. In fact he lay under the playground of the school I attended as a schoolboy. Along with thousands of other boys we played on his grave. I read, in class, Shakespeare's 'Richard III' while he lay not 200 metres away. In France I live an hours drive from the city of Angers. It was in the cathedral there that Anne Neville was betrothed to her first husband the Lancastrian heir in the war of the Roses. After he died she then married the Yorkist Richard.

I wrote the poem whilst travelling from Caen in Northern France to my home in the Loire Valley.

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.
The following poem is about an event I shared with my two year old granddaughter. I took her out to buy an ice cream on the street near where she lives,

Clifton Street. Everything that happens in the poem is true, so it will remain as a memory for me, and her.

Eating Ice-cream

A memory to grasp
like holding on
a cloud of pollen;
look at my fingers
and then it is gone.

Eating ice cream with Grandpa on Clifton Street.

A bench. We sat
as I ate my white cone.
I heard a lady say,
hauling a bag of shopping to her knee,
“You are mad,
taking blossom from a tree.”

She wore a blue dress,
tight round the middle.

Earlier in the park, by the swings,
blowing dandelions
Grandpa and me.

“Watch. I’ll tell you the time.
One o’clock, two o’clock. Then three.
Mummy will be home soon.”

A memory to grasp
like holding on
a cloud of pollen;
look at my fingers
and then it is gone.

(For Lilwen)

Private Delver Hathway was my great uncle. He was born in Wales, United Kingdom, and as a young man moved to the United States to work. When the First World War broke out, he returned to Wales and volunteered to join the regiment of the Coldstream Guards.

He died in 1915 in the Battle of Loos; such a waste of life. I hate to see the Queen of England, Elizabeth II, the Prime Minister and other dignitaries celebrate war each November 11 on poppy day. My great uncle has been forgotten. This is my protest against war.

Private Delver Hathway 1881-1915

Elysium dissolves

with the harvest of youth; August to
September
summer mellows, and on an autumn day I
lie as I die
in a chalk pit. I will not remember
September 28th 1915

death’s moment; unholy joy, my heaven.

Hell is life stolen from the young.
Hell is those left behind.

Scorn for a ceramic poppy;
as my spirit marches these fields of Loos.

(In memory of my great-uncle)

These are a selection of my poems from my new collection Don’t Go. The collection is published by Mosaïque Press and can be bought from online stores such as Amazon or good bookshops.

If you are having difficulty getting a copy and would like one, contact me at johneliot1953 and I will try to get one to you.

c. John Eliot 2016

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

AUTHOR
INTERVIEW 3

Spotlight Author

REBEKAH NORED



Liberian Literary Magazine conducted an interview with the REBEKAH NORED 😊

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

My Name is **Rebekah Nored**. I'm a stay at home wife, a new author, a jewelry maker and I'm currently taking online creative writing classes. I was born in Indiana and even after having trouble learning how to read I now love reading just about anything that I can get my hands on.

Why writing?

I first started writing as a way to let loose of everything I was feeling inside. My writing lets me be who I wanted to be on the inside.

What books have most influenced your life/career most?

I would honestly have to say that Lori Wick's book Pretense was the most influence on my wanting to write.

How do you approach your work?

At times I have to make myself sit down and write for a bit. While at other times I'm jumping in between books trying to keep up with everything going on in my head.

Sometimes my husband will come home from work to find me laughing or crying while I'm writing. My writing depends on my moods or the storyline.

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

Love, courage, fear, strength, freedom and dreams. I want my reader's to feel what my characters are feeling at the time.

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

Emma Dare is the main character of **Tarnished** who has gone through a lot in her life and you get to follow along as she makes her way to living her own life.

The theme is about the trials and the horrors that Emma went through; and how everything molded her into who she turned out to be.

I also have the book called **Some old, Some new** but all odds and ends out which is a book of different things I wrote over the years.

The storyline comes from a part of my own story. I know that some might say that this is risky but in a way, it's helped set me free.

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

I was inspired to use the name Tarnished due to be called a freak or damaged growing up,

But I like the idea of being called tarnished better since I just need to be polished to be like new.

Just because I call myself tarnished doesn't mean that I have to stay that way for the rest of my life. I'm working on polishing myself to be like new.

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

Don't let anyone or anything stop you from reaching for your dreams.

We're all tarnished in life and we can all become like new. Learn to love yourself for who you are and be happy with who you are.

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

Parts of my story is true for me and even after being called a liar or

being told that it was all in my head it still helped shaped me into who I am today. I'm not saying that I'm perfect because I'm far from being perfect but I'm finally starting to accept my past and to look forward to the future.

Do you have any advice for other writers?

Always follow your dreams!

Never let someone tell you that you're not good enough!

Have fun with your writing!

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

I just finished reading *Living with no excuses* by Noah Galloway which is an awesome book

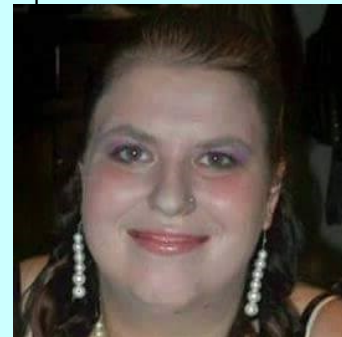
and a must read. I'm getting ready to read *If you ask me* (And of course you won't)

By Betty White.

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

I have my book Tarnished featured on Inkitt right now and I'm working on getting my last 89 out of 100 free copies

read so that I can see about getting a publishing deal that they would help set up.



What are your current projects?

I'm currently working on *Polished* which follows my book *Tarnished* and I'm hoping to have it done sometime after the new year. I also have another book that I've been working on here lately and I can't wait to get both books out on the market. I also run *Strong and Beautiful, Jewelry made Reckly's way* and *Books by Rebekah Nored* on Facebook.

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

Not yet I haven't.

Any last words?

Always follow your dreams and reach for them.

The Fatality of Democracy: Why Elections are Rigged in Africa

By Martin K. N. Kollie

**Columnist & Youth Activist,
martinkerula1989@yahoo.com**



Image Credit: www.cctv-africa.com

Spotlighting Africa's Democracy

Democracy in Africa is difficult to flourish, because there are too many kleptocrats, autocrats and opportunists flooding the political parameter. A free, fair and transparent election on the continent is rare due to anti-democratic precedents mostly devised by failed and corrupt regimes. Democracy in Africa is eclipsed by immaturity, impropriety and intolerance.

Africa has democracy in theory, but not in practicality. It is mostly in Africa that the interest of the minority supersedes the collective aspiration of the majority. Practicing politics in Africa means risking your life and your family. This I know for a fact! It is too sad that Africa is still at the backseat of the democratic plane. From my lenses, democracy in Africa is a government of the minority, by the minority and for the minority.

The lingering and vicious clash for state power and dominance among egoistic politicians in Africa has been creating a gloomy cloud of uncertainty over Africa's young democracy. Heightening political

crises and tensions have been seriously endangering the peace, security and stability of Africa. These conflicts continue to reverse gains made in dozens of nations across the continent.

Democracy in Africa is on life-support in most countries. This form of government which is supposed to guarantee the supreme interest and willpower of the majority has been experiencing serious miscarriage and mishap. Year after year, it is becoming convincingly glaring that the practice of democracy in Africa seems almost inapplicable.

The fatality of democracy due to all forms of electoral manipulation remains widespread and alarming. There are protests almost everywhere by opposition politicians and parties against **vote rigging** orchestrated by incumbent or ruling political establishments. The impact of such autocratic trend (**vote rigging**) is breeding chaos and crises across Africa.

The bias nature of electoral officers and monitors, coercion, secret ballots, late printing of ballots, inadequate civic education, ballot stuffing, disappearance of ballot boxes, vote buying, invalidation of votes, disenfranchisement, artificial result, confusing ballot papers, voter impersonation and inaccurate recording of votes are concocted and anti-democratic strategies employed by incumbent regimes to rig elections in most African nations.

Rigging elections nowadays is a common political phenomenon in Africa. Incumbent governments that have betrayed public confidence by failing to deliver on their promises to the people employ this crafty scheme (**rigging elections**) to forcibly detest the popular will of the people and retain political control by all means.

During this process of clinching unto power without the popular mandate of the people, they (incumbent regimes) gruesomely target perceived political enemies and crush key opposition figures either by intimidation, imprisonment or capital punishment. In some cases, they use the army and police to crackdown on mass

gatherings geared towards protesting fraudulent electoral results.

Sometimes, these despotic missteps perpetrated by kleptocrats and authoritarians lead to massive electoral violence, bloody coup d'état and civil conflict (**war**). Africa and Africans have been severely victimized by this carnage and concatenation of political contention. The volatility and fatality of democracy in Africa has been fueled mainly by egotism, chauvinism, nepotism elitism and ethnicity.

African Politics in Review

It is good that I throw some light on how politics is perceived and practiced throughout Africa. This would give readers a depth of understanding about the political landscape of Africa and the perception of both politicians and electorates. It would also help to further widen the scope of the subject under discussion and help to divulge reasonable causes for rigging of elections and democratic fatality in Africa.

Politics in Africa has been given an unusual connotation or label for decades now. Across the political field of the African continent, it (**politics**) is tagged as a fierce and bloody battle between the incumbent and the opposition. In some regions, it is considered as a poisonous game of enmity, animosity and antagonism. It is also perceived in some quarters as a game between the '**wise**' and the '**fools**'.

From my own judgment and relying on past experience(s), I can satisfactorily conclude that African politics is a fierce clash for power between political foes. I see it as a '**do or die**' battle among political rivals and those with undying political interest.

In this case, the '**Machiavellian Theory**' takes center stage. The '**end justifies the means**' becomes a prominent slogan. At this point of the discourse, the people are diametrically deceived and romanced by self-seeking politicians.

During most electoral processes in Africa, either the incumbent is at the throat of the opposition or the opposition is at the throat of the incumbent. Vicious personality attacks, character assassination and blackmailing usually defuse serious political conversations and debates based on the incubation of genuine vision and authentic alternatives. These are the hardcore truths and uncontested facts about African politics.

In my opinion, this style of practicing politics is not only farfetched, but it also undermines the stability of the continent. Politics should be about constructive engagements among patriotic forces and critical minds. It should be about microscoping series of options and selecting the best. It should also be about building national consciousness and upholding the tenets of democracy in the best interest of all nations.

Politics in Africa, especially during general and presidential elections, is mostly viewed from a narrow context and intuition. The platforms and manifestos of politicians and political parties in Africa are eye-catching to buy, but in most cases, they (platforms) really do not find concrete solution(s) to the despicable conditions of the people after the elections. After the **deal** is sealed by whatever means, the eyes of politicians become blind to the plights of the underprivileged and the marginalized. The voice of the majority becomes immaterial and noisy in the ears of politicians!!

Why are elections rigged in Africa?

If and only if African leaders across the length and breadth of Africa have been delivering on their promises and promoting public welfare through genuine policies and sustainable economic programs, I am sure that they will have no reason(s) to keep on rigging elections. In fact, there would probably be no opposition.

Unfortunately, this has not been the case over the past decades. Power is like honey on the tongues of African politicians. Their appetite for it (power) is unquenchable. Regrettably, in their naked quest to preserve this honey (power) continuously, they become obsessed by its sweetness and abandon the real essence of their mission or the people's mandate.

Consequently, they dash the hope and aspiration of the people by performing dismally in the discharge of their functions. After failing the people, most politicians in Africa during elections become adamant to **change or new options**. This is when they consider '**political power**' as an inheritance or absolute right.

In an effort to maintain their so-called political dynasty and hegemony, they lavish state-resources during campaigns to pursue continuity. When no amount of cash can find answer/solution to their political nightmares, they result into manipulation and machination. This is when **elections are rigged** without remorse for democratic values.

In my own judgment and considering prevailing political realities, I am convinced that the following are fundamental reasons why elections are rigged in Africa by most incumbent regimes:

1. **To maintain socio-economic and political supremacy**
2. **To protect stolen wealth and protégés**
3. **To sustain failed legacy and render the opposition impotent**
4. **To crush democracy by discouraging mass political participation**
5. **To perpetuate greed, elitism, corruption and conspiracy against the majority**

Few facts (stats) about electoral crises across Africa

Post-election era in Africa has been characterized by violent clashes between opposition protestors and security forces loyal to ruling political hegemonies. These clashes are usually instigated by accusations of electoral manipulation and fraud (**rigging elections**). In the last 10 years, these are few facts of electoral crises across Africa:

1. Recently (August 31, 2016) in Gabon, there were serious clashes between supporters of opposition politician Jean Pin and security forces after incumbent President Ali Bongo was controversially announced the winner of the August 27, 2016 election. Three (3) protesters were shot dead, dozens wounded and properties destroyed. Ali Bongo won with a narrow margin of less than two percent (49.80% to 48.23%).
2. In March 2016, opposition leaders decried foul-play after Congolese President Denis Sassou Nguesso was re-elected to extend his 32 years in power. There were violent clashes in Brazzaville with heavy firing in opposition camps.
3. In April 2016, there were series of protests by the opposition after the disputed re-election of the 26-year-old incumbent President Idriss Derby.
4. In April 2016, opposition groups protested the re-election of Ismail Omar Guelleh after he won a fourth five-year term as president of Djibouti.
5. There was sporadic post-election violence across Uganda after Yoweri Museveni was disputedly re-elected as President on February 18, 2016 for a fifth-term. At least 22 persons were

- killed. Main opposition leader Kizza Besigye and other opposition rivals said the election was rigged.
6. Opposition supporters went on the rampage in Lusaka, Zambia after President Edgar Lungu was re-elected in a controversial poll on August 11, 2016. Main opposition leader Hakainde Hichilema accused the incumbent of vote tempering.
 7. Between December 28, 2007 and February 28, 2008, Kenya experienced one of the most fatal post-election violence in Africa after incumbent Mwai Kibaki was declared winner of the December 27, 2007 presidential election. About 1500 persons died with 600,000 displaced. The main opposition leader Raila Odinga of the Orange Democratic Movement said the election was characterized by manipulation.
 8. Ivory Coast was severely engulfed by a post-electoral conflict for 4 months 14 days (November 28, 2010 – April 11, 2011). The crises erupted after the Constitutional Council announced President Laurent Gbagbo as the winner of the polls on December 3, 2010. At least 3,000 persons died with hundreds of thousands displaced.
3. Strengthen Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Law Enforcement Agencies (LAEs), and anti-graft institutions such as Anti-Corruption Commissions, Auditing Commissions and Accountability Labs.
 4. Promote the Rule of Law and overhaul the Judiciary system by making it more aggressive, independent and unbiased.
 5. Build a non-police and an un-militarized state. **(Security forces must play a neutral role during political crises).**
 6. Establish office(s) of the Ombudsman and Public Protector/Defender to limit the abuse of power and public resources.
 7. Reduce presidential power and tenure to 4 years and a 2-term limit (8 years). (African presidents are too powerful, because they have a long tenure – 6 plus years per tenure).

The maturity and stability of Africa's democracy predominantly relies on both incumbent and opposition politicians. But incumbent politicians have a more pivotal role to play during political transition. They must be willing and ready to accept what the people say through their ballots. They must not change the constitution when their tenures are over. It is time for African leaders to bury their naked pursuit for power and allow democracy to triumph. When the people decide that your **time is up**, respect them by allowing their will to prevail. Anything less than this, Africa is doomed!!

Martin K. N. Kollie is a global columnist, a Liberian youth and student activist who hails from Bong county, central Liberia. He currently reads Economics with distinction at the University of Liberia and has written many articles.

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Recommendations

Rising above some of these existing democratic threats, each nation in Africa must put into place the following:

1. Establish strong and independent democratic institutions such as Elections Commission, Good Governance Commission, National Democratic Institute, Human Rights Commission, etc.
2. Reform electoral laws, promote massive civic education and increase citizen participation.

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

LOVE LOVING ONESELF

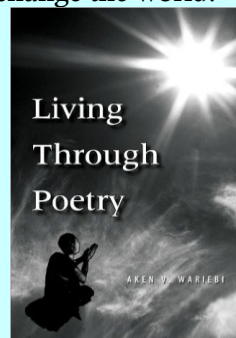
The world has a lot to pull one down. Frenemies crowd that circle and other things such as circumstances, situations, journeys, paths and many beyond one's control. Still... let the love that is inside of us prevail, not just sometimes or not at all, but all the time. Love is within, not out there. Each of us has a heart

that is connected to our souls. This is where the seed is planted and love grows. So if one has not been loving oneself before, start now and always smile while doing it. We are important to ourselves first, and then others.

One must love oneself and show self-love. We should do self care and loving oneself proves how genuine that love of self is. Listen, no one can teach one how to love oneself. We can be taught to unlove and be hateful and stupid. These only reduce one's wherewithal to be loving of and to oneself. When this happens, it is mainly because the teacher, one learns from, loves not. Often, those who teach such things know not what love is and they can not teach, nor pass along, what they don't know, haven't experienced or understand.

Love can be dangerous if not used carefully. It can leave damages that may last a lifetime and cause or open the door for a lot of negativity if given wrongly. But those things the result rather and the root. It may be something else that cause said but the origin isn't love.

Love doesn't mislead, misguide or belittle. It doesn't make one over, harass, bully or torture- self or others. One may as, how does one define the right way? Well, genuine love doesn't hurt oneself or others for starters. It doesn't pretend, it is pure and it grows. It is simple but special and has value and weight; it is accepting and is joyous. It is real. So if one has not found any of this in oneself then all I have to say is, check now, not later. Arguably, I'll say love sometimes can't wait and time can't heal the brokenness of that. So now is the time to love and appreciate oneself; and know the value of that thing called love. That's the only way to love self and other. Again, I will say, love loving oneself and watch that love spill into and change the world.





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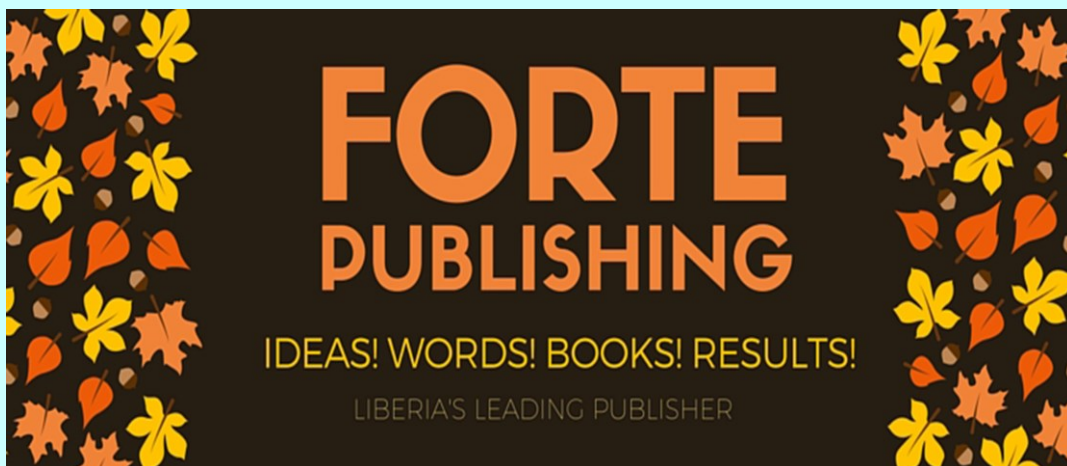
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The Importance of Responding to Email Messages [A Liberian case]

Emmanuel Gbanja Luke

B. S. IT, MSIS., MSHI

Email is a major means of communication in the modern world. Almost everyone has at least one. It is common for some to have several.

Today's article came out of the recent interaction of the author and several Liberian colleagues.

A. Communication via Email

The way businesses and people communicate in the twenty-first century is via email communication. This communication means, enable businesses and other organizations to communicate with each other efficiently and effectively.

At the same time, it transfers significant amount of data along with other information to recipients across the globe. This is entirely different when it comes to Liberia. Many in Liberia including the elite and officials in both private and government sectors, treat this form of global communication as just another way of doing business in Liberia, which is the wrong way.

B. Doing Business with Liberian Using Email

Have you ever emailed a friend, a business partner, director, or a minister in Liberia and did not receive a response from them at all? You are not alone, it happens all of the time.

Most of the individuals in question have access to Internet services almost all of the time, yet your email sits in their inboxes and you on the other end of the Internet waiting for a response.

This have made me wondered over the past five years that I have visited Liberia, about what importance do Liberians take in responding to email messages? Do Liberians know the importance of responding to email messages?

Do they have interest in joining the rest of the world in global communication?

In the past years that I have visited Liberia, I made some contacts and they all have disappointed me in responding to my emails upon my return to the USA. Notable, while in the U.S., I emailed my resume to one of the universities in Monrovia (which I wouldn't name) for possible teaching job to a director that was recommended to me.

Did not get any response within that time. Upon my arrival in Liberia six months later, I met the same director and I asked him if he had received the email with my resume.

His amazing answer was yes, I received your email and your resume. I said to myself, why you didn't just acknowledge it in a quick email response!

The same goes for Liberians living abroad. Many Liberians and Africans living abroad do not response to emails as well in a timely manner.

For these people, it's not that they do not have 24/7 access to Internet and computers, rather I believed they have chosen not to.

Few weeks ago, a friend from Denver, Colorado told me that he had contacted another Liberian in the U.S. to build a website for him, which they had agreed on a price.

Since that last communication about the website, he had not heard anything from this gentlemen concerning the website.

After so many email communications with his fellow Liberian and no response, he decided to take another route with his website.

This is when my friend from Denver, Colorado asked me for recommendation. I recommended a former co-worker and a close friend from Nepal (Asia), that I know could build the website.

Since that recommendation, the two have been working together on the website and the site is nearing completion.

For some I would think that most Liberians see the one, two or three piece machine as a decoration for their office desk space, rather than seeing it as a value added hardware to their daily productivity.

C. Responding Protocols

This is where email etiquette just as dining etiquette comes in handed. Email etiquette is a critically important skill set to master in the 21st century. If you are looking for business partners, clients, co-workers or even your boss to build trust in you, Liberians have to start responding to email as they get it in their inboxes.

The first rule of email etiquette is response to every emails no matter what, except for junk or spam emails. Acknowledge promptly that you received an email message at all time.

Even if you do not have a particular response, just acknowledge by saying “thanks or got it”.

If you cannot take action now, inform the sender that you saw the message and estimate when you will response.

Having your email accumulate in your inbox without acknowledging it receipt and responding in time can alienate your business partners, clients, co-workers and others.

As applying importance to responding to email messages, Liberians will need to be responsible email account holders before the next un-spammed email comes from someone that would like to do business with them.

Liberians will have to prove that it is not a mistake for one to invest their time in emailing people that may never response to such email.

Before Liberians can answer yes to the questions in this article, they will have to start with the basic email protocol by just responding to email communications at all times no matter the message on time.



Emmanuel G. Luke

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

WORDS OF NIA

We Say We Don't Need God

We say we don't need God.
Children have become prey.
We say we don't need God.
The morals of the country have
gone astray.

We say we don't need God.
People have gone postal.
Shooting up post offices, schools,
churches and malls.
There are all sort of predators
prowlng the halls.

We say we don't need God.
Education has declined
and our children are overexposed
to things we didn't let them see
years ago.
Now, they act like that's just how
life goes.

We say we don't need God. Good
customer service?
That's truly a thing of the past.
Please, thank you, I'm sorry and
excuse me,
barely heard these days; never
taught in class.

We don't need God?
Who's lying to who(m)? PRAY!
If we don't start remembering who
He is
there will be a much higher price to
pay.

1-1-2017 © RuNett Nia Ebo, Poet of
Purpose

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www.poetebo.com



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" [Part I]

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 was caking it 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.

Hold up! Not so fast, let's do this again!



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

SCOTT A. BORGMAN



Liberian Literary Magazine conducted an interview with the SCOTT A. BORGMAN ☺.

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 from Minnesota, originally, but I've lived in other parts of the United States throughout my life: Iowa, Virginia, Arizona, and for the past 13 years or so I've lived in Wisconsin. I love to read, watch movies, spend time with my family, and when I'm not writing, I even manage to sleep here and there! And if asked, my wife would probably add that I have an overly large humor chromosome, as I tend to laugh quite often.

Why writing?

When I was little, I found that I had a natural gift for writing. I used to sit in my room for hours on end coming up with stories that came into my head. I think when we're little, we all have dreams of what we want to be when we grow up – but we want to do them for the right reasons. Some want to be doctors because they want to help people, veterinarians because they love animals, athletes because they love to play the game.

Having money, big houses, fancy cars... those never enter our minds as reasons. I wanted to be a writer, because I wanted to delight and entertain people. It's like being a magician who conjures images into the minds of readers - using nothing more than words.

What books have most influenced your life/career most?

I don't limit my reading to one or two genres, because every genre has something special that sets it apart from the rest. Every book I've ever read has had some kind of impact, something which helps me to become a better writer.

Whether it's helping me to improve my fantasy

scenes, making a more ominous scene a bit darker, an emotional scene strike a little bit deeper... So to answer the question: all of them.

How do you approach your work?

Typically it starts with an idea for a story that comes into my head. I tend to get ideas for stories quite often, but they're not much more than fleeting thoughts. But then there are ideas that not only stay there, they expand and become more detailed. Those are the ones that I grasp onto, and when I start writing the idea down, I feel like I can't seem to type fast enough!

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

Strong female characters in leading roles. When I was growing up, I read a lot of fantasy books. I loved the worlds of dragons and magic (and still do!). But what bothered me was that the heroes and villains were almost always male – big muscular warriors and knights in shining armor. Female characters tended to play minor roles, be the 'damsels in distress' for the dashing heroes to rescue, or stood behind the males for protection. I wanted to change that, and the females who came into

my head and introduced themselves are far from those traditional roles. They can play that 'traditional' role, but they're also more than capable of taking care of themselves. They don't stand beside the males, they stand beside them... and often a step ahead of them.

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

I write in two genres: Fantasy and Paranormal Romance. On the Fantasy side, the easiest way to describe would be to say: think *The Lord of the Rings*, by J.R.R. Tolkien. Dragons, magic, elves, and other fantastical creatures are prominent features. Those books are suitable for ages 12+.

The other side is Paranormal Romance, which in a nutshell is vampires, werewolves, ghosts, shapeshifters, etc. having romantic relationships with humans. That's not the focus, but it does play a strong role, and as such, is intended for mature readers due to language and some steamy scenes.

Those are romance written, not vulgar/erotic. My Paranormal Romance books focus on another group: angels. Though

they're not the halo and wings type one may typically imagine.

Both genres have similarities and differences. They both have action, suspense, unexpected twists, a touch of horror... and of course, female characters in the leading roles! The differences are in the language, setting, and mature content.

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

Some books are written to entertain. Others hope to inspire, and others attempt to teach. *The Exiled Trilogy* was written to do all three. In 2010, my youngest son Cameron passed away at the age of 3.

That event really opened my eyes, and made me see that we take so much for granted in our daily lives and we don't realize it until it's gone. Cameron was still innocent.

He didn't know about all of the hate and discrimination, the greed and selfishness, the lies and deceit that we're bombarded with every day from the media and throughout our daily lives. He only knew the emotion of love. We're all like that. We come into this world

innocent, but as we grow older, the world around us steals that innocence away.

I didn't come up with the storyline. I just woke up one night and it was there in my head, refusing to go away. I knew the characters, I knew the scenes... I knew the lessons that are scattered throughout the story.

Some people may think that the storyline is offensive because of the way the angels, Lucifer, and the Greek gods and goddesses are presented. But those are merely the baseline for the story. Nothing more, nothing less.

The lessons within the story about humanity – about where we are and where we could be... those are the heart of the story, the deeper meaning, and the reason it was written. Beneath the action, the suspense, the unexpected twists... at its heart, *The Exiled Trilogy* is about us.

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

There are several. But it's not for me to tell my readers what they are, as much as I would like to. Every message has more meaning when one truly feels it within him or

herself. I only hope that I've succeeded in my attempt to pass on the lessons that took the loss of my son for me to learn - to see through innocent eyes once again, as he had done. He was my greatest teacher, my angel, and my inspiration for the lessons within the story.

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

Absolutely! I spent quite a bit of time doing research for various parts of the story that readers will find throughout the story. One that I'll mention is that several times throughout the book a reference is made to when Athena blinded Tiresias after she caught him watching her bathe. That's an actual mythological story that I found when I was doing research on Athena and the other Greek gods and goddesses that have roles in the story, so I hope readers will be curious and discover those stories themselves. They're fascinating tales!

Do you have any advice for other writers?

This job is *not* easy by any means. We have a part-timer who punches in whenever he feels like it and doesn't let us get a thing done during his shift. He comes with the job, and we can't fire him.

We have many names we refer to him as during his shifts, most of which aren't acceptable for newspapers and magazines to print, so I'll just call him by what everyone knows him as: Writer's Block. If he clocks in and you start getting frustrated, just step away and take a break. Read a book, watch a movie, go and play a round of golf... anything. I've found that it's far better than trying to fight through it, because when you do that, the story suffers, the characters you love become evil monsters, and your computers may end up having to wear a cast. Our readers expect our very best, and they deserve nothing less than that.

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

Bloodmarked by Lu J. Whitley

Cloak of Shadows by CK Dawn

Kissing Demons by Jen Winters

Throwing Away the Good by Veronica Del Rosa

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

Over the summer I had entered two of my books into contests, *The Exiled*, which is the first book in the trilogy, and *The Exiled*

Trilogy, which is a Collector's Edition that bundles all three books together to give readers the entire story in one complete volume. *The Exiled* received a Finalist award from the Independent Author Network and *The Exiled Trilogy* received an Official Selection award from New Apple.

What are your current projects?

I'm working on a brand new series that I'm absolutely ecstatic about. It won't fall under my usual Fantasy or Paranormal Romance genres, so it looks like I'll be adding another genre to my portfolio when it's completed! I don't want to give away too much information at this stage, as I'm still in the writing phase, but I will say that it has a 'superhero' type theme. There's action, humor, thrills, unexpected twists... and yes! A female character is in the lead role! I'm working overtime on this one, because I think it's definitely something that people are going to be excited about.

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

I haven't as of yet, but I'll certainly find time to get more info and see what's

out there. Finding a new favorite book is what makes reading such a joy, after all!

Any last words?

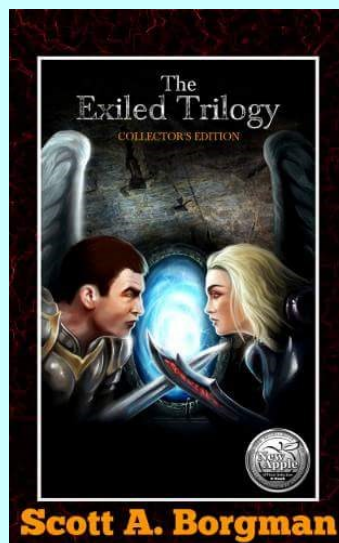
I'd like to say that if anyone is interested in my books or just wants to find out a little more about me, you are welcome to stop by and check out my official website: www.scottborgman.com,

where you can find information about all of my currently published books, read excerpts, get some exclusive content about some of the characters that aren't in the books, watch book trailers, and more. My books are all available for purchase exclusively on Amazon in both digital (kindle) and paperback.

One thing I do ask is that if you're interested, please take advantage of Amazon's *Look Inside* feature, which lets you read a sample from the book you're looking at. Perhaps you'll like what you read, perhaps you'll decide it's not for you – but either way, you're making an informed decision, and I prefer that over blind spur-of-the-moment decisions. Books are meant to be enjoyed, after all. For those who decide my work isn't for you, thank you for giving me a few moments of your

time. I truly appreciate it. For those who decide to walk with the characters from either genre, thank you for giving me the honor and privilege of being your storyteller along the way, and I hope that you'll consider leaving a short review on Amazon afterwards.

All My Best,
Scott A. Borgman



Author Bio

Ask him where he's from, and Scott's typical answer will be a laugh followed by "I'm a Minnesota pickle!" in humorous reference to the old Gedney pickle commercials.

He's lived in Minnesota, Iowa, Virginia, Arizona, and now resides in Wisconsin with his

wife, their three children, two rescued cats, and a loveable, bed-hogging pit bull who's all kisses, cuddles – and who steals his spot in bed on a nightly basis.

When he's not busy writing, reading, or socializing on Facebook and Twitter, he's spending time with his family, feeding his Star Trek, Star Wars, Supernatural, or Arrow obsessions on Netflix. He likes watching movies, and finding all kinds of things on YouTube, which he finds humorous (and doesn't take long. He has a sense of humor that borders on overactive), playing with the larger of his four-legged family members (when she's not sprawled out in his spot looking too adorable and comfy for him to want to move her), and still plays the occasional video game. Scott particularly enjoys hearing from his readers, so if you want to get in touch with him, you can do so through several ways:

SHORT STORY

Althea Romeo Mark

Gone Up Country [Part 1]

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.

To be continued...



Althea Romeo Mark

Herbert Logerie

It's Beautiful To Be Powerful And Kind

I never told you that I
was perfect
I merely stated that I
will succeed
Even if I have to
clean the dirty deck
Of your ignorance
and your intolerance
I will be the first to
stand up to lead
And to teach you
things that you won't
find
In a book; it's
beautiful to be
powerful and kind.

Power is funny,
strange, elusive and
temporary
Avoid stepping on
people that you
don't need now
Tomorrow is
decorated with
surprises. Do no kick
the cow

Let it eat the grass
and the leaves that
you use for tea
So its meat can be
not only pretty, but
delicious and tasty
Even if you are a

vegetarian, Mother
Nature needs
The spit and the
dung to nourish the
roots and the seeds.

I never told you that I
was perfect
I simply said that you
ring will not fit my
neck

It's Beautiful to Be Powerful and Kind

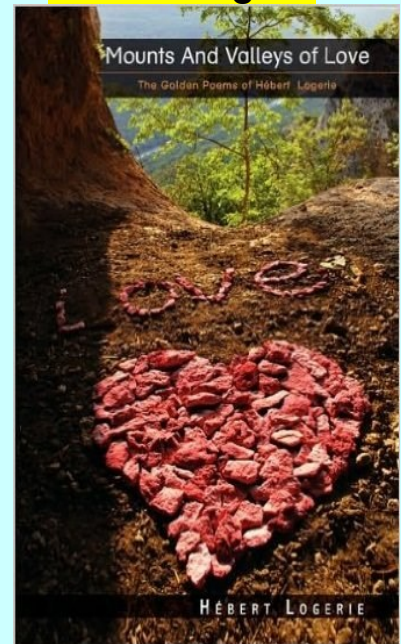
I never told you that I was
perfect
I merely stated that I will
succeed
Even if I have to clean the dirty
deck
Of your ignorance and your
intolerance
I will be the first to stand up to
lead
And to teach you things that
you won't find
In a book; it's beautiful to be
powerful and kind.

Power is funny, strange, elusive
and temporary
Avoid stepping on people that
you don't need now
Tomorrow is decorated with
surprises. Do no kick the cow

Let it eat the grass and the
leaves that you use for tea
So its meat can be not only
pretty, but delicious and tasty
Even if you are a vegetarian,
Mother Nature needs
The spit and the dung to nourish
the roots and the seeds.

I never told you that I was
perfect
I simply said that you ring will
not fit my neck

© Hebert Logerie



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.

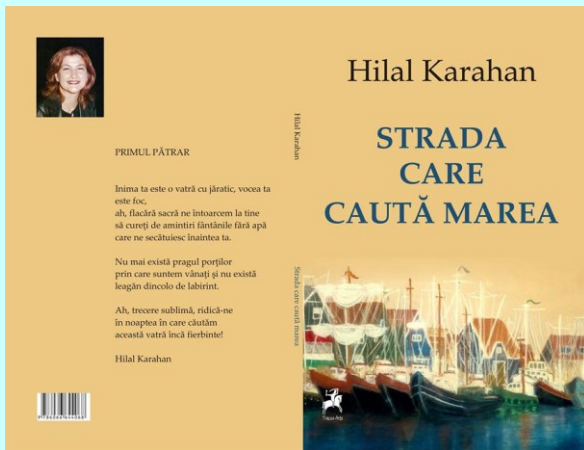
Gecenin sustuđu an düşünürüz

Gece rikkatlidir,
buzda kayan yıldızları
ağaçların saçlarına takar

İlikler düğmelerini günün
sabaha yorgun bakar

Bilir kimin bıraktığını
soluğuna sandal ve amber
kokulu hakikati

Gece,
herkes
sezdiğine inanır



Nous penserons au moment où la nuit se tut

La nuit est miséricordieuse
elle fixe aux cheveux des arbres
les étoiles glissant sur la glace

Elle boutonne les boutons du jour
et regarde fatiguée le matin

Elle sait celui qui avait laissé
à son souffle
la réalité à l'odeur de santal et d'ambre

La nuit
tout le monde croit
à ce qu'il pressentit

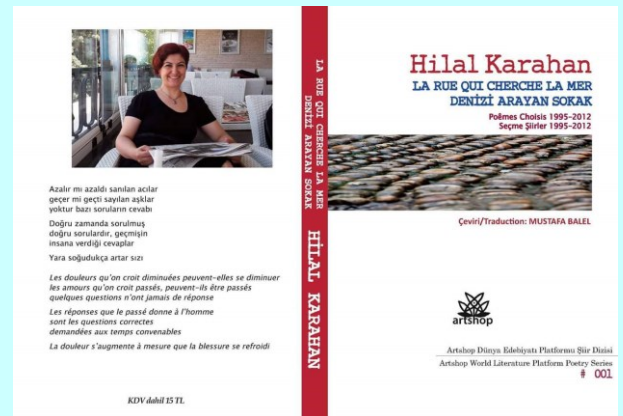
We think when the night is silent"

Night is merciful,
it fixes the sliding stars on ice
to the hair of trees

It buttons the collar of the day
looks tired to the morning

It knows who has left his breath
this reality smelling
sandalwood and amber

At night,
everyone believes
into what foresees



Alonzo "Zo" Gross

(ooh) Don't they have it all

Picture a Man,
 With a Woman,
 Whom,
 he secretly despises/
 Whom picks up "The Can"
 (Nightly)
 Ta Drink away his vices/
 But what he can't understand,
 iZ that oneZ own joy,
 iZ twice as/
 Valuable as the material thingZ,
 That still,
 render him lifeless/.
 Now,
 dig if u may--*
 His Woman,
 Whom feelZ the same way--*
 In Love,
 (Not with him)
 But in a Decadence,
 In which they both obey--*
 Trapped in pain ~
 A forced grin,
 Tis Part of her everyday--*
 Actin' sane~
 But her need,
 Ta (Truly Live)
 MakeZ her (Truly)
 Not want ta stay--*
 In a Loveless-Love,
 (A Grand Facade),
 So festered in decay--*.
 No prison barZ,
 (Their way-^)
 Just Wealth|
 That hath made them,
 Both blind{|
 4 they can only,
 Loathe themselvez|
 Whilst doin'...

A Different Kind of Time{|.
 iZ the Best "Pay Back".

© Alonzo "Zo" Gross



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.

Jack Kolkmeier



The Drum is the Voice of the Trees

the drum
is the voice of the trees
you taste its lilt on your hips
and hear its heartbeat
in the breeze

the drum
gives us roots music
and trunk space
and leaf scatter
and branch breaking
as a symbol
of love and a constant steady
rainfall

the drum
is the choice of the trees
with all due respect to
fiddling around
and basic intentions

for the drum
keeps us up late
watching stars and flying
embers
it makes us other worldly
specters
half-baked with an urge
from the heat of dancing
and then
the drum walks us home

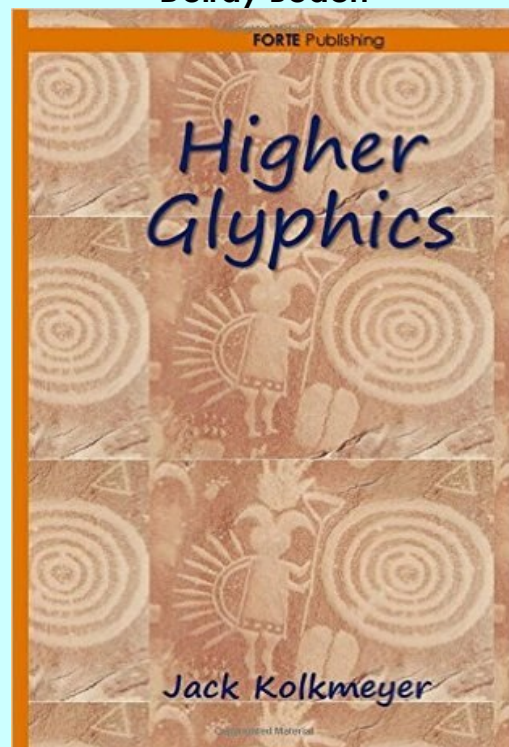
with a surety and sprightliness
of step
and not ironically
well, perhaps iconically
right on time
to watch the moonglow
melt into the morning notes
coming from the birds and
the churches

yes, you see

the drum
is the voice of the trees
because

the drum
is the choice of the trees

Delray Beach



FORTE Publishing

Jack's newest book **Philosophy of Yard** is expected to be published soon. But **Higher Glyphics** is currently available for purchase

Renee' B. Drummond-Brown

'Dawgz' in Heat

So hun~~~
What's the new girl like at work?
Ah~~~
she's just a 'dawgz'
not very pretty
like you though!

'Workin'~~~
late night again?
Does the new girl
Have a hubby
and/or
friend?

Work picnic~~~
'an'
your family can't come?
But
the 'dawgz' there
for you
ALLLLLLLLLLL
alone

Just you and her~~~
'onna'
business trip
A loooong
'wayze' from home,
for 7 'dayze'???
You fo sho
she's a 'dawgz'
and not out
for play?

Very superstitious~~~
a blind man
SEES
WRITINGS
on the wall,
yep, yep, yep

the stench
of this dung
REEKS
Ms. Jezebel's treacherous calls

'Wifee'~~~
does the unthinkable;
hires investigator,
to check out
him & her
to
'SEE'
JUST
what's up???

As she suspects~~~
'Dem' two 'dawgz'
IN HEAT~~~
have 'sum' pups

Dedicated to: Why must he chase
the cat; but a good lawyer can
cure ALL 'dat'?

A B.A.D. poem

As an emerging artist, trying to
establish a solid reputation as an
author, I am asking for your support
by *SHARING THIS POST* and
ORDERING my hardback, soft
back, and e-Book(s) online and/or
on my Face Book Page.

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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author.

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Thelma Teetee Geleplay

THE CRY OF MY MOTHERLAND

Oh my children!
When will my misery end?
I was once known as the mother of
many children
Children of whom few were mine
and many strangers'
As beautiful as pasture this land
was
From far and near many strangers
did come
A place that was once a home of
many
A place where many found love,
peace and harmony
A place that is small but great
enough for her own and others

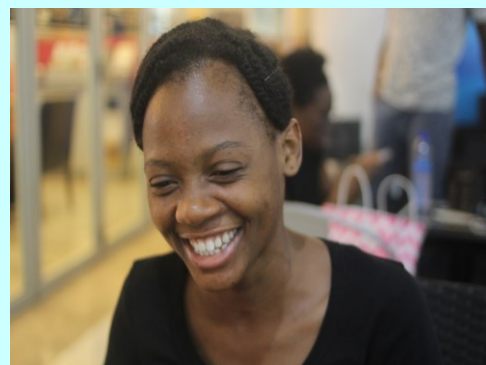
During the days of my tender age
Every fruit of mine was first on
blossom's page
My resources were enough to cater
for those in my coast land
Palm, Cotton, Timber and Rubber
filled the lands
Then came the strangers and the
wanderers
Some were wolves clothed as
sheep
Sheep that seemed harmless but
had plans of endless wickedness

Time came when strangers
became Princes
Princes that enslaved my children
They served them as Lords and
they built houses out on their lawns
I saw my young ones suffer
starvation
All these were causes of their
manipulation

Wars hit from the East, West, North
and South
My home was filled with mourning
and wailing
This home that was once filled with
joy and laughter
Because of greed and selfish pride
many did not see what was
coming after.

I felt my children's pain yet, all the
strangers got was gain
I wept and said to me "this is
insane".
Then came the deadly EBOLA
Ebola made my children refuse
their own
Strangers rejected and stigmatized
my offspring with frown
Some even felt ashamed of their
mother tongue
The blood from their wounded and
dying bodies made the depth of
my earth sodden
In deep pain I suck up my
children's blood
Because of others' rejection some
slept in the flood.

Oh my children Liberians!
When will my misery end?
I am in great pain because of your
greed, hatred, jealousy, envy
nepotism
I weep, yet I have hope for the
future.



Hasan ERKEK



DENİZ KIZI

Kaç kar-boran geçti üstümden
kaç kez dolu yedi yüreğim
ç ı ğ l ı klar ı m yank ı land ı
dağlardan
gri bir göğe as ı l ı p kald ı

Bir bir ölüyor hücrelerim
kahr ı ndan, öfkesinden
korkuyorum haramiler şehrinde
yitip gitmekten

Deniz k ı z ı Eftelya
ç ı k düşlerimin hapsinden
k ı lavuz et sesini yoluma
götür o masal ülkesine
yedi kat denizen dibindeki
buluşal ı m düşle gerçeğin eşiğinde

Yumuşakl ı ğ ı nla dokun
yaralar ı ma
tuzlu sularda ruhumu y ı ka
gizini esirgeme
sağ ı lt beni, haz ı rla
çünkü yeniden başlayacak f ı rt ı na

MERMAID

Countless snowstorms have passed
over me
countless times hail has hit my heart
hills have echoed my cries
hanging on to a gray sky

My cells are dying one by one
because of grief and anger
I'm afraid of disappearing in the
town of kharamees

Dear Mermaid Ephtalia
go out of the prison of my dreams
let your voice guide me
take me to that land of tales
which is seven storeys down
beneath the sea
let's meet on the brink of dream
and reality

Touch my wounds with your
tenderness
wash my soul in salty waters
do not refrain from sharing your
secret
cure me, preparing
for the storm that is about to begin

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

Fethi Sassi

شَهْوَتِهَا

كَانَتْ تَسْرِي دَاخِلَ جُبَّةِ
الشَّفَقِ
مَرَّحَ خَلْفَ الْغَيْمِ مِعْرَاجُ
شَهْوَتِهَا
يَسْأَلُ ... :
مَنْ خَطَفَ لَيْلَهَا الْمُومِسَ
؟

Ascent of her desire

She was travelling by night in the
twilight jubbah
Crying behind the cloud ascent of
her
 desire asking....:
Who took away her harlot night?

Les Routes du Cacao

Sur les pistes ténébreuses du
 cacao,
 un homme s'est égaré,
 son stylo s'est volatilisé.
La liberté telle un oiseau géant
 a pris du plomb dans l'aile
 et s'est fourvoyée...

-An anonymous Ivorian poet,
Les Routes du Cacao, 2008

Final Performance

Cynthia Cruz

I crawl along the wet floor
Of my mother's childhood,

A serpent, or a long-buried secret,
In my mother's bisque
Chiffon gown with small stars

Stitched in silver, a crown
Of tinsel pinned into the dark
Blonde knots and dreads of my
hair.

I follow a sequin thread of dead
Things, stop when the moon clocks
out,
Polish my long nails in the sun.

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You Foolish Men

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.

On the back of history

Dedicated to the nation Liberia @167

On the back of history
Came a small colony
A home of the negroes
A land for them to smile
The first little country
In the breast of Africa
On the back of history came men and
women
Led by JJ Roberts
Standing together in adversity when
bullied by the bulldozers
They stood strong, arms under arms, and
declared a free nation
On the back of history, came Maryland,
creeping, crawling, crying

To join her brothers in love and became a
brother in love

On the back of history came men and
women of color
Roaming Africa for a land to rest and call
home
Some came for afar
From the Ghana empire, the Mali empire,
the Songhay empire
Came the sons of traders, in search of a
home
On the back of history
Came the sons of King Sao Boso, King
long peter
Then came the sons of Bob Gray,
The sons of Matilda Newport Sailing on
the back of history on the mayflower
One day, the sons of sons of our
forefathers will sit down together
Void of tribe or ethnicity or creed
And write the history of their fathers with
a lens
Clearer than binoculars
Our country is a tye-dye nation

All 16 tribes came sailing with one voice
From cape Mesurado, to Bushrod Island
From Lofa to Nimba
Bong to Grandcapemount
From Grandgedeh to Grandbassa
Someday, we'll see the faces of the
French, the Greek the Portuguese the
Arabs
All trooping to our land
This time, not for slaves, but to see the
shores of Bushrod Island

Where the men of color lived
Or see the shores of lake piso
Or wander behind the forest of the sapo
park
Or picnic on the sides of kpatawee
All along the mangrove swamps
And tropical rainforests
We sing the bell of our one own chorus
The love of Liberty
Brought us here!

Lekpele M. Nyamalon

I. Family Trees

(1)

mother was a mango transplanted by moon-light. she glowed like spilt cream. on unknown days she would burst into bruises, or leak tears, but it was just a skin game. fruit do that, seeping out ripe juice, when inside all is sweetening. the real hurt was slower, deeper.

as the years swelled, her tenderness rooted in the soil of bruised fruit. the real rage was churned with the father women. then they hurled it together like paint at uncles gouging *lobola* or marrying twice or taunting children.

these days everyone is quieter as she begins to sag into the third age, so terribly afraid of going blind.

(2)

brother was a flamboyant tree. he arrived like flint, which they fought over and everyone died. at first he would run through the house bass-booming for us to wake up. but as it became clear to him that no one would dye his room red he settled down to chewing gum and playing foosball. now, once a week, he hands out pocket money, backwards. we are so proud of him.

Tsitsi Jaji

Culled from Carnaval © 2014

Ordinary Heaven

I arrange a doll in a chair and wait for her to speak.

I want to say, "Be!" but am an ordinary creation.

I watch for the folds under her eyes to twitch.

I have many dreams, I say to her.

In my dreams I'm better than myself.

I soften peppers in a well-greased pan and make announcements.

I say, in the afterlife we cannot allow a single particle of our light

to diminish. I am not a woman-prophet but I know paradise. I have seen my soul sitting on grass.

There, I learned God doesn't know shame, and after six days

He allowed our atmosphere to make certain souls wince;

we crawl under its magnificence. Here, I can attain ordinary heavens.

Here, I attend to my book of questions.

What is love? Why does it say,

"Allow me to mogul your soul?" Where does it keep what it takes?

What does the prostrating shadow request?

Why do rocks enslave

water? What is the slave's poem? Does the sea favor its roar

or murmur?

The doll cannot answer. The furrow in her bottom lip suggests

that entry into ordinary heaven only requires recognition of it,

for the soul's arrogance to weigh less than a mustard seed.

I am sorry for you, I tell her.

You witness but don't testify.

Ladan Osman © 2014

Culled from Ordinary Heaven

PROVERBS FROM LIBERIA

1. A bird may be in the air but its mind is on the ground.

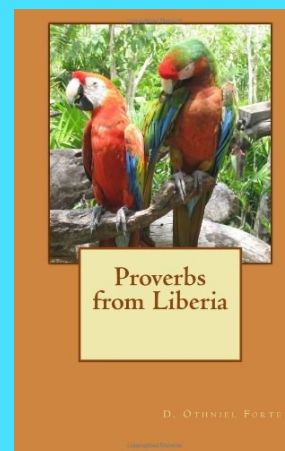
This proverb can be used when one is physically far from home but is mentally still at home (homesick). It could also apply in instances where a person is with someone but loves another person, that is not the one they are with currently.

2. A bird with fire on its tail burns its own nest. If a bird allows its tail to catch fire and it enters its nest, it can't blame anyone else for ruining its home. Some choices we make, only lead us into danger.

3. A child that they carry on the back, doesn't know that the road is long. *So many times, we take for granted the efforts of others to make our lives easier. We don't appreciate it or take it*

lightly. It is only when we have to do the same thing for ourselves or others, that we realize that it was a difficult thing to do.

4. A fool is the only one who buys his own tomatoes. A wise person will never allow himself/herself to be misled. They would know better than to fall for such a trap.
5. A little rain each day will fill the rivers to overflowing. The little effort we make on a consistent basis, can accomplish the largest of task. The key is to be consistent at whatever it is we want to achieve.



D. Othniel Forte

GIFTS OF THE MASTERS

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

Life is Fine

Langston Hughes,

I went down to the river,
I set down on the bank.
I tried to think but couldn't,
So I jumped in and sank.

I came up once and hollered!
I came up twice and cried!
If that water hadn't a-been so cold
I might've sunk and died.

But it was Cold in that water! It
was cold!

I took the elevator
Sixteen floors above the ground.
I thought about my baby
And thought I would jump down.

I stood there and I hollered!
I stood there and I cried!
If it hadn't a-been so high
I might've jumped and died.

But it was High up there! It was
high!

So since I'm still here livin',
I guess I will live on.
I could've died for love—
But for livin' I was born

Though you may hear me holler,
And you may see me cry—
I'll be dogged, sweet baby,
If you gonna see me die.

Life is fine! Fine as wine! Life is fine!
From *The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes*,
published by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. Copyright ©
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permission.

RICHARD ALDINGTON

CHORICOS

The ancient songs
Pass deathward mournfully.
Cold lips that sing no more, and
withered wreaths,

Regretful eyes, and drooping
breasts and wings—
Symbols of ancient songs
Mournfully passing
Down to the great white surges,
Watched of none

Save the frail sea-birds
And the lithe pale girls,
Daughters of Okeanus.
And the songs pass
From the green land
Which lies upon the waves as a
leaf

On the flowers of hyacinth ;
And they pass from the waters,
The manifold winds and the dim
moon,

And they come,
Silently winging through soft
Kimmerian dusk,
To the quiet level lands
That she keeps for us all,
That she wrought for us all for
sleep

In the silver days of the earth's
dawning—
Proserpina, daughter of Zeus.
And we turn from the Kuprian's
breasts,

SITALKAS

Thou art come at length
More beautiful
Than any cool god
In a chamber under
Lycia's far coast,
Than any high god
Who touches us not
Here in the seeded grass.
Aye, than Argestes
Scattering the broken leaves.

H. D.

I
London, my beautiful,
it is not the sunset
nor the pale green sky
shimmering through the curtain
of the silver birch,
nor the quietness ;
it is not the hopping
of birds
upon the lawn,
nor the darkness
stealing over all things
that moves me.
But as the moon creeps slowly
over the tree-tops
among the stars,
I think of her
and the glow her passing
sheds on men.
London, my beautiful,
I will climb
into the branches
to the moonlit tree-tops,
that my blood may be cooled
by the wind.

F. S. FLINT

NOCTURNES

I
Thy feet,
That are like little, silver birds,
Thou hast set upon pleasant ways;
Therefore I will follow thee,
Thou Dove of the Golden Eyes,
Upon any path will I follow thee,
For the light of thy beauty
Shines before me like a torch.

SKIPWITH CANNYLL

THE RETURN

See, they return; ah, see the
tentative
Movements, and the slow feet,
The trouble in the pace and the
uncertain
Wavering !
See, they return, one, and by one,
With fear, as half-awakened;
As if the snow should hesitate
And murmur in the wind
and half turn back ;
These were the "Wing'd-with-
Awe,"
Inviolable.
Gods of the winged shoe!
With them the silver hounds
sniffing the trace of air!
Haie! Haie!
These were the swift to
harry;
These the keen-scented;
These were the souls of blood.
Slow on the leash,
pallid the leash-men !

EZRA POUND

The Heart of a Woman

GEORGIA DOUGLAS JOHNSON

The heart of a woman goes forth
with the dawn,
As a lone bird, soft winging, so
restlessly on,

Afar o'er life's turrets and vales
does it roam
In the wake of those echoes the
heart calls home.

The heart of a woman falls back
with the night,
And enters some alien cage in its
plight,

And tries to forget it has dreamed
of the stars
While it breaks, breaks, breaks on
the sheltering bars.

*Source: The Heart of a Woman and Other
Poems (The Cornhill Company,*

Quatrains

Gwendolyn Bennett

1
Brushes and paints are all I have
To speak the music in my soul—
While silently there laughs at me
A copper jar beside a pale green
bowl.

2
How strange that grass should
sing—
Grass is so still a thing ...
And strange the swift surprise of
snow
So soft it falls and slow.

The Snow Fairy

Claude McKay

1889 – 1948

I
Throughout the afternoon I
watched them there,
Snow-fairies falling, falling from
the sky,
Whirling fantastic in the misty air,
Contending fierce for space
supremacy.
And they flew down a mightier
force at night,
As though in heaven there was
revolt and riot,
And they, frail things had taken
panic flight
Down to the calm earth seeking
peace and quiet.
I went to bed and rose at early
dawn
To see them huddled together in a
heap,
Each merged into the other upon
the lawn,
Worn out by the sharp struggle,
fast asleep.
The sun shone brightly on them
half the day,
By night they stealthily had stol' n
away.

An Evening Thought:
Salvation by Christ,
with Penitential Cries

Jupiter Hammon,
1711 - 1806

Salvation comes by Christ
alone,
The only Son of God;
Redemption now to every one,
That love his holy Word.

Dear Jesus, we would fly to
Thee,
And leave off every Sin,
Thy tender Mercy well agree;
Salvation from our King.

Salvation comes now from the
Lord,
Our victorious King.
His holy Name be well ador'd,
Salvation surely bring.

Dear Jesus, give thy Spirit
now,
Thy Grace to every Nation,
That han't the Lord to whom
we bow,
The Author of Salvation.

Dear Jesus, unto Thee we cry,
Give us the Preparation;
Turn not away thy tender Eye;
We seek thy true Salvation.

Salvation comes from God we
know,
The true and only One;
It's well agreed and certain
true,
He gave his only Son.

Lord, hear our penitential Cry:
Salvation from above;
It is the Lord that doth supply,
With his Redeeming Love.

Dear Jesus, by thy precious
Blood,
The World Redemption
have:
Salvation now comes from the
Lord,
He being thy captive slave.

Part II

Dear Jesus, let the Nations cry,
And all the People say,
Salvation comes from Christ
on high,
Haste on Tribunal Day.

We cry as Sinners to the Lord,
Salvation to obtain;
It is firmly fixed, his holy
Word,
Ye shall not cry in vain.

Dear Jesus, unto Thee we cry,
And make our Lamentation:
O let our Prayers ascend on
high;
We felt thy Salvation.

Lord, turn our dark benighted
Souls;
Give us a true Motion,
And let the Hearts of all the
World,
Make Christ their Salvation.

Ten Thousand Angels cry to
Thee,
Yea, louder than the Ocean.
Thou art the Lord, we plainly
see;
Thou art the true Salvation.

Now is the Day, excepted
Time;
The Day of the Salvation;
Increase your Faith, do not
repine:
Awake ye, every Nation.

Lord, unto whom now shall we
go,
Or seek a safe abode?
Thou has the Word Salvation
Too,
The only Son of God.
Ho! every one that hunger
hath,
Or pineth after me,
Salvation be thy leading Staff,
To set the Sinner free.

Dear Jesus, unto Thee we fly;
Depart, depart from Sin,
Salvation doth at length
supply,
The Glory of our King.

Jupiter Hammon was the first African American poet published in America. He was born into slavery to Henry Lloyd in Lloyd Harbor, New York, on October 17, 1711. The Lloyd family encouraged Hammon to attend school, where he learned to read and write, and he went on to work alongside Henry Lloyd as a bookkeeper and negotiator for the family's business. In his early years, He was heavily influenced by the Great Awakening, a major religious revival of the time, and became a devout Christian.

Hammon published his first poem, "[An Evening Thought. Salvation by Christ with Penitential Cries: Composed by Jupiter Hammon, a Negro belonging to Mr. Lloyd of Queen's Village, on Long Island, the 25th of December, 1760.](#)" as a broadside in 1761. Eighteen years passed before the publication of his second work, "[An Address to Miss Phillis Wheatley.](#)" In this poem, Hammon addresses a series of quatrains with accompanying Bible verses to [Wheatley](#), the most prominent African American poet of the time. In 1782, Hammon published "A Poem for Children with Thoughts on Death."

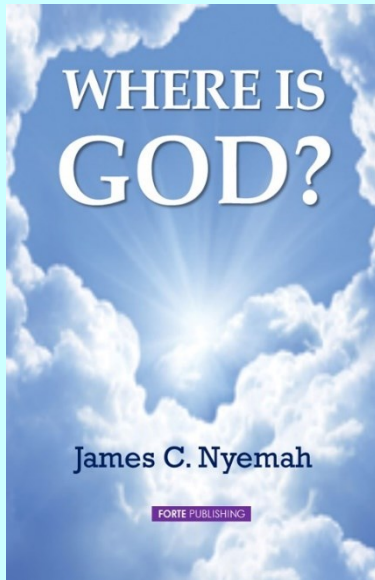
He is widely considered one of the founders of the early American and African American writing traditions. **DoD:** unknown, although he is believed to have died around 1806, having been enslaved his entire life. He is likely buried in an unmarked grave on what was once the Lloyd property and is now Caumsett State Historic Park Preserve in Long Island, New York.

Recommended Reads

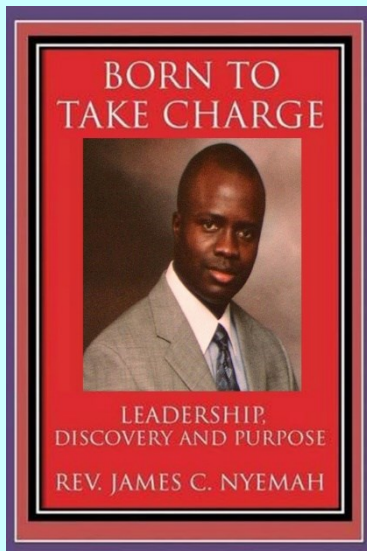
Published by **FORTE Publishing**

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.



do one thing... TAKE CHARGE.

Pastor James Nyemah writes a powerful motivational book that spurs one to

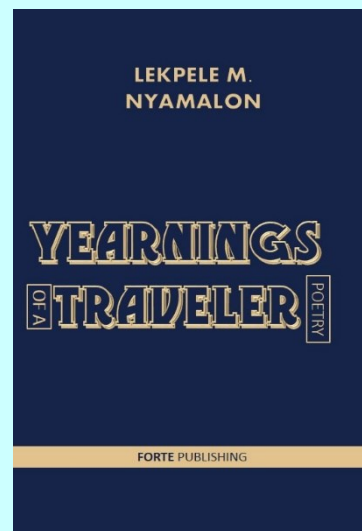
Recommended Reads

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

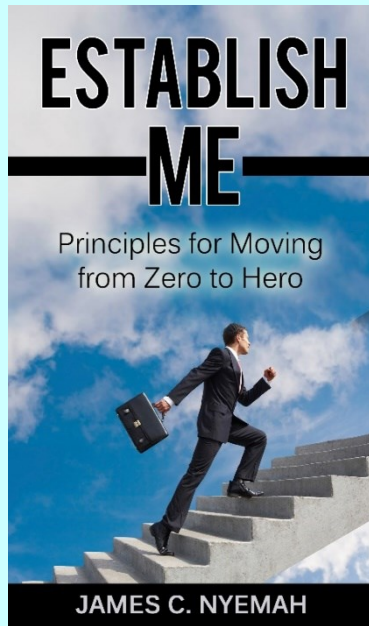
We all have a yearning for something. For Lekpele, his has been a message of self worth, as we see in his signature piece, My Body is Gold; one of patriotism, as in Scars of A Tired Nation; one of Pan Africanism as in the piece, Dig The Graves. He also has a message of hope as seen in his award winning 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

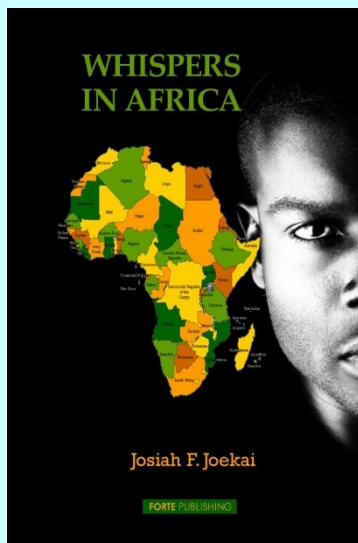
ESTABLISH ME Principles from Zero to Hero

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



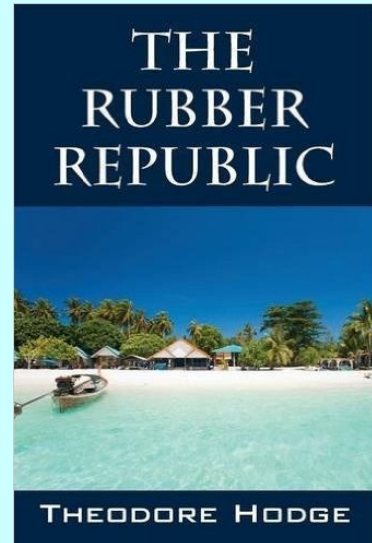
In his latest work, Ps. Nyemah lets us know that God can **Fix Us, Mold Us, Create Us** and then **Establish US**.

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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



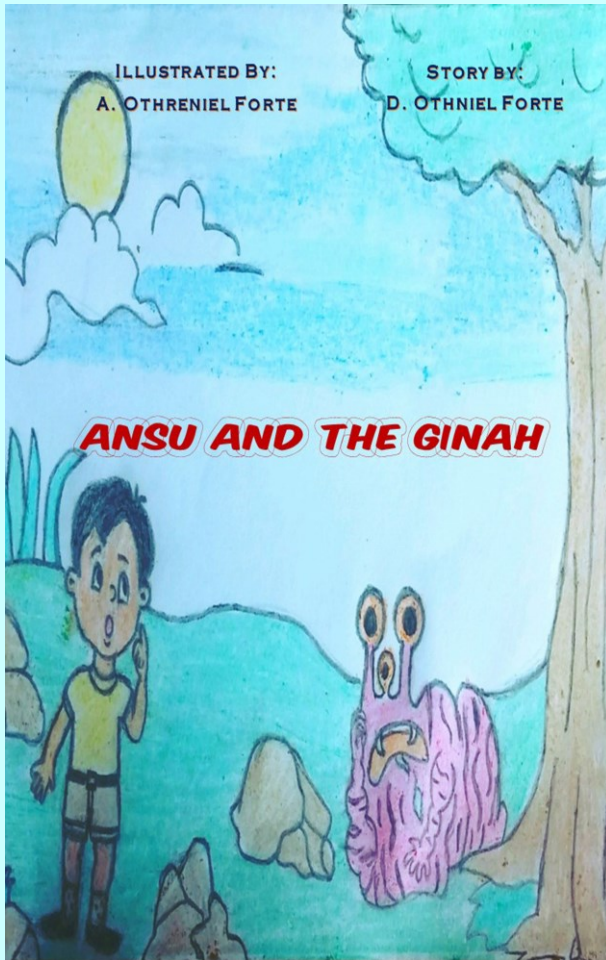
the intriguing and fantastic lives of two young men, Yaba-Dio Himmie and Yaba-Dio Kla, who leave their parents' farm in search of enlightenment and adventure. But the story is also about their country, the Republic of Seacoast, and a giant American Rubber conglomerate, The Waterstone Rubber Plantation 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



**Happy
New Year
to the
People of
Liberia**

President Ellen Sirleaf

**Happy
New Year
to the
Liberian
People**



VP Joseph Boika

AROUND TOWN



Cozy Evening



Local beach



Child selling Plantain



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



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



School kids having fun



A Powerful message in support of arts/artists



Traditional Dancer from the Gio Tribe



Photo: S. Mark

City Center

KWEE Promoting Liberian Literature, Arts and Culture



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



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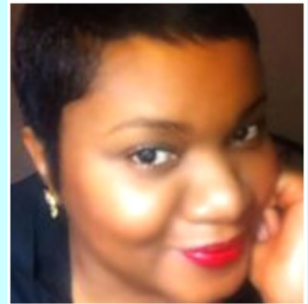
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PHOTO BY: Melisa Chavez

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*

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.

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Liberian

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& Culture

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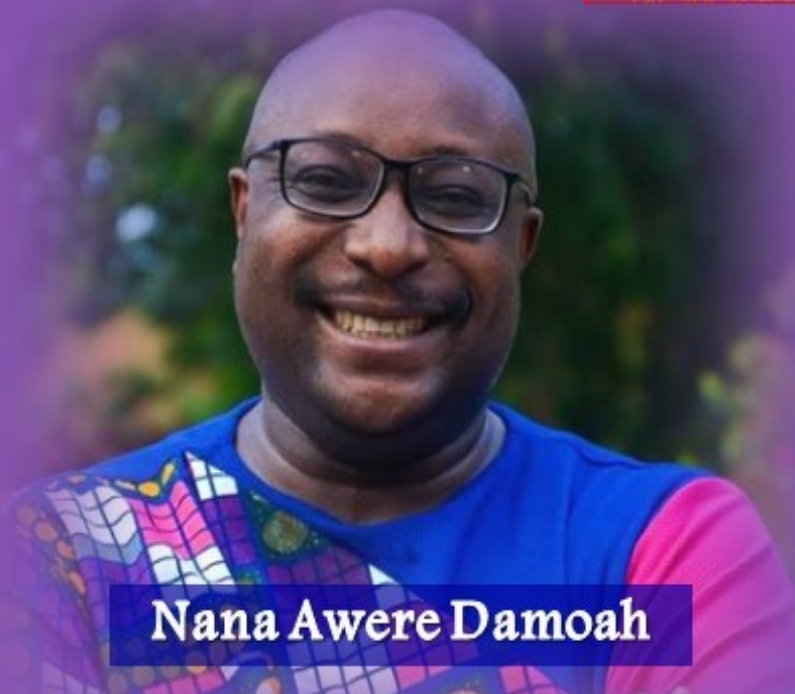
reading amongst our people.

KWEE

JAN Issue

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NEW ISSUE



Nana Awere Damoah



Rebekah Nored

NEW BEGINNINGS MONTH



Scott Borgman



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NEW ISSUE