

LIBERIAN LITERARY MAGAZINE

K **W** **E** **E**

**Bai T.
Moore**

Author of the Month

Reviews

**UNSCRIPTED
LIB PROVERBS**

Random Thoughts

**Althea Mark
Diaspora Poet**

**GIFTS OF THE MASTERS
RESURRECTED MASTERS**

According to Eliot

**SHORT STORIES
POETRY SECTION**

Liberian Literary Magazine

KWEE



Liberian

Literary

Magazine

Overview:

New Look

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

Our Commitment

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

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

What to Expect

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

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**Liberian
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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 is deemed important enough. The catch theme here is addressing the tough issues

Liberia Classic

This segment features classic Liberian poetry and prose by our greatest creative minds.

Contemporary Liberian Literature

As the name suggests, deals with *issues* in modern local or *diasporan* literature as seen by Liberian creative artists.

Risqué Speak

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

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

Diaspora Poet

The internationally acclaimed poet, Althea Romeo Mark hosts this segment.

Authors of the Month Profile

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

Authors of the Month Interview

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

Articles

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

Book Review

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

Gifts of the Masters

Our world have a way of shattering when we encounter masters of the trade. We bring some of the works of the greatest creative minds that ever graced the earth.

Short Stories

Well what can we say? They are short, engaging and we easily fall in love with them

Artist of the Month

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

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

Poetry Section

This is the marrow of the bone; the juicy parts we keep sucking on. We feature established and emerging poets in the array of their diversities. If you can imagine difference, chances are, this is where you will find.

Editor's Desk

The Year Ahead



2016 is swinging and thus far, things are on the up. This is our first 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. Each issue, we see a better [KWEE](#) and for that we remain thank to you. Yes you. All of you that have stayed 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 here is a teaser, but I'd deny it if quoted! 😊 Oops, did I just type that? There goes my plausible deniability.

Anyways, I'm one that likes my bad and not so good news first, that way, I can enjoy the good ones. So

here it goes. Our hot corner [Kulubah's Korner](#) by our sharp wit KLM will not be with us for a while. Sad right? Don't worry, she's not gone yet, trust me, she is on a refresher and will be back with more of her insightful, but truthful opinion bites. Quite frankly, am I the only one who thinks that at times she's just meddling 😊 [-I'm whispering here-]? We will miss you KLM, please hurry back.

We'd also be shifting some of the segments to the blog exclusively. 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.

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.

In *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 know really what will come up until it does.

Richard Moss goes about his randomness with purpose in his poetry corner, *'Twas Brillig*. He can assume the mind or body of any of his million personifications, ideas or characters or just be himself and write good poetry. I am sure you know what to expect there.

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 2016.

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

Independence Day,

July is a great month for Liberians. We get to celebrate July 4th [I must say, as if it were our own] although it beats me why we place so much hype on it. If you are an American of Liberian heritage, it would make sense. But the excitement displayed by many Liberians is whack.

And then we get to celebrate our own independence on the 26. Trust you me, fewer days command a grander celebration than this say, nationally.

However, looking on the bright side, they get to receive money from their relatives or family twice.

Excerpts from an upcoming book

Mistress; the Falling [Part I]

she started off a decent girl
with hopes and ambitions.

ambitions of becoming
someone of importance
with dreams

dreams of her own;
running her own home

having a family;
of her own
raising her own children

having a career;
of her own

but somewhere in between
life happened;
or was it love that happened?
whatever;
something happened!

he was charming, romantic;
and knew exactly what to say.

he was thoughtful
he did the right things

he cared; he truly did
she had to say nothing;
he got her
he just did.

they connected unlike any before
she found herself accepting.

with time
compromising became easy
after all,
with her,
he gave his all.

the proper compliments;

he never flattered or
overreached like most guys;
honest comments and actions;
constant glances;
tickles;
gentle touches,
pecks;
holding her just long enough
but not suggestive.

later, so much later,
came the gifts;
the stolen kisses,
the cuddles,
the hugs;

and before she knew it,
she'd fallen for
someone
one already taken

D. Othniel Forte

Liberian Classic

the shape of our world today

Bai. T Moore

nepeja

this is

h
u
m
o
r
c
o
l
o
g
y

one day
in a small
integrated school
in scare-crow
alabama usa
a little ambitious
teacher asked his
pupils to tell
him the shape
of the world
the answers
they were plenty
such as
the world is round
the world is flat
the world is square
the world is zig zag
a bright little
negro girl in
the back row
of the class
got up and laughed
my father and my mother
said last night
the world is in
the worst shape
now than it
has ever been



Authors of the Month Profiles

BAI T. MOORE

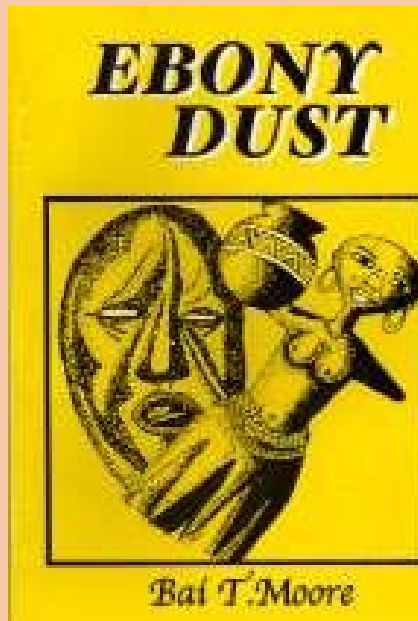
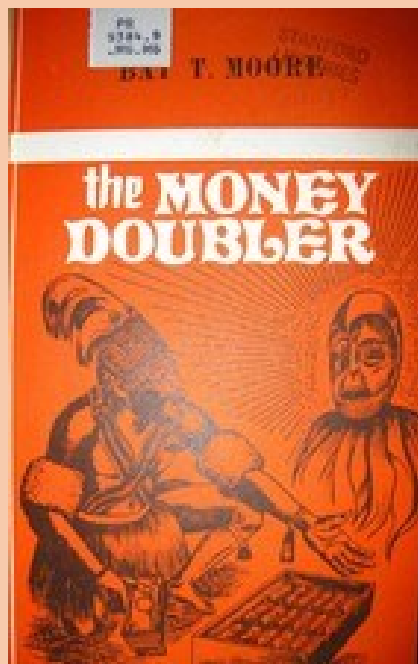


Bai T. Moore

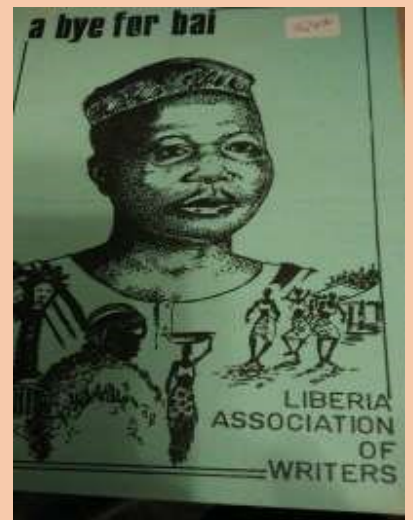
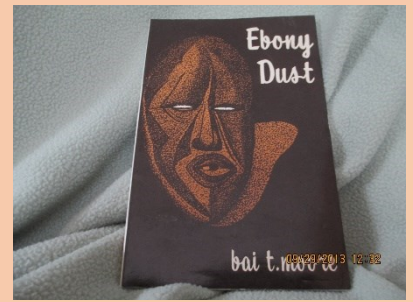
Bai T. Moore was a renowned poet and author whose work was greatly influenced by his experiences growing up in Liberia.

In addition to Moore's career as a writer, he served as a government official for several years, first as Chief of the Liberian Bureau of Agriculture, and later, as Deputy Minister of Information, Cultural Affairs and Tourism.

Moore's collection consists of government papers, ethnographic materials, published works, manuscripts, and drafts of his writings.



BAI T. MOORE



Bai Tamia Moore

Bai T. Moore was born on October 12, 1910 in the town of Dimeh, a Gola village between Monrovia and Tubmanburg in Liberia, and died in Monrovia on Jan. 10, 1988. He studied at Virginia Union University and returned to Liberia in 1941, where he served the Liberian government in various posts while writing, promoting the Gola, Dey culture and the general cultures of Liberia. Bai T.

Moore became Minister of Cultural Affairs and Tourism under the government of Samuel K. Doe, a post that he served in diligently until he died in 198 at the age of 79.

Our Spotlight author of this issue is arguably Liberia's most prominent literary master

BAI TAMIA MOORE

Author Interview



Liberian Literary Mag features

BAI TAMIAH MOORE

Biography

Bai Tamiah Moore was born in the village of Dimeh, 20 miles from Monrovia, and given the name Tamiah. Though the exact date of Moore's birth was not recorded, it has been approximated as either sometime in 1916 or in October, 1920. The village in which he grew up was ruled by the Dei ethnic group, but was also inhabited by the Gola, Vai, Mandingo, and Bassa peoples. Moore's parentage was both Vai and Gola, but he identified himself as Vai, using the criteria of

patrilineal descent, language, and name. He spoke the indigenous languages of Gola, Vai, Vassa, and Dei. His maternal grandmother was a great and respected storyteller in her home village of Janney. Both his ethnic background and the importance of storytelling in his family were great influences in his life.

Moore was the sixth of seven children, with two older brothers, three older sisters, and one younger brother. Moore's father died while he was a young child, forcing his mother and his older siblings to support the family. Because two of his older sisters were attending an indigenous school for women in nearby Sande, his mother chose to remain in Dimeh after her husband's death, rather than return to her home village of Janney.

While he was still a young boy, Moore's oldest cousin convinced his mother to allow Moore to visit their relatives in Janney. This trip was supposed to last only "a few moons," but it stretched into a few years.

Moore's stay in Janney proved to be very

influential in his life because he was immersed and nurtured in the rich culture of the Gola ethnic group while living with his mother's family. Also as a result of his move to Janney, Moore had his first taste of western culture.

After learning his distant cousin attended a mission school in nearby Bendoo, Moore obtained permission to visit the school and to stay with the missionaries who ran it. Soon after his arrival, he was enrolled as a student. There was a large ethnic mix present at the school—Vai, Gola, Mandingo, Kpessi, Basso, Kru and Americo-Liberian students attended. Moore learned English at Bendoo, and there his name was changed to Johnson Moore—Johnson after Reverend R. O. Johnson, and Moore after the Baptist Church in Richmond, Virginia that supported the mission. Mommie Bouey, one of the missionaries who ran the school, was so impressed by Moore that she decided he should be given the opportunity to travel to America.

After Moore's mother and grandmother died, he returned to Janney

uncertain about whether he wanted to continue his schooling at Bendoo. During this period, he was initiated into the Poro, the male society that educates adolescent boys in the culture of the Gola and officially declares them to have reached manhood.

It was at the ceremony signifying his acceptance into the Poro that Moore was given the name Bai/Bye, to be placed before his birth name Tamiah. Henceforth, he would be known as Bai T. Moore. After entering the Poro, he traveled extensively through Gola Country, a journey that would forever flavor his writings.

On August 3, 1929, Mommie Bouey's promise of sending him to America was finally fulfilled and he departed from Monrovia with Bouey's husband, Reverend Bouey. Mrs. Bouey and the reverend's brother, John Bouey, met them when their ship, the S. S. West Ke-Bar, docked in Philadelphia on September 4. From Philadelphia, the Boueys took Moore to Richmond, Virginia, where Moore attended the public high school.

After graduating from high school in 1934, he went on to Virginia Union University where he received a B.A. in biology in 1938. Though he considered going on to medical school, he was unable to do so for lack of scholarship and personal funds. Moore instead began working in Washington, D. C., while taking graduate courses at Howard University. Moore had a number of interesting jobs during the twelve years he remained in the U.S., including working as newspaper boy, busboy, dishwasher, bellhop and chauffeur.

Moore's aptitude for writing was evident early in his education, particularly when he began contributing to his high school's publications. Moore's first attempts at writing poetry imitated the voices and styles of American and European poets. When he began to draw from his experiences in Liberia, it was clear that they would be a major source of inspiration and material for his work in the future. He wrote primarily in English, though he did occasionally write in the Vai language, as well.

After returning to Liberia in 1941, Bai T. Moore decided to explore his ethnic heritage extensively. He traveled all over Liberia collecting Vai folktales, and those of other ethnic groups, as well. Moore then settled down to life as a writer, and in time, he accepted a post as a government official. He first took on the position of Chief of the Bureau of Agriculture in the Liberian Department of the Interior, and in 1980, that of Deputy Minister of Information, Cultural Affairs and Tourism. Upon retiring in 1986, he became a senior advisor and mentor for the Liberian Association of Writers/Society of Liberian Authors, where he worked until his death of a heart attack on Sunday, January 10, 1988.

Major Works

□ 1937. *Golah Boy in America*. Richmond, VA: Quality Printing Co., 1937. A biographical sketch of his youth in Africa describing customs of the Golah tribe and his journey to "Big" America.

□ 1947. *Echoes from the Valley*. Robertsport, Liberia: D. Muir Printing Office, 1947. A collection of poems with

Roland T. Dempster and H. C. Thomas.

[ral&docId=VAC1412.xml&doc.view=print](http://www.rolanddempster.com/ral&docId=VAC1412.xml&doc.view=print)

□ 1962. *Ebony Dust*. Monrovia: Ducor Publishing House, 1962.

A collection of poems. Reprinted in 1976.

□ 1967. *Chips from the African Story Tree*.

A collection of Liberian folktales with S. Jangaba M. Johnson.

□ 1968. *Murder in the Cassava Patch*. Monrovia: Ducor Publishing House, 1968.

First published in serial form in the newspaper *Liberian Star*, that same year it was also published as a novel which was reprinted in 1976.

□ 1974. *Voices from Grass Roots*. Liberia: privately printed, 1974.

A collection of poems.

□ 1976. *The Money Doubler*. Lagos & Unicom Books, 1976.

A novel.

□ 1979. *Liberian Culture at a Glance*. Monrovia: Ministry of Information, Cultural Affairs, and Tourism, 1979.

□ N.D. *Monkey Work, Baboon Draw*.

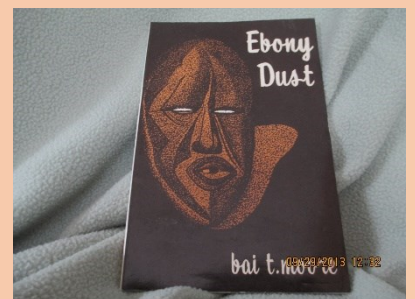
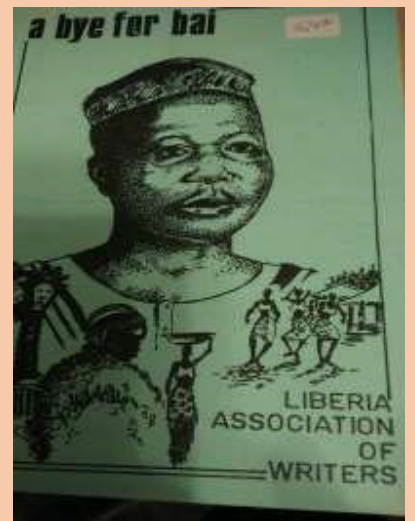
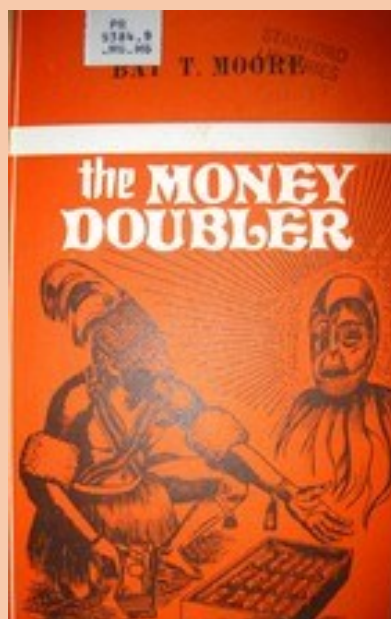
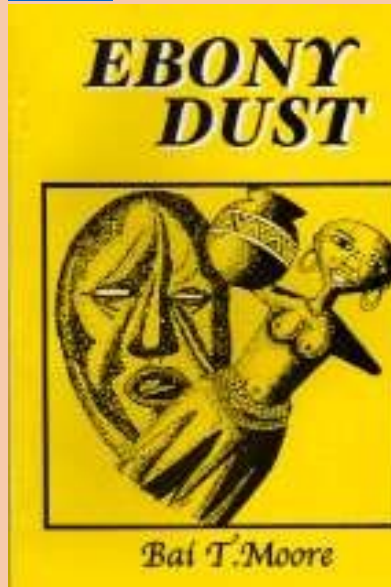
A novel. Unpublished.

□ N.D. *Godchild*.

A novel. Unpublished.

SOURCE

<http://webapp1.dlib.indiana.edu/findingaids/view?brand=gene>



BAI T. MOORE

Diaspora Poet

Clippings

His hair, woolly, short and soft
is dark-brown and
blazes red when he sits
in the gaze of the sun.

The wise ones taught him
the sacredness of trimmed hair.
It was kept in fist-sized balls
in plastic bags, not for nostalgia's
sake
nor for souvenirs of childhood.

Hair is hidden, stashed away in
far corners of drawers, and
in tattered suitcases
gathering dusts under beds.

It lay among the keepsakes
of grandparent's tarnished silver,
ancient eye glasses and photos
of black sheep so faded,
no one recognizes faces.

You do not wish your enemy
to get hold of it. With hair strands
rubbed between thumb and finger
and a few words to the Obeah
man,*
the fiend becomes your master.

Yesterday, unburdened by the
voices
of the wise ones, tinged with little
nostalgia,
he threw his children's hair in the
dustbin.

The brown, black, dark brown fluffs,
aren't unlike the ones he sweeps-up
in his barber shop everyday.

He does not own the souls of others.
He has had no time, nor will
to search for an obeah man

*Obeah man = Caribbean
equivalent of a witch doctor

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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:

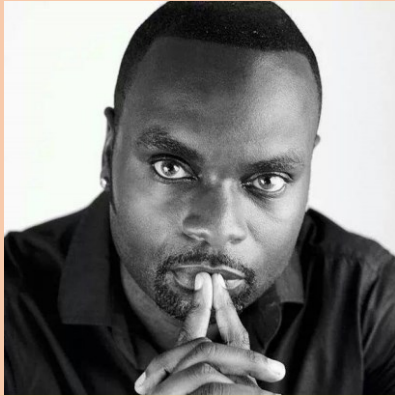
www.aromaproductions.blogspot.com



Author Interview 2

Spotlight Author

Alonzo Gross



Liberian Literary Magazine conducted an interview with author Alonzo Gross ☺.

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

I am really just someone who loves to learn. Someone who has always loved wisdom and different diverse things. I've been a writer since the age of 5. Influenced by the eccentric & unique style of Dr. Seuss which was my first Major Writing Influence.

Why writing?

I don't really journal in the traditional sense. My poems, songs, & music are extremely

therapeutic for me. So the writing for me, is a means to break through and escape. I was always fascinated by the notion of escapism by way of art.

What books have most influenced your life/career most?

The first book of Profound Influence on me was Dr. Seuss' The Cat in The Hat then I would have to say The Hardy Boys. After that I got into The Prophet by Khalil Gibran which absolutely altered the way I approach my writings.

How do you approach your work?

I approach my work like a canvas; I add then take away, add then take away. It is a process many visual artists utilize as well.

This same method is was also used by the late Jean Michel Basquiat. I allow myself to let the work use me, and I go where it leads.

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

I find myself exploring Truth, Conflict, Resolution, Pain, Mysticism, Love, and Death.

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

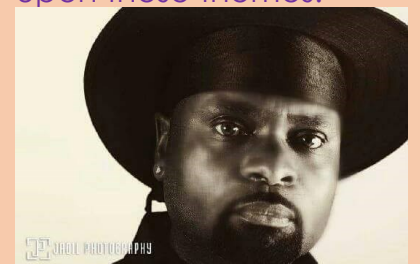
My current book is called Soul EliXiR the writingZ of zO. It explores a myriad of themes, including inner conflict, bliss, war & spirituality. It is a journey from one level of learning. Many of the pieces I wrote for that book were written in a time where I was really feeling those emotions and expressing them through the work.

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

The title for my book Soul EliXiR actually came to me in a dream which happens often and I do my best to write it down. I didn't even know what Elixir meant until I looked it up.

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

The overall message I want for all of my books is the message of open mindedness and freedom. This book builds upon those themes.



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

The book will be coming out soon can't really give an exact date as of yet

Do you have any advice for other writers?

Read, Read, and do more Reading. Study the masters. Nurture your craft. Find your voice and your audience will find you.

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

I recently read The Motivation Manifesto by Brandon Burchard which was an excellent book. I am currently reading Conversations with God by Neale Donald Walsch, Esoteric Mind Power by Vernon Howard, Mastery by Robert Greene, The Complete Works of Claude McKay, and of course the Bible first and foremost.

What are your current projects?

A documentary film I was in called Voices is coming out in 2016. It was filmed in Los Angeles, California and directed by Gina Nemo.

I was honored to be a featured poet/musician in the documentary. We're looking forward to its release in theatres. I'm looking on releasing new poetry and new cds.

My new CD entitled, A MADNESS 2 THA METHOD. The release of my book of poetry "Soul EliXiR", and appearing in several anthologies.

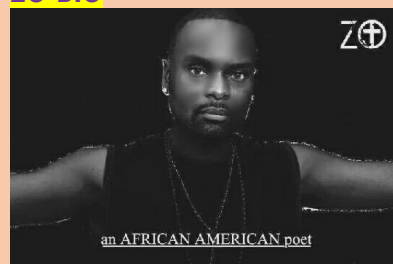
Have you read book[s] by [a] Liberian author[s] or about Liberia?

No, I can't say that I did.

Any last words?

Peace.

Zo Bio



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.



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.

Despair

Love, thou hast been unkind,
severe;
Thy pride forbade thee
recognise
The joys that might have been.
Arise!

The hour of hate has come!
Prepare!

I, too, can scorn with scorn
repay; —
The cravings of my heart
repress:
And my deep love with pride
may dress,

(Frail armour for so stout a fray!)

But stout or frail or fierce or
calm, —

What guerdon this for Love's
decease?
Each day my passion doth
increase,

And pride is useless as a balm.

Forsooth! 'tis but a moment's
pain, —
This longing for the sympathy
I scorn. O to be free, — heart-
free

From this wild dream that doth
again

Haunt all my thought each
passing hour!
Heart-free! have I a heart? It
rests,
Pauline with thee! within thy
breasts

Whose velvet couch has subtle
power!

"Leaves from Love's Garden"

Thou stol'st my heart and now a
stone

Hangs heavy where a heart-
beat thrilled !
That one long kiss! its sweetness
filled

My deepest soul when thou
had'st done!

'Twas in that kiss my soul
departed;
'Tis on that kiss, Sweet memory!-
Today my passion feeds: ah,
me,

That ever I was broken-hearted
!

Tears, tears, O copious tears will
rise

O'erflooding all the channels of
my being:
Ah, tears of blood and anguish,
seeing

Which cannot thy bright
sparkling eyes

Melt into sympathetic showers?

O idle hope! O wreck of love!

O too-confiding faith! Above
They smile, — the higher
powers!

Smile! God! what awful
sacrilege!

Mock at my woe and me
distressed?

That love might point a sorry
jest,
Ah, can this be their privilege?

"Leaves from Love's Garden"

Short Story: How lay Lill Boy, lor Lie So?

Massa Boima left Golodee (Gola village in Dei country) and went to America. While there she married Francis Zehmon a Dei man and after a year they had a bouncing baby-boy. They decided to name him Zohpon, the name of Francis' Great Grandfather.

Five years passed and Massa decided to visit her people in Golodee, so they could see Zohpon.

She packed everything she wanted to carry and on the departure day, Francis drove his family to the airport and waited until they took off.

It was a long trip. Zohpon was asleep when the plane landed at Robert International Airport- R.I.A. and Massa had to wake him. After checking out, she chartered one of the Taxis waiting outside.

When the Taxi turned on the road going to Bomi Hills, her heart skipped a beat and sweet memories began to set in. Her girlhood days began to play slowly in her mind's eyes and unconscious smiles began to form on her lips.

"Sister, sister we're almost to Klay O!" the driver bellowed. Being ripped from the memories she

collected herself. "After that junction, take the first road to your left." she interjected.

A couple of minutes passed and the driver turned left onto a dirt road. Fifteen minutes later she was home at the big house in the center of Golodee.

What a welcome it was, her father, Konah and mother, Bendu, were already waiting together with the crowd that had assembled.

Zohpon was swept off his feet and into his grandmother's arms. Greetings and hugs were exchanged.

After the play (festival) they took a warm bath and retired to their quarters.

The following morning after breakfast, Massa went with her mother to get some country bread.

Zohpon was left with his grandfather, who sat on the porch. Mr Konah was happy with his grandson and kept an eye on him, while he played.

After a while, Zohpon had a full bladder and had to release himself pressingly, knowing not where to go he sprayed grandfather's favorite Mango tree.

Oldpa Konah saw Zohpon peepeeing on his tree and he shouted "Why you peepeeing on the tree?" Zohpon seemed not to have heard grandpa

Konah, so grandpa went outside to his grandson.

When he got to Zohpon he asked, "Why you peepee under the tree?"

Zohpon said, "What? I did not peepee under any tree. I only urinated."

Grandpa bellowed, "Aye how lay lill' boy lor lie so. I saw you with my own two eyes peepeeing."

"No, Grandpa I never peepee or whatever that is, I only urinated," said Zohpon.

Just then Massa and Ma Bendu entered, Mr. Konah turned to Massa and said, "How lay lill boy lor lie so." Massa asked, "Pa what happened?"

"I asked Zohpon why he peepee on the tree and he's telling me, he did not peepee but he urinated." said Mr. Konah.

Massa laughed till her sides hurt and finally said. "Pa, Zohpon did not understand you and you did not understand Zohpon. Peepee and Urinate mean the same thing, but Zohpon nah know 'peepee' and you nah know *Urinate*"

Grandpa began to laugh and picked up his grandson and held him warmly.

From that day forward the two were tight buddies.

(By: Sylomun Weah)

Unscripted

Cher Antoinette



JULY 2016

REACH

I have been waiting
 waiting for the right
 moment
 to tell myself
 to listen
 to tell myself that this is
 the time
 to listen to my heart
 feel the beats
 the ebb and flow
 of my spirit

this is the time to reach
 reach for the other half
 of myself
 I hear your screams

echoing
 your thoughts race
 towards mine
 blending
 merging
 two pieces of the elusive
 floating aimlessly
 over time
 trailing continents
 washed by the stars

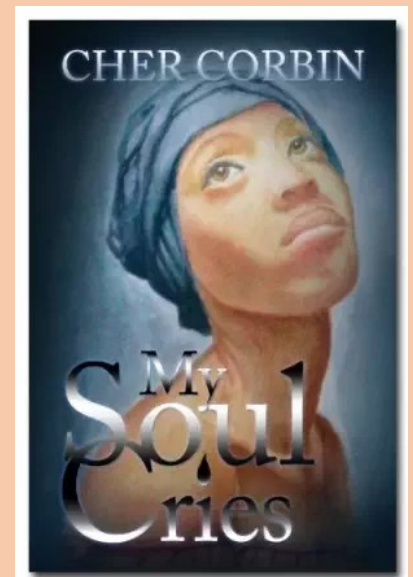
your spirit rides the waves
 your words
 our words
 our thoughts

resonating
 the uncertainty
 of this insanity
 is now our reality

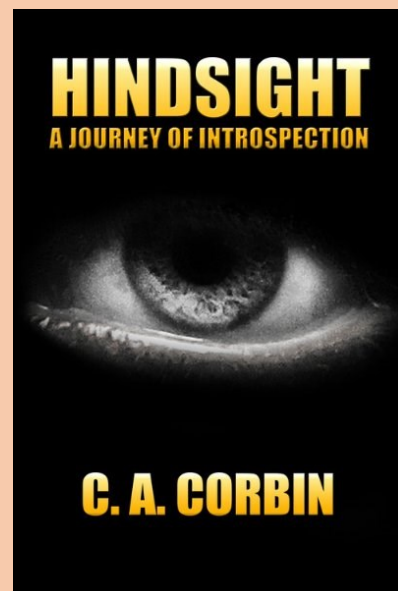


SANDCASTLES

can we build castles
 sandcastles
 on the rocky shores
 can we believe
 in fairy tales
 glass slippers to fit
 pumpkins to transform
 coaches to carry us
 to the gala
 the event of the year
 a meeting of souls
 dancing of hearts
 to the music of the
 waves
 under the silvery moon
 on the patio
 of our
 house by the sea



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

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Ophelia S. Lewis

KEEP IN TOUCH



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Author Interview 3

SPOTLIGHT AUTHOR

RACHEL SMETS



Rachel Smets

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

Hey! I'm Rachel, life coach, language instructor, speaker, and founder of rachelsmets.com. I speak six languages and teach conversational languages and multi-cultural training. I love inspiring people, especially with integrating in new countries, as I have been living and working in several countries since many years.

When not writing or teaching, I am running, biking, and at the gym to relax my mind.

Why writing?

Why not share what I know or learned and hereby try to help others.

What books have most influenced your life/career most?

What books have most influenced your life/career most? ACIM (A Course in Miracles), Ask and It is Given, The Secret, The Mindful Way, The Power of Now, etc...

How do you approach your work?

With discipline.

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

Self-help themes, anything psychology related has always interested me due to my passion for people, but also to grow personally. Also, entrepreneurial themes, to learn and improve business wise.

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

Title: "Awaken Your Confidence: 15 People Share Their Journey to Success".

Category: Non-fiction, Self-help, Business & Money. Not Fiction, not a story, but FULL of inspiration!

Short Description:

The goal of Awaken Your Confidence is to give you the inspiration and tools to help you grow your confidence step by step.

In Part One, 15 successful people share their journey to personal happiness and career satisfaction.

Part Two has 11 confidence hacks that you can apply immediately to start building your self-confidence.

Some of the names I interviewed are **SJ Scott**, **Stephen Shedletzky**, **Dr. Aziz**, **Jesse Krieger**, **Scott Ballard**, **Gina Hussar**, and many more. Each of their stories in **Part One** reveal how they went from shy or introvert to very successful.

~~ "Never assume that you're stuck forever and it's impossible to get what you want. Life changes, and so can you." ~~

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

Self-confidence is useful in many areas in life, both private and professionally. With confidence, you can be

the person you want to be. Many people feel stuck and frustrated, but there's no need to, because the great thing is that you can learn and build confidence.

As a shy little girl, my self-esteem was very low. By traveling the world on my own, I lived and worked in many countries. This experience gave me the confidence that I have now, and that's what I want my readers to achieve too.

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

Absolutely! Learn: How to awaken your confidence and transform your life to get what you want. Life changes, and so can you. You can Start Now! Take charge of your own success. Use the power of confidence and you will transform your life.

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

Yes, you receive all 15 interviews on video & audio files added as a Bonus.

Do you have any advice for other writers?

For non-fiction writers, I would advise to research a lot in order to give as much value as possible to your readers.

What book[s] are you reading now?

I've read many books about writing books and writing skills, and marketing.

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

My book will launch on August 23d. Besides that I am promoting my language conversation sessions and creating new intercultural trainings.

Any last words?

Confidence is something you create within yourself by believing in who you are.

Rachel Smets -BIO

Rachel Smets is a life coach, language instructor, speaker, and founder of RachelSmets.com. She speaks six languages and teaches conversational languages and multi-cultural training to individuals and groups. Her expertise was gained from living and working in several countries since many years.

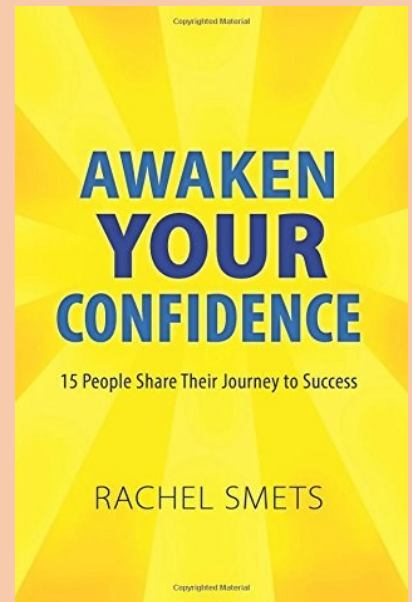
Rachel's goal is to help you achieve your personal and career goals faster and easier than you ever imagined. By creating a plan tailored to your situation and then take action to become the person you want to be.

She graduated from the University of Maryland (US) with a bachelor's degree in psychology, and achieved her master's degree in management from the University of St Andrews (UK).

Born and raised in Belgium, Rachel started her expat life in 2003. Learning about other people and experiencing

different cultures is her passion, so she is thrilled to be living the life she has chosen for herself and enjoys sharing her experiences to help others.

If interested in engaging Rachel to speak please email rachel@rachelsmets.com/



Do you: feel stuck? Feel like your life will never change? Ask yourself the same questions over and over again, without getting answers? Do you feel trapped, confused, stressed and frustrated? You're not alone.

Often, the root cause of feeling stuck is a **lack of confidence.**

Is it possible to: become more confident? Stop feeling overwhelmed and start finding purpose and enjoyment in life? Is it really possible to pull yourself out of this low confidence cycle?

Yes! It's absolutely possible.

Learn: How to awaken your confidence and **transform your life** to get what you want. **Life changes, and so can you.**

You can Start Now! The goal of Awaken Your Confidence is to give you the inspiration and tools to help you grow your confidence step by step.

In Part One, 15 successful people share their journey to personal happiness and career satisfaction.

Part Two has 11 confidence hacks that you can apply immediately to start building your self-confidence.

These interviews were selected carefully to represent a variety of people from around the world. Some, such as Stephen Shedletzky or Jesse Krieger, are well-known, touring the world and speaking in front of large audiences. Some are famous authors, like Steve Scott; others are entrepreneurial coaches, such as Dr. Aziz or Scott Ballard.

They all have one thing in common: they started out with low confidence or feeling stuck in some way, but **they found the tools to Awaken Their Confidence.**

What is confidence?

Confidence is a feeling of trust in your qualities and judgments. To be self-confident is to feel secure from within, to believe in yourself and your abilities.

With confidence you will discover multiple benefits:

- Becoming healthier and more positive
- Having a balanced, successful life
- Gaining greater self-esteem and self-awareness
- Better focus on achieving goals
- Feeling more energized
- Greater feelings of fulfillment and satisfaction
- Accepting new challenges without fear
- Achieving more with less stress
- Setting realistic goals and getting the results you want

The most powerful hacks in this book are:

- Take action and keep moving forward. Break big goals into small steps.
- Face your fears. Expect and overcome obstacles.
- Failure is feedback. Learn from it.
- Live in the present. Don't get stuck in your past.
- Focus on what you can do, not what you can't.

- Practice, practice, practice. Consistency and repetition matter.
- Don't compare yourself with others. You are unique.
- Exercise to keep your body and mind healthy.
- Learn to accept yourself for who you are.
- Take control of your life. You are responsible for your own happiness.

You can Awaken Your Confidence! It's never too late.

Use these 15 inspiring interviews to find your own confidence hacks. Put them into practice Today and discover the benefits of a Self-Confident YOU.

Take charge of your own success.

Use the power of confidence and you will transform your life.

Would You Like To Know More?

Download now and take that first step to grow YOUR Confidence and **be the person you want to be.**

To gain confidence, scroll to the top of the page and click BUY NOW button!



Short Story: *VICTORY IN TRAGEDY*

KPANA NNADIA GAYGAY

Massa lived with her uncle, his wife and three sons in a slum community near Monrovia. Their three rooms zinc shack was situated near the Atlantic Ocean. Massa moved in with her uncle when she lost her parents a day before her ninth birthday. They were on their way from purchasing items for her birthday celebrations when a speeding truck lost control and ran into them, killing them instantly.

At her uncle's house, life was nothing but hard for Massa. Her aunt, who always complained about the burden of caring for her, took to maltreating her probably as compensation for the burden. Mrs. Konah used every opportunity to let anyone know how dissatisfied she was with this. She often said that there was not enough money to support her three sons and Massa at school, suggested to her husband that his niece should begin selling sweets around while they work to save enough to enroll her the next year. Out of fear of annoying his wife should he object, he told her Massa was her daughter and so should

take whatever decision that could mean well for her.

At age 9, Massa became a street vendor on the basic streets of Monrovia. From selling sweets to parched groundnuts, she became familiar with nearly every nook and corner of the city. One day after tilling the streets and barely selling much, she decided to engage a conversation with her aunt. "Aunty Jenneh, I want to tell you something."

She began. "What is it"? Her aunt shouted. "I just hope you haven't used the money from the sales today again and coming with a story of it losing from you", she continued. "No Aunty, I just want to know when I'll finally begin school. I have been selling for nearly four years and yet no sign of me starting school."

"Oh, so you've become so frisky now that you can stand to my face and insult me", her aunt screamed. Afraid of the worst, Massa quietly walked into her room. She sat on the bed, hugged her pillow tight as tears profusely ran down her round cheeks. Why was she being treated like this in her own uncle's house and he said nothing. Every time she spoke to her aunt about school, she would always accused Massa of insulting her. Twice she had been beaten and bruised by her uncle. She mourned the unfair treatment meted against her and the death of her parents. She wouldn't be going through this had they not died and left her to suffer.

She cried herself to sleep. Early the next morning, she was awakened by the sound of her aunt demanding that her husband send his niece away if he wanted peace to prevail in their home.

She heard him pleading with her not to do such but Mrs. Konah insisted. "If Massa does not leave this house now, it means you don't want peace. I cannot sit and watch such wretched and miserable child continue to insult me like she's been doing." Before she could think on what to say if her uncle came in to ask her, her door flanged open and her aunt stood in the doorway. "Aunty Jenneh", Massa began. "I beg you oh, sorry. Please don't put me out. You know I don't have anywhere to go. Please, I won't ever ask you again about me going to school." She knelt

down and held her aunt's feet in a traditional apology manner. She cried bitterly at her aunt's feet. But her tears couldn't bring a grain of sympathy and compassion to the heart of Mrs. Konah. It seems like the devil himself has entered into her. "Massa, if you like you can cry blood but you'll no longer stay under this roof. By the time I return from the shower, I want you to pack whatever you think belong to you and leave my house." Mrs. Konah sternly told her.

Massa knew better than saying another word to her aunt. She rose from where she had been kneeling in front of her aunt and began packing what little she called clothes in a plastic bag. She slowly walked out the door as if trying hard not to disturb her aunt or anyone in the house. Tears filled her eyes. She could barely see anyone or anything as she made her way through the door. Onlookers stood around watching her leave and a few joined in her tears. Her uncle couldn't bring himself out. He couldn't bear the sight of her leaving but it seems his hands were tied. He called in sick at work that morning and refused to eat anything.

Back in the streets, Massa walked around like a mad person. She didn't know just where to start from. Those were the only family she, the only house she called home. Massa prayed it would all be a dream and she'd wake up in bed in her room. But, the heavy October rain that unexpectedly came down like the creator has unleashed the clouds brought her to reality. She was homeless, standing in the street and under such heavy downpour. Clothes all soaked and dripping, she found a stairway leading to an office. She decided to rest there since offices were already. She sat there thinking on what next

to do but no thought came up. No alternatives. She knew her aunt better. Going back could be a waste of time. Deep and lost in her thoughts, she dozed off. Around 5am, which was the usual time she woke up at her uncle's house to begin her daily task, she woke up. She hurriedly changed into some dry clothes, and made her way down the stairs. She didn't want people to come and see her lying down at their office door. She made her way downtown Waterside, all along thinking on what to do. Massa knew she had to leave the streets, that weren't her place. And she so well knew she had to survive. But how, she thought. Walking down Waterside and lost in her thoughts, she didn't notice a speeding car coming her way. Just when marketers realized and began shouting for her to run, the car ran into her. She lay in front of the car in the pool of her blood. Women were wailing and beating their breasts, imagining the pain that mother was about to go through. Everyone around assumed that the child was dead. Some police quickly arrived on the scene and unconscious Massa was hurriedly placed in a taxi and rushed to a hospital.

As luck could have it, she wasn't dead, but the force with which her head had hit the asphalt left her unconscious for two days. When she finally woke up, the nurse on duty asked her if there was anyone she could contact to come and pick her up from the hospital. "No Ma, I don't have anyone or anywhere to go to." Shocked, the nurse asked her how possible that was. "But my dear, how can you be telling this. Where are your parents or whoever you're staying with?" the nurse asked her. "My parents died and I've been living with my uncle and his wife. I was told by my aunt to

leave her house the day before I was brought here. So Ma, if you think I'm well now, just let me go," Massa responded. The lady thought hard and decided she would help Massa out. "My husband is not around at the moment but I'll take you home with me. When he comes back and he agrees, you'll stay with us if not then you'll have to find another means," the nurse told her. Massa quickly went on her knees as she thanked the lady; "Thank you Ma, thank you very much." "It's okay Massa, my name is Mrs. Alice Brown. You can just call me Aunt Alice, okay," she said to Massa. "Alright, Aunt Alice", Massa responded. "Thank you plenty again, let God bless you plenty." She continued.

Mrs. Brown took to Massa to her home on the Bushrod Island and introduced her to her neighbors as her niece who had come to stay with her. A month after her arrival at the Brown's House, Mr. Alex Brown returned from his business trip and his wife introduced Massa to him. She explained the Massa's ordeal to him which she said moved her to want to assist. "No problem my dear," he began after listening to his wife. "Once you think it is okay for her to stay with us, she's welcome. We'll just need to quickly see about her enrollment. Good thing the school has just began," he concluded. Massa heart nearly skipped a beat. School! Finally she was to have an opportunity to learn. "Uncle Alex," Massa shouted in excitement. "Thank you oh, thanks so much. I'm happy to know that I'll be staying and also going to school."

Since she was new in the community, Mrs. Brown decided that Massa should attend a school nearby. Everything was arranged and Massa started at a community school in the

neighborhood. How happy she was! She couldn't cease raining praises and blessings on the couple. She was glad that finally she was in school. She had always dream of becoming a renowned journalist and knew that to realize that dream first required her to complete high school. She didn't take school for granted.

Massa was everything that anyone could imagine in a child. Mrs. Brown grew to love her by the day. She boasted to her friends about Massa. Everyone who visited them knew how helpful of a child she was. From cleaning the house, washing and even cooking, Massa helped new found mother with everything. Back at school, Massa was also a very bright student. Her teachers and even classmates praised her brilliance. At the end of the school year, Alice Brown wasn't too surprised to see her own Massa walking away with many of the prizes that. She only wondered how Massa had fit in so well and fast with life after her past difficult life with her aunt.

At the beginning of the new school year, Mrs. Brown was assigned to another hospital away from Monrovia. She left Massa in the care of her husband who had also grown to love Massa. She left just a few days after Massa began her junior year of high school. It was a bit of a tearful moment for them both. They came to e so closed that one wouldn't believe it if told Massa wasn't the biological daughter of Alice. She patted her and assured Massa that she could return once in a while to check up on her.

Just three months after his wife left for her new post, Mr. Brown's attitude towards Massa began to change. He would stare at her in ways that made her feel uncomfortable being

around him. He'll abruptly walk into room without knocking; something he had never done before. Massa who and always look forward to coming home right after school now dreaded coming home. She feared the worst. She began staying out late to avoid too much encounter with him. She wondered why Mrs. Brown had taken so long to visit as promised. She had no one to talk to. Every night she prayed that his wife will come home so that the madness would end.

He was sitting at the dining table staring at a newspaper when that night when Massa came home really late. He shouted at her to sit down. She could smell alcohol all over him and a can of stout was on the table before. She was trembling as she walked towards him. "Uncle Alex, I beg oh. I will not come home late again. Forgive me just for tonight," Massa begged. "Massa," Alex began, "You know very well that you're not my daughter. In fact, you're in no way related to either my wife or I. I accepted you to stay in this house because I like you. So if you refused what I'm about to tell you, just know that you'll be signing your own paper to leave my house." He told her. "What is it, Uncle Alex?" Massa asked. Her eyes were already welling up with tears. She felt betrayed. Why this was happening to her, she thought. "Okay, now you're sounding like you want to stay. I love you and I want you to go to bed with me, Massa. Alice is far away and will know nothing about this." He shamelessly told her. He was walking towards her while talking. He reached to her, held her hands pull her hard to himself. She stood there, completely cold and

dumfounded. She couldn't believe what he had just told her. A man old enough to be her father, someone she saw as a father was standing in front of her and asking her to go to bed with him. Just as he was about to reach out to fondle her breast, she regain some strength, pushed him away from her and began shouting at him. "Why are you doing this, Uncle Alex? Do you have to be so wicked to me? I've respected and obey you in everything but tonight, I'm sorry to disappoint you. I cannot and will not do what you are asking me to do." She quickly rushed into her room and locked the door. She sat on the bed as she released her anger in tears. She couldn't bring herself to accept that Mr. Brown and something under his sleeves all along and neither she nor his wife ever noticed.

Early the next morning, Massa hurriedly got dressed for school and rushed out. She didn't want another confrontation from Mr. Brown. As she walked to school, her mind raced faster than her steps. What was she to do? She couldn't tell the neighbors as he had threatened to send her packing out of his house. Massa was in a big dilemma. How she wished Alice Brown would just appear and safe the situation. She got on campus looking all gloomy that even her principal noticed. After the regular morning devotions, the Registrar of the school came and announced that all who were indebted to the school were to be send home that morning. She knew that she was to be a part of that of group. Mrs. Brown had paid the first installment of his school fees and assured her that her husband would

complete the payment at the end of the month. With the issues unfolding at home, Massa wondered how that payment would be made. Her name and those of other students were called and asked to go home and inform their parents of the payment of their fees. She quietly walked back home that morning and met Mr. Brown just about to leave the house. "Uncle Alex," she began. "Morning and I'm very sorry about last night. I just came back from school. I was sent out of class because of the balance fees I owe". She stood as if she had dropped a bomb and wanted to see it explode. He quietly walked past her, got into his car and drove away. Massa burst out in tears. She knew he was going to use this bait to carry out his evil plans. She promised herself that no matter what, she would never give in to his demands. If that would mean she stay out of school, she rather that happen.

Alex came back that evening, walk straight into his room and after what seem like forever to Massa, he came out. With just a towel tied around his waist and no shirt, he walked to where she was seated on the sofa and sat beside her. She began to sweat profusely even though a fan was nearby. He leans against her in an attempt to kiss her. She quickly pushed him away again, but this time she did not run off. She knew that wasn't saving her his constant harassment. If it had to stop, she needed to stand her grounds. She took a few steps away, looking him directly in the eyes and said to him; "Uncle Alex, have respected you for so long but I guess tonight will be just the end of all that. Don't think I'm

going to sit here and allow you take advantage of me. The devil that has entered your mind needs to come out tonight. So, let me just warn you that this night will be your last night ever attempting to abuse me sexually. Now, I want you to hand me the fees for the school or else tomorrow the police will be at your door.” She said it with so much authority that she was wondering in her head what had come over her. What if her words meant nothing to him? She was putting herself in more deep trouble. Alex on the other hand looked at her in amazement. Bewildered, he walk into the bedroom and after a while came back and handed her some money without saying a word. She yanked the money out of his hand and walked away feeling victorious. She didn’t want her heart to create any feelings of sympathy for him. She had just dealt him a fair deal and wasn’t going to allow sympathy to exceed her joy. She entered her room and locked it firmly behind her. She knew and saw the look on his face and didn’t want to take any chances with him. Alex, in her mind was now a wonder and wouldn’t resist any opportunity he had of biting.

Massa awoke the next morning feeling really happy. She was, after all, returning to school with her due balanced and also had succeeded in putting an end to Alex’s harassments of her. She opened her room door and noticed a sheet of paper had been pushed under the door. Eagerly, she picked the paper up and quickly opened it. Her heart was beating faster than normal as she read aloud what was written on it. “By the time I return from work tonight, I

want to come to an empty house. If I meet you by chance anywhere near my house, flies will carry your news to the police. Go ahead and dare me if you like. I’ll reveal the beast I have within me to you.”

Massa couldn’t believe her eyes. Every ounce of joy she felt that morning instantly left her heart. She was gripped with fear. Now she wondered whether the events of the past night were really a victory or a defeat. She thought her words had sober his mind. She had no idea this was coming. She thought the events of the last evening could instill fear in him and he had stop embarrassing her. Again, she was completely lost. With her mind racing faster than can be imagined, coming to a deciding point was hard for her. She had nowhere to go and she didn’t want to involve any of the neighbors. Alex had warned her never to.

Perplex, Massa returned to her and threw herself on the bed in tears. Again she wished Alice would appear so that everything could stop. She still couldn’t understand why she hadn’t come back to see her let alone call since she left. She pitied her life. Maybe all this wouldn’t have happened if her parents had not died. She recounted her ordeal from the time she stepped into her uncle’s house up to the present condition she found herself. She felt the entire world was against her. She began questioning God why He would allow her go through such. Sleeping, they say, have no mercy. Massa, drowning in her thoughts felt asleep. She dreamt that she was back at her Uncle’s place. Her Aunt in her usual meanness was shouting at her to go and fetch water for the house. She reluctantly go in for a bucket

and just as she was about heading out for the water, Massa awoke from her sleep. She looked around and it dawned on her that she had been dreaming.

TO BE CONTINUED.....



KPANA NNADIA GAYGAY

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.

July Pictorial

A lot happened in July, considering that we got the chance to celebrate our 169th independence as Africa's oldest republic. There was also other highlights. For example, the poetry readings by renowned Liberian poet, **Patricia Wesley**, a new Mass Choir [**The Liberian Premier Choral Society**] and a musical institute [**The Liberian National Academy of Music**] were officially launched; **Lekpele Nyamlon** another Liberian poet was selected to host a panel at the **Babishai Poetry Fair** in east Africa; Author **James Nyemah** conducted a few workshops in preparation of his august book launches.

Then of course we had to drop in a few photos from the official program at the embassy in Washington, Guinea and a few other places.





UL Poetry Reading

*Featuring Dr. Patricia Jabbeh Wesley
Liberia's Award-Winning Poet, Writer, Speaker, and Civil War Survivor*

You are all invited to an afternoon of poetry reading from Dr. Patricia Jabbeh Wesley. Dr. Wesley will read from her collection of poems, some of which are based on contemporary and traditional Liberian life.

Date: Thursday, July 7, 2016

Time: Approx. 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Location: University of Liberia Auditorium

About the Author

Dr. Patricia Jabbeh Wesley is an internationally celebrated Liberian poet and Associate Professor of English and Creative Writing at the Pennsylvania State University. She is a former graduate and instructor of English at the University of Liberia. She is the author of four books of poetry and has been featured in numerous publications around the world. As a survivor of the Liberian civil war, she immigrated to the United States with her family. Her poems speak of her growing up in Liberia, experiencing the war, living in exile, and longing return to her homeland, with a deep sense of understanding and appreciation of her Grebo cultural upbringing.

Contact Information

For more information visit www.pjabbeh.com.

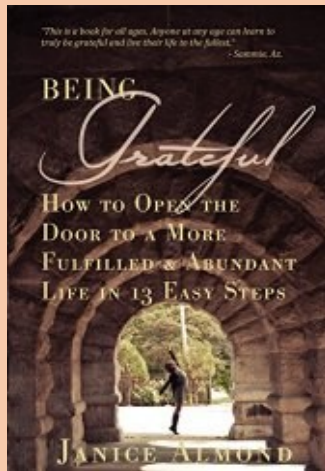








Finding Meaning in Everyday Living



Janice Almond

MAKE A CHOICE TO ENTER THE RACE.

ENTER THE RACE- WAY #7

"The only thing that ever sat its way to success was a hen."

Sarah Brown

MAKE A CHOICE TO ENTER THE RACE. It is impossible for you to even win a race that you don't enter. Makes sense, doesn't it? Then why do we hesitate to begin? Have you ever asked yourself why you are so hesitant? If not, ask yourself now, "Why am I so hesitant to enter the race that is set out before me?" In reality though, you have NO CHOICE. You must enter.

The Bible talks about us running a race. About running with all of our might. Believe it or not, the minute you were born you entered a race whether you wanted to or not. With the first breath you took, you entered. You were off and running! The gun sounded and crying, maybe kicking, even screaming, the *slap* on the buttocks signaled your entrance into the race.

Someone once said that ever since our umbilical cord was cut, we have been looking for a place to plug it back in. Crazy, huh? Now, we have to not only cut the cord but also enter the race and advance down the track. I have a twelve month old granddaughter who is a joy to behold. As I am writing this chapter, I have had the privilege of visiting with her, holding her, and just loving on her. She is steadily and constantly striving to learn, reach out, discover, and explore. Daily, I marvel at her strength, determination, and stamina.

We are like that. WE are babies. Daily, as we live, we have to grow and develop, gain strength, and determination. We have to strive to learn, to reach out, and to gain stamina. In other words, we have to become relentless. Continual pursuit is the way. My granddaughter, at only twelve months of age, is relentless. She is determined. Right now, she is striving, going after what she wants. I marvel at her. From before sun up to after sun down, she is busy and active. Nothing is deterring her from her goals. Her desire to advance is insatiable.

We **MUST** be like that. We **MUST** be relentless. We **MUST** advance. We have to run. We can't just sit. We are not hens. Entering the race takes pushing yourself. This reminds me of when I was a little girl. I would often go swimming. Never did I like or want anyone to push me into the pool. I always wanted to jump in myself. I wanted, although I probably didn't realize it at the time, to push myself. I wanted control. Life is like this, as well. You need and want to push yourself. Who likes always having to be pushed or prodded by someone else, like a boss or a spouse, etc.?

Deep down inside, we all want to be in control of our own dreams, our own destinies. Not being in control feels uncomfortable. When I would get pushed into the pool, I was never ready for it. I was always caught off guard, caught off balance. So many times, I really thought I might be injured or get hurt. It was never a good feeling. I didn't like it.

If someone is pushing or forcing you to go after your dreams, it is not a good feeling. You don't like it, either. You have to push yourself. You have to *jump off*. When the gun sounds, you must be ready. "Ready, set, go!" Listen to this quote, "Life has no remote. Get up and change it yourself." www.mesmerizingquotes.com. It's time to go. The race won't be easy. It's never easy. It's meant to be difficult for a reason. Being born is hard. Even with difficulties, babies learn how to thrive and survive. It's inbred in them. It's a part of their nature.

It's a part of your nature to thrive and survive. Think back to a time when you were in the midst of a great difficulty. How did you get through it? How are you getting through your difficulties right now? You are pressing forward. You are pulling up strength. Entering our races and sustaining the forward advancement will propel us to our place of destiny and purpose. Your race is for you and you alone to enter and win. Don't let anything or anyone hinder you from entering.

Have you entered your race yet? Listen to this, "No one can go back and make a brand new start, however anyone can start from now and make a brand new ending." Quotes Life 101.net

This is what I am doing. I am starting now on a new journey. What journey can you start now? What new race can you enter? It is not too late to leave your "mark", your legacy.

You can start your marriage anew.

You can start your career anew.

You can start your weight loss anew.

You can start your relationship anew.

You can start your business anew.

Whatever is coming to your thoughts right now, start "that" anew.

In one of my English classes, I had an extremely gifted, highly intelligent male student. From the moment I met him, we "hit" it off! There was just something special about him. First off, he was an excellent writer. The only problem was he couldn't stop getting expelled from school because he had a "weed" habit. Also, probably due to this addiction, he never could focus in class. He never got any work completed. You could say his life revolved around "cannabis."

When I would attempt to get him to focus and get his essays done, he would tell me, "Mrs. Almond, I got this!" Yeah, I knew without a doubt he could do it. The question was, would he? Almost without fail, if he did complete his assignments, it was at the very last possible minute.

I always kept my confidence in him. I knew if he could just "kick" this habit, he could and would go far. He would succeed anywhere. I did my best to encourage him. This went on throughout most of his high school life.

One day, as they say, something "clicked." He quit smoking marijuana. He started anew and made a brand new ending. He finally graduated. I was and am so proud of him. Unfortunately, I was unable to attend his graduation since I had moved to another state.

Enter the race as a marathon not a sprint and advance with a steady pace. You want to run in such a way in order to receive your prize, goal, or dream.

Here's what you need to do **now**. Think about whatever gifts or desires you have. Take the time to figure out what they are. Write them down. They are a part of your dream, your gift to the world, to mankind. We need you to go after and pursue your dreams.

We are counting on you. The whole world is counting on you. We need you to enter the race.

Every day, we need you to continue running. Knowing your gifts and or desires will allow you to become tenacious, relentless, and steadfast. Start now and make your brand new ending.

Your race is laid out for you as is mine. **Try this exercise.** Think about the race you have embarked upon. Go over what you just wrote down. Ask yourself these questions, "Why is my race important?" "Why must I start and continue my race?"

WHY I MUST ENTER THE RACE. List your reasons.

COMPLETE THIS SENTENCE:

I will enter the race by...

This is a short excerpt from my newest book release due out August, 2016. **BEING DETERMINED: How to be Relentless in Pursuing Your Dreams in 15 Simple Ways.**

Visit my Amazon author page: http://www.amazon.com/Janice-Almond/e/B01326RZ92/ref=sr_ntt_srch_lnk_1?qid=1469572211&sr=1

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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. Follow Janice on Twitter: **@JalmondjoyRenee**

'Twas Brillig

Richard Wilson Moss

The Rain And The Fan

Gravity has no place
 here anymore.
 Things are really
 weightless.
 Hours, their dance on
 thin floors
 Of cardboard minds
 Is over, they pass
 helplessly
 Up, up into barren skies
 Of all infinite thought
 And I can only hold on
 Desperately to the arms
 Of the next chair
 While listening to the rain
 flirt
 With the fan in the
 window.



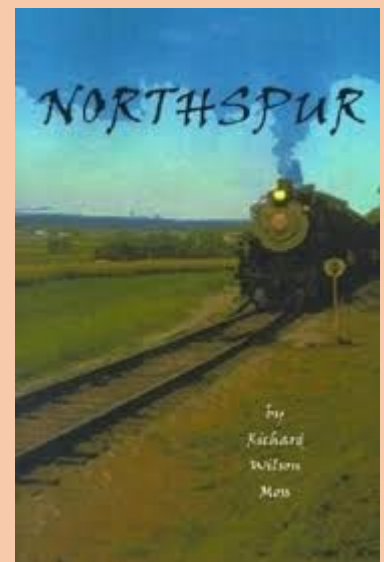
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The Strongman

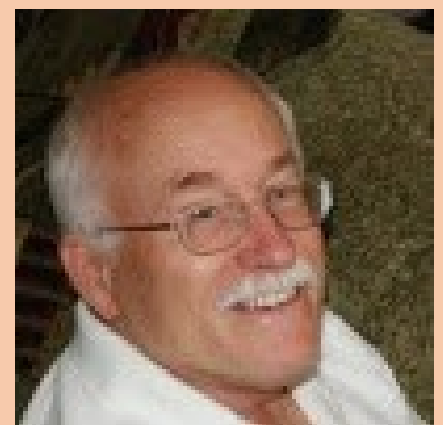
When the sun was
 finished looking
 And the stars had begun
 The strongman visited
 The runt of the circus
 They drank beer and fed

The dancing girl's horses
 Afterwards walking
 To a basement bar
 For a nightcap
 And everyone unsteady
 there
 Marveled at such a pair
 But one drunkard who
 reeked
 Heckled them until the
 strongman
 Picked him up and threw
 him down.



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



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HAS OUR INDEPENDENCE MET ITS PROMISE?



By Martin K. N. Kollie

Youth Activist

martinkerkula1989@yahoo.com

Long before the declaration of our Independence in 1847, the freedom of our forebears to dictate their own political and economic destiny was under hostage. For 25 unbroken years, the sovereignty and self-governance of a land which would later be known as Liberia was determined by an International Non-Governmental Organization (INGO) called the American Colonization Society.

After several years of hard labor and inhumane treatment in the United States, the chain of slavery was finally untied from the hands and legs of black slaves. In 1822, a new territory in Africa called Liberia was founded by the ACS to accommodate freed black slaves. I can imagine how though it was for these settlers to safely sail on a dark continent like Africa. Even though it was difficult traveling long distances, but nothing could easily bend their determination from seeking refuge in a new home where freedom was accessible.

On February 6, 1821, the first batch of 88 immigrants left New York and harbored in Liberia. This was a new beginning of establishing a young nation. Upon the arrival of these settlers, they met indigenous occupants on ground with unique cultural pattern and values. Americo-Liberians were gently given an olive branch by original owners of this soil at the time. As a result of indigenous' kindness and generosity, Americo-Liberians had breathing space to co-exist on the Providence Island.

After few months, the interest of these strangers grew larger. Their quest for expansion became a paramount priority. The memory of slavery was still fresh on their minds. As a result, they had no intention to unite with those they met on ground. Instead, colonists thought it was a good idea to promote disunity and disintegration by subjecting the natives to unjust and inhuman treatments.

Internal bickering and power struggle became the order of the day. There were series of wars between the colonists and indigenes. This was a bitter start for Liberia! I think if two parties (both natives and settlers) were going to cordially cultivate unity from the very beginning, our country would have been a better society. Regrettably, deep division characterized the formation of Africa's first Independent nation.

From 1821 to 1847, Liberians were indirectly ruled by foreigners. From the Colonial to Commonwealth era, the determination of self-governance was invisible. The British and French also took advantage of a conflict-ridden settlement by encroaching on our land. Even

though there was segregation, but delegates from various colonies were ready to embrace an independent status after two and the half decades of external control and threats. Their readiness was uncompromising!

A new and lone nation in Africa was finally given birth to at an official constitutional convention held in 1847. There were 12 delegates from Montserrado, Sinoe, and Grand Bassa Counties who subsequently adopted the declaration of independence and constitution on July 16, 1847. At long last, on July 26, 1847, a young African American man from Virginia named Joseph Jenkins Roberts declared the colony of Liberia an Independent Republic. The Lonestar rose above Africa as an inspiration to other colonized territories. Our country became known worldwide from that moment. Many saw us as a symbol of hope and a shining star of democratic radiation in Africa.

I am left to wonder why Long Peter, Sao Boso, and other native Kings didn't participate in this crucial convention even though they were an integral part of the society. It is left with you to answer this question. Despite the situation, there were unique promises made during Independence. Those promises are still loud in our ears and can never be forgotten. The promise of self-determination, security, freedom, peace, unity, equality, dignity, justice, and civil liberty were guaranteed in one voice by the founders and forefathers of this state.

After 169 years of existence, the question that seems too hard to answer in some quarters is **"HAS OUR**

INDEPENDENCE MET ITS PROMISE?" I want to emphatically say NO! The promise of Liberia's independence is still lingering in the wilderness of uncertainty. After more than a century of political endurance, where is democratic inclusion – where is equality – where is economic freedom – where is Justice - where is unity – where is patriotism – where are all these good promises? The state remains at a standstill whenever self-seeking economic migrants excel to prominence. Our past and present as a nation clearly show the lack of political will to uphold and defend these fundamental promises of our independence.

The significance of preserving our sovereignty goes beyond everyone's interest and imagination. Overtime, most citizens have lost appetite to celebrate Liberia's birth anniversary simply because they believe that it is worthless to be happy in the midst of poverty and hardship. Independence Day is meant to revive national courage and restore broken hopes. Independence renews good memories of economic, political, and social transformation. Independence means for everyone regardless of your status to have access to basic social services. It also means to equitably distribute national resources. Other countries around the world are eager to celebrate their independence because the promises of their independence are still in tight!

Recently, Americans happily observed their independence because the promises of

America yesterday are still upheld today. Due to the conducive political and economic environment existing in Ghana, there was a nationwide independence celebration on March 06 of this year. I saw smiles on the faces of Ghanaians. They had sufficient reasons to commemorate such a special day. Their flag was high up in the sky projecting an emblem of a progressive and inclusive society. How can Liberia boast of being 168 years old when most of its citizens are subjected to economic deprivation, marginalization, and destitution? How can we brag of being the trendsetter of Independence in Africa, when our economy is at the verge of collapse? Why aren't we growing along with our age? This is a big shame to Africa's first Independent Republic. Even though we have abundance of natural resources with a very small population, our country remains one of the poorest on earth. I refuse to accept that this sweet land of liberty is cursed!

The country's greatest problem has been its leaders. Most politicians in Liberia care less about improving the living standard of ordinary people. They go extra mile to achieve their selfish political ambition and enrich themselves through ill-transparent practices. They lack integrity to protect the constitution which guarantees the inalienable rights of all citizens.

It is very unfortunate for our leaders today to forget the promise of self-determination. Patriots like Hilary Johnson and J. J. Roberts made sacrifices to

secure the status of nationhood for Liberia. The destiny of the oppressed majority is still imprisoned by members of the elite class. This country belongs to all Liberians; as such, divisiveness and class system must come to an end. The principle of egalitarianism is an unparalleled catalyst of national healing and reconciliation. Everyone must be given a fair chance to chart his/her own course politically, socially, and economically. Realities in the recent past and now suggest that our country has not aspired to the level of self-determination. What a promise betrayed! When our sitting President said in her first inaugural address that she looks forward to see Liberia becoming a success story of America, did the president really calculate the implications? For me, that was an understatement. When the story is written about how America through Firestone has and continues to exploit Liberia and its people for 89 years now, I wonder what will the president say.

The promise of Security, Peace, Equality and Freedom has been suppressed by elitists and imperialists. The society is still insecure. Without security, it is impossible to achieve economic growth and democratic sustainability. Due to poor security system, criminal rate is high on the increase. The rule of law is not taking root because some enforcers of the law are unaware about the law. The rights of impoverished citizens are mostly infringed upon by higher-ups. I thought the framers of our constitution said everyone regardless of your

social status should have access to unlimited security and Justice. Regrettably, the 'rich and powerful' continue to enjoy maximum security and justice at the expense of ordinary peasants. With the draw-down exercise of UNMIL, our nation stands at serious security risk. I hope this government under Madam Sirleaf's rule will mitigate this gap.

Though the objective of our founding fathers was to establish a country of peace and tranquility, but after 169 years, peace amongst Liberians is invisible. Peace cannot come when one group of people are being unfairly treated. Peace can only come when everybody has access to equal opportunities and privileges.

We fought war in this country due to dissatisfaction and discontent. We had no reason to kill each other for 15 years. Sadly, we had to thread the path of civil unrest because certain individuals felt they were more citizens than others. Certain individuals felt that the presidency was a family inheritance. As a result of this, greedy politicians took advantage of the situation by infiltrating the ignorance and gullibility of our people.

Today, the innocent blood of over 250,000 Liberians who were victimized by this senseless crisis is crying out for Justice. Our peace still remains fragile as the symptoms of displeasure and public discontent continue to undermine national reconciliation. Reconciliation is possible, but through sincerity, honesty, justice and transparency. We cannot be preaching reconciliation why corruption in public service is evident. We cannot be preaching peace when

our hydrocarbon resources are abused. We cannot promote togetherness when our educational system is messy. We cannot sing the song of freedom when our health sector is poor. We cannot preach unity, when the gap of economic equality is very wide. If we are given the opportunity to freely and equally vote, we must also be given the opportunity to freely and equally share in our nation's wealth.

We have achieved political freedom to some extent, but where is the economic freedom? Our current dilemma is more economical. Until we can fight to gain economic independence, our political situation will continue to shift downward. Liberia cannot get better when the hope and aspiration of our Independence are decaying. This country is far from getting better when our young sisters are sexually enslaved and trafficked by foreigners. A just and equal society procreates peace and unity. The failure of politicians over the years to pledge their uncompromising loyalty and allegiance to Liberia has led to an uneven nation.

Noticeable indicators in Liberia have made most Liberians to lose taste about celebrating Liberia's birth day. We know how they feel right now. We share in their sorrow, pain, and agony. We empathize with street children, widows, teachers, students, shoe-shine boys, wheelbarrow pushers, taxi-drivers, marketers, push-push riders, petit traders, car loaders, rock crushers, and all less-fortunate citizens who are in serious economic torment. Don't give up – Keep holding on! Change is on the way.

Why must Liberia be the 7th poorest country when its soil is blessed with abundant natural resources? Liberia according to transparency international 2013 barometer report was rated as the most corrupt country along with Mongolia in the world. Over 80% of Liberians live below the line of poverty, while 85% are unemployed. We have more than 16 billion direct foreign investments, but the living condition of our people is awkward. Why must we celebrate independence when 66 out of 68 concession agreements did not meet the minimum standard of the PPCC and PFM laws? Liberia's inflation rate is 7.30% while import rate stands at \$2.457 billion. I wonder where we stand with all these downward trends. There is nothing to celebrate because the hope of our independence is unseen in practical terms. We call on all Liberians to peacefully protest on July 26 by boycotting all national programs around the country. 169 years is enough to transform our condition. Join us to fight against nepotism, corruption, patronage, injustice, and inequality.

About The Author: Martin K. N. Kollie is a Liberian youth activist, student leader, an emerging economist, and a young writer. He is currently a student at the University of Liberia reading Economics with distinction and a member of the Student Unification Party (SUP). Martin hails from Bong County and he can be reached at: martinkerkula1989@yahoo.com

According to Eliot

Short Story

Calming the Storm

The storm raged around the four children, Simondes', Ehud and Shani and baby Shoshun's home for three days and nights. The wind whipped, thunder crashed, lightning streaked and flashed. But there was no rain, just the static petrifying storm. At times it could be almost beautiful.

At other times the family were filled with horror; would it ever end. Was this the final days. It was impossible to stay outside for long. All the children's father could do was herd the animals into the barn, feed them and see they were made safe. After that, the family remained indoors. There was little they could do. There were much needed repairs, both big and little to the home and clothes, but soon even they were finished. All the family could do then was eat, sleep and listen to the storm.

By the third day, they were all worried. The children's father, Barak, would make regular trips outside, not only to see that the animals were safe and well but to check that the house would remain standing. Sitting in the room, close to the fire, they could all hear the creak and groans of the building as though it were gasping its last and soon would collapse to the ground.

'Don't worry,' said Grandpa, 'this house has stood for a hundred years. It was built by my grandpa. It will stand for a hundred more.'

'I don't remember a storm like this,' said Levana. She pulled her daughter Shani closer to herself, holding the sleeping

baby, Shoshun, as though that would protect both of them.

'Do you, Grandpa?' asked Simondes. 'Do you remember a storm like this?'

The whole family looked at him expectantly. Each hoping in their heart that Grandpa had known many storms and that they had all died away by the third day.'

'Well...' said Grandpa, 'I remember my grandpa, I was about ten, telling me that it rained once for a couple of days.'

'It's not raining now,' said Levana.

'Grandpa, you don't remember a storm like this and neither did your grandpa,' said Simondes. For a small boy he sounded angry.

Shani began to cry.

'It's never going to stop.' Ehud sounded afraid. 'Never never never. We shall be stuck in this house, listening to the wind, the thunder, watching the lightening for the rest of our lives. We shall never be able to go out. After Daddy has killed the animals and we've eaten them we shall starve to death.'

Shani cried even louder.

'We're going to die.' said Ehud. 'We're all going to die.'

'Ehud, that's enough.'

'Come on, come on,' said Grandpa, 'I'll tell you all a story. Levana and Barak as well.' The children sat around him. Levana seated herself and Barak stood leaning against a wall, pretending not to listen.

'I was with Jesus when this happened,' said Grandpa.

'Oh, goody,' said Shani, 'another story about Jesus.'

'So, you saw this happen? You were a witness?' asked Simondes.

'Yes, this is the truth.' Grandpa paused for a moment to let the importance of what he had just said be realised by his family. 'Well, Jesus had been teaching the crowds all day...'

'What about?' asked Shani.

'Shani, let's just listen to Grandpa. He's not said six words.'

'Well,' said Shani, 'I was just wondering whether it was like I learn at school.'

'No, not quite,' Grandpa said to her kindly. 'Jesus was teaching people about God, religion and how to make themselves better people.'

Ehud sighed. 'I knew that.'

'Jesus had been teaching the crowds all day. I'm sure he was very tired. If we'd stayed where we were they would not have left him alone and he would have got no rest.'

So we walked to the shore of a great lake. There were boats there pulled up on the beach and Jesus said, "Let's get into the boat and cross to the other side. It is deserted. There, we can rest for the night."

'Whose boat was it?' asked Shani.

The boys sighed, but they were wondering the same thought as Shani.

'One of the disciples.' Grandpa scratched at his forehead. 'I think it was Peter's boat.'

'I was just wondering because you shouldn't take things that don't belong to you and I thought that was perhaps wrong of Jesus.'

'No, Shani, Jesus wouldn't do that. Anyway we all piled in and pushed off from shore. It was a lovely evening. The sun was beginning to set. We unfurled the

sails and away we went. Jesus went to the back of the boat and lay down on a cushion. He was soon fast asleep, tired after his hard day.'

'Like you, Barak,' said Levana. 'You fall asleep in seconds.'

'Because I work so hard.' Barak smiled.

'We carried on sailing,' said Grandpa. 'Soon we were in the middle of the lake. We could hardly see the shore we'd come from or the one we were going to on the other side. We couldn't have swum either way if the boat sank.'

But it wasn't going to, it was a calm peaceful evening, or so we thought. We sat, relaxing, lost in our thoughts. Watching the sailor at the tiller, the sailor at the sails.

Suddenly everything changed. We were all nearly tossed into the sea. A great wind blew up, like a tornado. The rain hammered down. The waves were tipping into the boat.

We were sinking. I was very very frightened. I thought at any moment the little boat would turn over and we would drown. It would have been impossible for any of us to make it to the shore. And Jesus? He slept on. As peacefully as Shoshan in your mother's arms.'

They all looked over at the baby before Grandpa carried on with his tale. 'Jesus slept as though nothing were happening. The rest of us tipping water out of the boat as fast as it came in.'

The tiller man was trying to hold a steady course, but it took all his strength. We were taking the sails down before they torn to shreds. And through all of this Jesus slept.

Finally one of the disciples went over to him and shook him awake, "Jesus," the man cried, "'we are going to sink. There is a great storm. Can't you hear it?"

Jesus stood up, steady as though the boat weren't rocking at all, and said, speaking to the storm, "Peace, be still." Grandpa paused for a moment. 'And to this day, I can't believe what happened, even though I were there. The storm stopped. It just stopped.

It was as calm as it had been a while earlier. No wind, no rain, no waves blowing into the boat. And then he looked at us all, Jesus, and said, "Why were you afraid? Have you no faith?" I just sat down and said to myself, who is this man that even the winds, rain and waves obey him.'

'Well, that's very clever,' said Barak. 'But I wish they would obey me.'

'Listen,' said Shani.

'What?'

'I can't hear anything.'

'Faith, Barak,' said Grandpa. 'And even the storm will stop. Come on let's go and look.'

The family walked outside. It was still, still as though the storm of the last three days had never happened.

*****The End*****

c. John Eliot

These stories were written for my own grandchildren, although I think readers of any age from nine upwards would enjoy them. They are based on the Gospel I love most, Luke. But they are told by Grandpa Chacham. Chacham, a fictitious figure, was a follower of Jesus. Not a disciple.

He witnessed many events and told his stories from a Jewish point of view. He

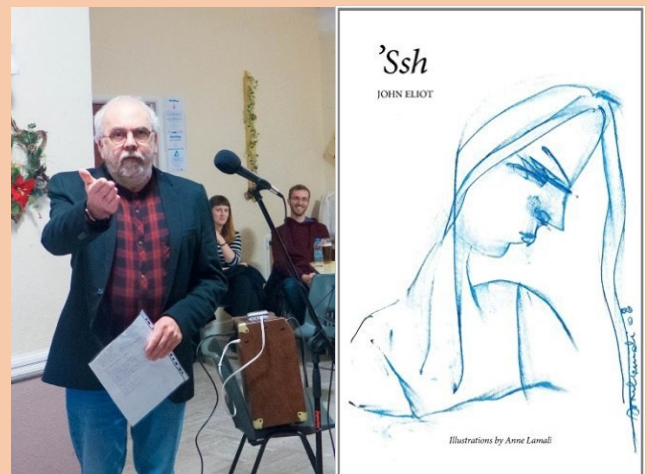
did not believe in the Virgin Birth, or resurrection simply because the gospel writers hadn't written the gospels yet!

The children in the stories are based on my own grandchildren, Cameron, Carlton, Scarlett and Lilwen. I have loosely translated their names into Hebrew by taking the root meaning.

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 one book of poetry published '**Ssh**' available on Amazon and a new one will be coming out in the Autumn, titled 'Don't Go'. Both books are published by Mosaïque Press of England."

Connect here: johneliot1953@gmail.com

John Eliot



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

According To Eliot, Extra!

An occasional look at the World of Literature picking up some news that I hope will be of interest.



We'd all love a contract with a publisher and a nine year old has done just that! **Hilde Lysiak** of Pennsylvania in the USA, self-published a newspaper. She broke the news of a murder in Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania. She has signed a four book deal with Sholastic which will be based around her investigative adventures.



Poetry news, publisher Jonathan Cape is to publish work by Vietnamese author, **Ocean Vuong**. Born on a rice farm in 1988, he did not learn to read until he was eleven. I haven't read his work, but I've a feeling he is one to look out for.

German author, **Marcel Beyer** receives the most important German language accolade for literature, the Georg Buechner Prize.

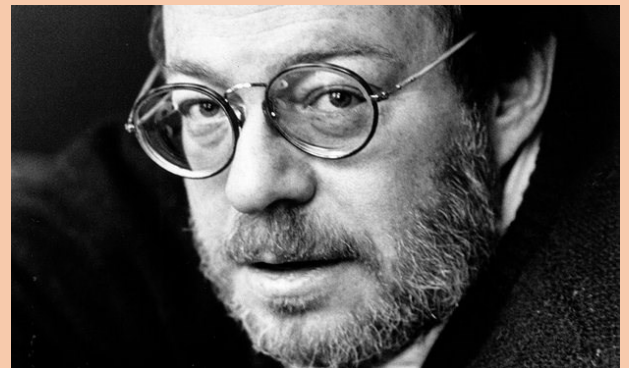
In Seattle at the **Locus Awards**, for science fiction and fantasy writing, Terry Pratchett, Neil Gaiman and George RR Martin were also honoured.



Author, **Lisa McInerney** has won not one but two quite prestigious prizes with her debut novel, *The Glorious Heresies*.

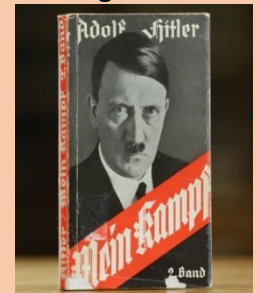
Maragaret Atwood and **Len Deighton** look to have a novel each made in to a series for television. *Alias Grace* from Margaret Atwood and *SS-GB* from Len Deighton.

Justine Trudeau, Canadian Prime minister is featured as a hero in a new Marvel Comic.



Michael Herr, author of *Full Metal Jacket* and *Dispatches* has died along with futurist author Alvin Toffler who has died at the age of 87.

Hitler's work **Mein Kampf** is published again. Proceeds from profits will be going to Holocaust Survivors and their families. On a personal note, if I were a holocaust survivor I wouldn't want the money. Any thoughts? **John Eliot**



Liberian Proverbs

Excepted from, **The Elders' Wisdom**

1. **Marriage is like a peanut, you have to crack it to see what is inside.** When one decides to get married, one will never know fully what it entails until you are in it. It is a journey that can only happen when you leave for it. It is true we can get glimpses of our partners, but the real thing is only when the marriage ceremony is over. In this case, one has cracked the ground pea and with time, one will know if it was good or not.
2. **Marriage is bittersweet.** Married people fight and make up just like everyone else.
3. **No child laughs at the ugliness of its mother.** Just as it is related in another parable, the sentiments hold true. There is no bad bush for a child. The child has none for its parents as well. The child sees its mother in ways that transcends any negativity others may see.
4. **No man is an island.** We need others in life as much as they need us. We can do many things alone, but in substance, our lives depend on so many others and what they provide to make us live peaceably or happily.
5. **No matter how cold a monkey gets, he doesn't warm himself in leopard skin.** There are some things that do not happen. The monkey in this case has and knows its limits. It will never consider wearing a leopard's skin as something of a play not even if it is facing a desperate situation.
6. **No matter how long a log may float in the water, it will never become a crocodile.** What you are, you are; what you are not, you are not. We can't change the natural order of certain things. They are just the way they are.
7. **No matter how low a cotton tree falls, it is still taller than grass.** Some things are just way beyond our reach or abilities. The grass at its tallest still falls short of the cotton tree at its lowest point.
8. **No matter how tight a monkey's trousers are, he has to leave space for his tail.** We carry along with us some ingrain things. They never leave us, in fact, we make a conscious effort to provide for them. The monkey here never covers up or leaves its tails hidden, not even for a tight pant.
9. **No one can uproot the tree, which God has planted.** As mentioned before, the concept of God is not limited to one kind. Liberians are religious on many counts. We believe that fate/destiny has a way of taking its proper place at the proper time. For the traditionalists or the Christians/Muslim etc. it is practically the same.
10. **No sane person sharpens his machete to cut a banana.** The relative softness of the banana makes it seem foolish for one to use a sharpened knife on it. Some tasks are so obvious or have easy solutions that when others try to make them complicated, it gives room to question their sanity. In this case, the one who sharpens the knife is viewed as insane.

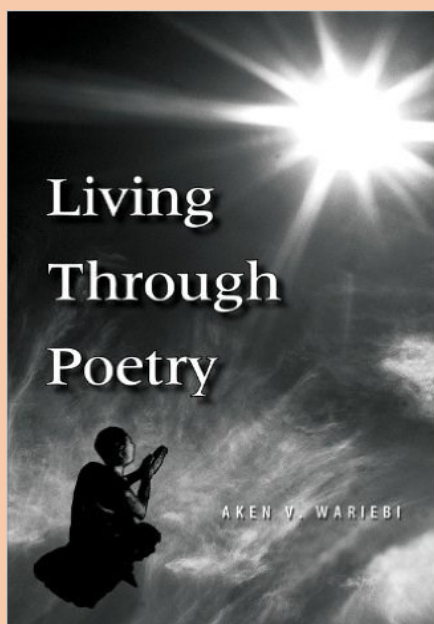
Aken-bai's- A Flow of Thoughts



Aken Vivian Wariebi is an avid reader and writer and the latter began more frequently since grade school. A graduate from both Rutgers and Syracuse Universities, respectively, she never left a book nor a

pen behind. 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 heart and soul and for Ms. Wariebi life speaks to her pen. Others describe her writings as life short stories. No matter how it is felt, Ms. Wariebi speaks to your heart and soul from hers and hopes that all can find a little more light along their journey of life in her work as she has in her writings. She is originally from Monrovia, Liberia and currently resides in the USA.

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Listen to Yourself

Listen to you for a change
To your heart, your vibes
Your voice, your understanding of you
Listen to your soul, your conscience level
Your level of prospective as well...
And how it portrays you
Listen to the details of you and your story

It can't be denied nor pretended and don't
be ashamed
Nor place it aside, blocking yourself out of
your story
Is lack of self maintenance? Oh, I'll let you
decide
The lies you tell yourself come clear, so
beware
Listen to your fantasies, your dreams,
carefully
Your goals, gifts, talents and skills? But yes,
they may want to meet you

Listen to your language, your circle
And who is in your corner... because
The two are not always the same
Listen to the messages of your life
Then from all of that, listen to your truth
Hear what it tells you, so greet you
Be acquainted and a friend of you
And as you let God rule and you're not
confused
Try and live truly by it in public too

We all Matter

In spite of our stories, our cultures, our
religions, our queries
Despite our journeys, our histories, our glories,
our adversities
Whether blue, black, white or Red, no
matter the race
Whether short, tall and

Whatever else we hold to ourselves
We all Matter

We can hold on to yesterday if we choose
But today we must remember may have a
clue
Tomorrow still bears arms
of our fuses
Not only to fools, but the guilty too
But the noises would annoy as the cause
confuses

We can hate but that hurts us
Primarily because if we did love ourselves
we won't choose it
Listen, we all matter
No matter our class or what the heck our
status says or dictates
Society surely knows it sometimes regrets it

You know, sometimes it may be misleading...
because
Assuming leads the game, so understand
this
We must lead the fight
Because the struggle has always been real
Or we should follow not just the cause's
message
But be real in our actions as well, it should
come from the heart and not the garbage

We must live what we preach, hypocritical
innuendos, countless benefits
or conveniences worthless
We must stand for the greater good not the
evils
We so often respect then be less

If we know we all matter
We need to treat ourselves and others
gently
Much kinder when no one is watching or
looking
We must spread love not just speak it
without example

We must not be silenced to injustice of any
kind and speak
Good of all in their absences especially and
their presence sincerely

We must not change our views or values
that change lives for the better
In order to fit in, quite a temporary fix for the
pretentious abilities
We are cramped into, but adjust it for the
betterment of humanity
We all matter so "them" versus "us" has to
stop and unity has to take its place

Forgiveness, compassion, courage, love,
must increase and work with our common
senses
Standing to protest and cursing our
neighbors after doesn't count
Slandering or belittling included at least that
is what justice concluded
But for this moment think, if we truly matter
and we act it, that will be
All we have to do, no protest needed, none
would be necessary, maybe we should try it

Because we all do matter so let's face it
We have the solutions
So the puzzle is or can be fixable
We have to believe we all matter
That is the beginning of a resolution
If we don't trap it

If we do so, we better learn and quickly
Time, you see is watching and waiting and
life is sticking to it.

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Artist of the Month

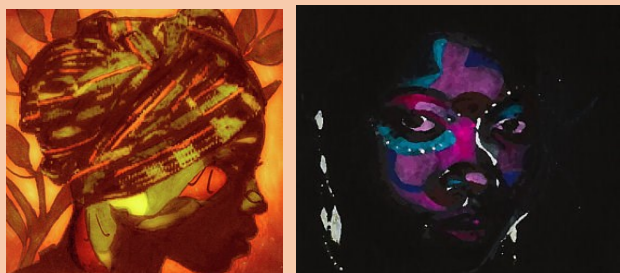
Josephine Barnes



Yatta



Sebia



Suki



Kimah

Josephine Barnes is a Liberian artist based in the United States.

Herbert Logerie

I Wish I Could Say Goodbye To Death

I wish I could say goodbye
To this invisible monster
Who is hiding everywhere
Under the bridge, in the air.

I would like to try to spy
On that double crosser
He is as slick as a great liar
I wish I could hide him in
the dryer.

I do not want to say hello
to death
Because it is sad when a
love one
Is the victim of that
demon.

I want to say goodbye to
death
Because I would like to live
forever
Under the sun, and in the
stream of the river.

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If God Had To Write A Poem

If God had to write a
poem
Being the best divine
writer
Ever
This poem

Would have been very
simple
No words
No swords
Writing on the parchment
No, this is not a sample
Of his mysterious
accoutrement
Just blank pages
For the ages.

Idées Folles, Pensées Drôles

Pensées drôles
Il faut avoir beaucoup
d'amis
S'éloigner des émis à tout
prix
Et éviter les ennemis sans
répît.

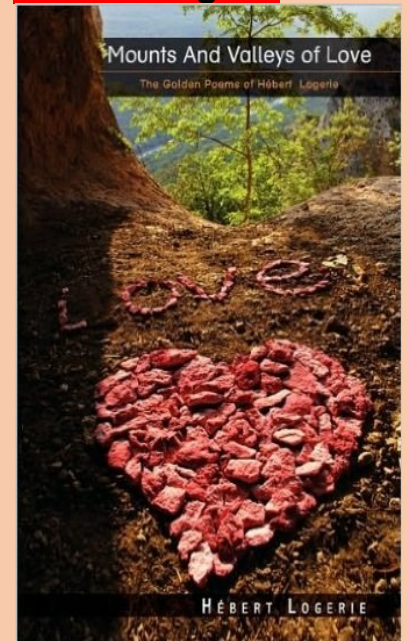
Idées drôles
Pensées folles
La vie n'est jamais simple
et facile
Et la mort beaucoup plus
difficile
A accepter dans un
monde sans accent et
sans style.

Les amis vous protègent
Les émis vous tendent des
pièges. Et les ennemis
vous brûlent dans la
neige.

(Signification du mot émi:
tantôt ennemi, tantôt
ami. Un émi ou une émie
est un mot inventé par le
poète Hébert Logerie)

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Herbert 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/
herbert-logerie](http://www.poemhunter.com/herbert-logerie)

[http://www.poesie.webnet.fr/
vospoemes/logerie](http://www.poesie.webnet.fr/vospoemes/logerie)

Alonzo "Zo" Gross

Awaken Thy Love...

Awaken Thy Love,
let our eyes be consumed,
with the passing of the tides,
as our destinies collide.

Upon the shores of evermore,
I wast mesmerized by ur smiles-

Verily, I Sendeth u my kisses,
whilst they travel forth,
through Earthly-Oceans &
Heavenly-Niles-.

Awaken Thy Love,
from ur deepest slumber,
U maketh my heart warm in Coldest
Winter, the breeze of Thy perfume,
is the coolest wind of my summer.

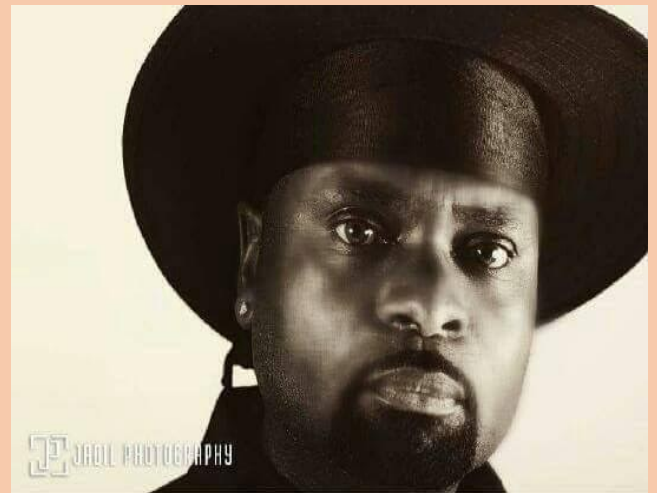
Awaken Thy Love,
U duly Art Thou fairest of all maidens,
In ur touch is mine comfort,
Im truly lost in ur loving-lips gazing.
But Alas...

Awaken Thy Love,
as u gather ur senses,
4 on the morrow If ye shall perish,
agony & tragedy wouldst render I
senseless.

Wherefore...
I dream of the 2 of us,
Amidst Mercurial-Meadows,
near the white picket fences.

O' I doeth Pray I again c u Soon^
& whence our paths Again Intertwine,
let our spirits in Unison Shine,
as we dwelleth upon dew,
under the Blissful-Decadent- Moon^.

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Alonzo "Zo" Gross

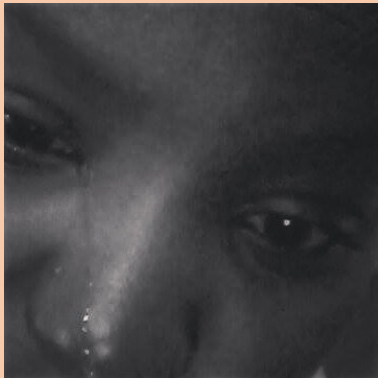
Born in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, raised in Allentown Pa. Zo graduated from William Allen High School. He went on to graduate from Temple university with a BA in English literature and a Minor in Dance. Zo started Dancing, writing songs, poetry, and short stories at the age of 7. Zo successfully performed 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.

COMFORT MARTIN-LEECO

THEN THEY TORE MY LAPPA ON BROAD STREET"



I was just a little girl walking on the streets innocent of it all; then they tore my lappa on Broad Street. My parents couldn't afford just anything when they tore my lappa on Broad Street. The man told me he would give me money and fine things; then they tore my lappa on Broad Street. I saw all the beautiful things and good food... and pretty hair wraps girls of my age had so; they tore my lappa on Broad Street. Sometimes the man forced me, sometimes he begged me. Sometimes he gave me those fine things; then they tore my lappa on Broad Street. I yelled but he gave Mama Money. I screamed, he gave Papa money; then they tore my lappa on Broad Street. Sometimes Mama said no. Sometimes Papa said no. I started accepting it as my life. I was hopeless; then they tore my lappa on Broad Street. Nobody cared. They called me "little prostitute". They told their children "don't play with her". My heart, my life and my soul were captured; and they tore my lappa on Broad Street. One day, I thought I smelled freedom. Someone saw me! Yes, I am freed! No, I was wrong! Then they tore my lappa on Broad Street.

They stripped me off my clothes, captured my captives and gave me fifty lashes on Broad Street; then they tore my lappa on Broad Street. Some booed, some cheered. Some agonized-the ones I had asked God to save me. But they tore my lappa on Broad Street!

On November 10, 2015 in Monrovia, girls at most aged 15 were found living with men as sex slaves. It was alleged upon hearing the news, Director General of **General Services Agency** of Liberia in anger with her team arrested those men and openly whipped those girls in the streets of Monrovia. **I AM THOSE GIRLS**❤️❤️

Comfort Martin Leeco is a young Liberian mother of one who temporarily resides in New Jersey, United States. She had come in 2014 due to health reasons to give birth to her son Spencer Leeco, Jr during the outbreak of the Ebola Virus at the time. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Sociology from the African Methodist Episcopal University in Monrovia where she became its first Senior Class President in 2005 and first female recipient of the Adam Richardson Leadership Award, the school's highest merit to student leaders. She also holds a Master's of Business Administration Degree from the Cuttington University and a Certificate in Microfinance. Her involvement in writing and advocacy are in the prints of her community, church and workplace in Liberia. She worked for 8 years as General Manager of the Lone Star Telemarketing Corporation. One of her works: "I am a Liberian, Not a Virus" went viral on social media and erupted in to a campaign. Liberians posted pictures and signs with harsh tags "I am a Liberian, not a Virus "as a peaceful objection to discrimination against Liberians by the rest of the world during the heat of the Ebola crisis.

Jack Kolkmeier



Walking Up the Down Road

we met for the first time
at the confluence of two chances
 one went this way and the other went there
we walked along the destinies of our choices
theirs went through the forest of thought
mine along the valleys of work

we met a second time
so far down our paths
 somewhere upstream
 between the rivers of our decisions
theirs contemplative and quiet
mine more riot and boisterous

and now we meet again
here at the gulf of life
 having meandered up
 and back down again
through all the indecisions
 of hope and dreams
 and opportunity made splendid
then gone awry

we shook hands
then hugged
then sat and talked for awhile
 about where we had been
 and what we had seen
 and what we had tried

we smiled and laughed
but then grew still
 as we watched the waters
 of one way
converge with the expanse of another

back at the start again
of our two chances

Coltrane

entanglements
in polka dots and moonbeams

engagements
round midnight
on parallel courses
it seems

and nocturnal admissions
lost arcs and frozen phrases
wholly wars of redemption
and tangled transgressions
play deeply

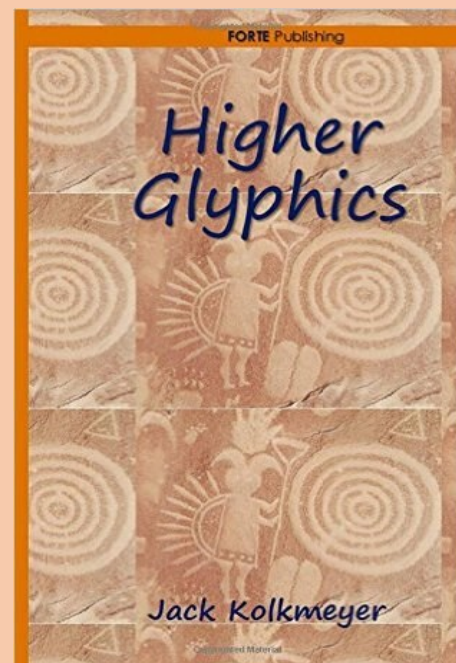
how deep is the ocean

lush lives
and moments of need
life with wings
and salt peanuts
swirl notably

bye bye blackbird

these are a few

of our favorite things



FORTE Publishing

Renee' B. Drummond-Brown

Alone

I sit here
In 'dis' dear rocking chair
And gaze
Through reflections
Of youthful days
'Dem' good ol' 'daze'
Wasn't always so good
And the bad ol' 'daze'
Hmhm
Didn't always outweigh 'da' good

'Da' Youngins' 'dat' come in to take
care of me
NO BLOOD of mine though
'Daze' laugh at me
And think
I don't see
What 'daze' see
But what 'daze' don't know 'bout' me
I survived all my colored life
Acting as 'doe' I don't see
I 'seez' real good
And know
In God's great big world
I'z 'foreva' alone
And they too 'gotta' get old

I reared 10 'chillins'
All alone
Not one
Comes 'seez' 'bout' me
In 'dis' dear home
Seems to me 'daze' argue 'bout' my
check
But alone in 'dis' dear home
There's no need for 'dat'
In fact
'Daze' can have all I'z got
'Da' less I'z got
"Da' less I'z worried 'bout'

'Den' 'doze' big decisions being made
By 'Docs'
'Talkin' round about me

Like I don't 'getta' say
Buts 'dats' OK
I entered 'dis world alone
And will leave it 'da' very same way

'Da' 'grans' I raised comes see's 'bout'
me
(smile)
'Daze' cry
Ask why?
Why's you in here?
I'z say
Calm down my love
God got 'dis'
He'll answer you
By and by
From far above
And 'den' 'daze' ask me to give 'dem'
more
Why's can't 'daze' see???
I got 'nothin' else left
To give
Except His love

Father is my grieving in vain?
Is my lonesness sane?
In 'dis' dear nursing home
I sit
I rock
I think
I'm all alone

If... 'da' morning come
I'll sit
I'll rock
I'll think
I'll pray
Until my God
Come
Take His last breath away
And 'den'
Back home
I'll return to Him all alone
Please support my write(s) by sharing this
post and ordering my e-Book, Hardback
and soft back

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Gifts of the Masters

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

GWENDOLYN BROOKS

One Wants A Teller In A Time Like This

One's not a man, one's not a woman grown
To bear enormous business all alone.

One cannot walk this winding street with
pride
Straight-shouldered, tranquil-eyed,
Knowing one knows for sure the way back
home.

One wonders if one has a home.

One is not certain if or why or how.
One wants a Teller now:

Put on your rubbers and you won't catch a
cold
Here's hell, there's heaven. Go to Sunday
School
Be patient, time brings all good things-(and
cool
Stong balm to calm the burning at the
brain?)
Behold,
Love's true, and triumphs; and God's actual.

Harlem [dream Deferred]

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up
like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester like a sore—
And then run?
Does it stink like rotten meat?
Or crust and sugar over—
like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags
like a heavy load.

Or does it explode?
Harlem [dream Deferred]

LANGSTON HUGHES

Freedom's Plow

When a man starts out with nothing,
When a man starts out with his hands
Empty, but clean,
When a man starts to build a world,
He starts first with himself
And the faith that is in his heart-
The strength there,
The will there to build.

First in the heart is the dream-
Then the mind starts seeking a way.
His eyes look out on the world,
On the great wooded world,
On the rich soil of the world,
On the rivers of the world.

The eyes see there materials for building,
See the difficulties, too, and the
obstacles.

The mind seeks a way to overcome
these obstacles.

The hand seeks tools to cut the wood,
To fill the soil, and harness the power of
the waters.

Then the hand seeks other hands to
help,

A community of hands to help-

Thus the dream becomes not one man's
dream alone,

But a community dream.

Not my dream alone, but our dream.

Not my world alone,

But your world and my world,

Belonging to all the hands who build.

A long time ago, but not too long ago,

Ships came from across the sea

Bringing the Pilgrims and prayer-makers,

Adventurers and booty seekers,

Free men and indentured servants,

Slave men and slave masters, all new-

To a new world, America!

With billowing sails the galleons came
Bringing men and dreams, women and
dreams.

In little bands together,
Heart reaching out to heart,
Hand reaching out to hand,
They began to build our land.
Some were free hands
Seeking a greater freedom,
Some were indentured hands
Hoping to find their freedom,
Some were slave hands
Guarding in their hearts the seed of
freedom,
But the word was there always:
Freedom.

Down into the earth went the plow
In the free hands and the slave hands,
In indentured hands and adventurous
hands,
Turning the rich soil went the plow in
many hands
That planted and harvested the food
that fed
And the cotton that clothed America.
Clang against the trees went the ax into
many hands
That hewed and shaped the rooftops of
America.
Splash into the rivers and the seas went
the boat-hulls
That moved and transported America.
Crack went the whips that drove the
horses
Across the plains of America.
Free hands and slave hands,
Indentured hands, adventurous hands,
White hands and black hands
Held the plow handles,
Ax handles, hammer handles,
Launched the boats and whipped the
horses
That fed and housed and moved
America.
Thus together through labor,
All these hands made America.

Labor! Out of labor came villages
And the towns that grew cities.
Labor! Out of labor came the rowboats
And the sailboats and the steamboats,
Came the wagons, and the coaches,
Covered wagons, stage coaches,
Out of labor came the factories,
Came the foundries, came the railroads.
Came the marts and markets, shops and
stores,
Came the mighty products moulded,
manufactured,
Sold in shops, piled in warehouses,
Shipped the wide world over:
Out of labor-white hands and black
hands-
Came the dream, the strength, the will,
And the way to build America.
Now it is Me here, and You there.
Now it's Manhattan, Chicago,
Seattle, New Orleans,
Boston and El Paso-
Now it's the U.S.A.

A long time ago, but not too long ago, a
man said:
ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL-
ENDOWED BY THEIR CREATOR
WITH CERTAIN UNALIENABLE RIGHTS-
AMONG THESE LIFE, LIBERTY
AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS.
His name was Jefferson. There were
slaves then,
But in their hearts the slaves believed
him, too,
And silently took for granted
That what he said was also meant for
them.
It was a long time ago,
But not so long ago at that, Lincoln said:
NO MAN IS GOOD ENOUGH
TO GOVERN ANOTHER MAN
WITHOUT THAT OTHER'S CONSENT.
There were slaves then, too,
But in their hearts the slaves knew
What he said must be meant for every
human being-

Part one

Freedom And Love

Thomas Campbell

How delicious is the winning
Of a kiss at love's beginning,
When two mutual hearts are sighing
For the knot there's no untying!
Yet remember, 'Midst our wooing,
Love has bliss, but Love has ruing;
Other smiles may make you fickle,
Tears for other charms may trickle.
Love he comes, and Love he tarries,
Just as fate or fancy carries;
Longest stays, when sorest chidden;
Laughs and flies, when press'd and
bidden.
Bind the sea to slumber stilly,
Bind its odour to the lily,
Bind the aspen ne'er to quiver,
Then bind Love to last for ever.
Love's a fire that needs renewal
Of fresh beauty for its fuel:
Love's wing moults when caged and
captured,
Only free, he soars enraptured.
Can you keep the bee from ranging
Or the ringdove's neck from changing?
No! nor fetter'd Love from dying
In the knot there's no untying.

Freedom

Helen Hunt Jackson

What freeman knoweth freedom?
Never he
Whose father's father through long lives
have reigned
O'er kingdoms which mere heritage
attained.
Though from his youth to age he roam
as free
As winds, he dreams not freedom's
ecstasy.

But he whose birth was in a nation
chained
For centuries; where every breath was
drained
From breasts of slaves which knew not
there could be
Such thing as freedom,--he beholds the
light
Burst, dazzling; though the glory blind
his sight
He knows the joy. Fools laugh because
he reels
And weilds confusedly his infant will;
The wise man watching with a heart
that feels
Says: "Cure for freedom's harms is
freedom still."

How Did You Die?

Edmund Vance Cooke

Did you tackle that trouble that came
your way
With a resolute heart and cheerful?
Or hide your face from the light of day
With a craven soul and fearful?
Oh, a trouble's a ton, or a trouble's an
ounce,
Or a trouble is what you make it,
And it isn't the fact that you're hurt that
counts,
But only how did you take it?

You are beaten to earth? Well, well,
what's that?
Come up with a smiling face.
It's nothing against you to fall down flat,
But to lie there -- that's disgrace.
The harder you're thrown, why the
higher you bounce;
Be proud of your blackened eye!
It isn't the fact that you're licked that
counts,
It's how did you fight -- and why?
And though you be done to the death,
what then?

If you battled the best you could,
If you played your part in the world of
men,
Why, the Critic will call it good.
Death comes with a crawl, or comes
with a pounce,
And whether he's slow or spry,
It isn't the fact that you're dead that
counts,
But only how did you die?

Keep A-Goin'!

Frank Leiby Stanton

Ef you strike a thorn or rose,
Keep a-goin'!
Ef it hails, or ef it snows,
Keep a-goin'!
'Taint no use to sit an' whine,
When the fish ain't on yer line;
Bait yer hook an' keep a-tryin'-
Keep a-goin'!

When the weather kills yer crop,
Keep a-goin'!
When you tumble from the top,
Keep a-goin'!
S'pose you're out of every dime,
Bein' so ain't any
crime;

Tell the world you're feelin'
prime
-
Keep a-goin'!

When it looks like all is up,
Keep a-goin'!
Drain the sweetness from the cup,
Keep a-goin'!
See the wild birds on the wing,
Hear the bells that sweetly ring,
When you feel like sighin'
sing-

Keep a-goin'!

Freedom

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Once I wished I might rehearse
Freedom's paeon in my verse,
That the slave who caught the strain
Should throb until he snapped his
chain.
But the Spirit said, 'Not so;
Speak it not, or speak it low;
Name not lightly to be said,
Gift too precious to be prayed,
Passion not to be expressed
But by heaving of the breast:
Yet,--wouldst thou the mountain find
Where this deity is shrined,
Who gives to seas and sunset skies
Their unspent beauty of surprise,
And, when it lists him, waken can
Brute or savage into man;
Or, if in thy heart he shine,
Blends the starry fates with thine,
Draws angels nigh to dwell with thee,
And makes thy thoughts archangels
be;
Freedom's secret wilt thou know?--
Counsel not with flesh and blood;
Loiter not for cloak or food;
Right thou feelest, rush to do.'

Freedom

John Barbour

A! Fredome is a noble thing!
Fredome mays man to haiff liking;
Fredome all solace to man giffis,
He levys at ese that frely levys!
A noble hart may haiff nane ese,
Na ellys nocht that may him plese,
Gyff fredome fail; for fre liking
Is yarnyt our all othir thing.
Na he that ay has levyt fre
May nocht know weill the propyrte,
The angyr, na the wretchyt dome
That is couplyt to foule thyrdome.

Bot gyff he had assayit it,
Than all perquer he suld it wyt;
And suld think fredome mar to prise
Than all the gold in warld that is.
Thus contrar thingis evirmar
Discoweryngis off the tothir ar.

Anecdote for Fathers

William Wordsworth (1798)

I have a boy of five years old;
His face is fair and fresh to see;
His limbs are cast in beauty's mould,
And dearly he loves me.

One morn we strolled on our dry walk,
Our quiet home all full in view,
And held such intermitted talk
As we are wont to do.

My thoughts on former pleasures ran;
I thought of Kilve's delightful shore,
Our pleasant home when spring began,
A long, long year before.

A day it was when I could bear
Some fond regrets to entertain;
With so much happiness to spare,
I could not feel a pain.

The green earth echoed to the feet
Of lambs that bounded through the glade,
From shade to sunshine, and as fleet
From sunshine back to shade.

Birds warbled round me—and each trace
Of inward sadness had its charm;
Kilve, thought I, was a favoured place,
And so is Liswyn farm.

My boy beside me tripped, so slim
And graceful in his rustic dress!
And, as we talked, I questioned him,
In very idleness.

“Now tell me, had you rather be,”
I said, and took him by the arm,
“On Kilve's smooth shore, by the green sea,
Or here at Liswyn farm?”

In careless mood he looked at me,
While still I held him by the arm,
And said, “At Kilve I'd rather be
Than here at Liswyn farm.”

“Now, little Edward, say why so:
My little Edward, tell me why.”—
“I cannot tell, I do not know.”—
“Why, this is strange,” said I;

“For, here are woods, hills smooth and warm:
There surely must some reason be
Why you would change sweet Liswyn farm
For Kilve by the green sea.”

At this, my boy hung down his head,
He blushed with shame, nor made reply;
And three times to the child I said,
“Why, Edward, tell me why?”

His head he raised—there was in sight,
It caught his eye, he saw it plain—
Upon the house-top, glittering bright,
A broad and gilded vane.

Then did the boy his tongue unlock,
And eased his mind with this reply:
“At Kilve there was no weather-cock;
And that's the reason why.”

O dearest, dearest boy! my heart
For better lore would seldom yearn,
Could I but teach the hundredth part
Of what from thee I learn.

The Little Boy Lost

William Blake (from *Songs of Innocence*, 1791)

“Father! father! where are you going?
O do not walk so fast.
Speak, father, speak to your little boy,
Or else I shall be lost.”

The night was dark, no father was there;
The child was wet with dew;
The mire was deep, & the child did weep,
And away the vapour flew.

Out Of The Night That Covers Me

William Ernest Henley

Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the Pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll.
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.

A Prisoner In A Dungeon Deep

Anne Brontë

A prisoner in a dungeon deep
Sat musing silently;
His head was rested on his hand,
His elbow on his knee.
Turned he his thoughts to future times
Or are they backward cast?
For freedom is he pining now
Or mourning for the past?

No, he has lived so long enthralled
Alone in dungeon gloom
That he has lost regret and hope,
Has ceased to mourn his doom.

He pines not for the light of day
Nor sighs for freedom now;
Such weary thoughts have ceased at length
To rack his burning brow.

Lost in a maze of wandering thoughts
He sits unmoving there;
That posture and that look proclaim
The stupor of despair.

Yet not for ever did that mood
Of sullen calm prevail;
There was a something in his eye
That told another tale.

It did not speak of reason gone,
It was not madness quite;
It was a fitful flickering fire,
A strange uncertain light.

And sooth to say, these latter years
Strange fancies now and then
Had filled his cell with scenes of life
And forms of living men.

A mind that cannot cease to think
Why needs he cherish there?
Torpor may bring relief to pain
And madness to despair.

Such wildering scenes, such flitting shapes
As feverish dreams display:
What if those fancies still increase
And reason quite decay?

But hark, what sounds have struck his ear;
Voices of men they seem;
And two have entered now his cell;
Can this too be a dream?

'Orlando, hear our joyful news:
Revenge and liberty!
Your foes are dead, and we are come
At last to set you free.'

So spoke the elder of the two,
And in the captive's eyes
He looked for gleaming ecstasy
But only found surprise.

'My foes are dead! It must be then
That all mankind are gone.
For they were all my deadly foes
And friends I had not one.'

This month's issue focuses on freedom not only in terms of nationhood, but in any of its forms. Freedom should be free from undue influence.

A Kind of Refugee/Living in Limbo



Front row: Cassandra Mark, Malaika Mark, Francine Morris, Michael Mark. Standing: Althea Mark, kneeling, Emmanuel Mark

Our children, Malaika, Cassandra, Michael and I arrived in London, May 1990, having flown out of Robertsfield Airport on one of the last flights leaving Liberia.



I could still hear the warning issued at the last social event held at the American Embassy: *All American citizens should evacuate the country*

immediately. The neatly folded map, which pinpointed safe houses if the rebel army rolled into the city sooner than expected, was now a crumpled piece of paper.

We disembarked holding one suitcase each. I was in charge of passports, birth and marriage certificates and diplomas, now more valuable than gold.



Aldin Mark, my husband (Emmanuel)'s sister and resident of London since 1960, met us at Heathrow airport. She took us to her home on Ifley Road, Hammersmith, within walking distance from Shepherd's Bush in London. It would be the first in a series of temporary homes. I shared a room in the crammed, narrow, two-story apartment with my three children. When my husband arrived six weeks later via Sierra Leone, Guinea and Belgium, he joined us in the bedroom where two single beds joined together was our private space.



Soon after Emmanuel's arrival, we went to the Citizens Bureau where our status was established and legal aid provided. My husband was born in

Grenada, a former British colony, and still held a British passport which allowed him to obtain British passports in Liberia for our children.



Dr. Emmanuel Mark, king of his castle in Liberia
We were placed in a B&B in the Bayswater area. It was home until we could be resettled elsewhere. My family was assigned two rooms. My husband, I and our six year old son shared one room. Our daughters, aged, nine and eleven, shared another. We were ashamed to be in this position but the civil war had determined our fate. We drew solace knowing that the situation would be temporary.

Like the other families, we were seeking to begin a new life having lost all we had. We were happy to be alive. Starting again from scratch, although daunting, was a second chance. We had sacrificed everything. My husband had abandoned his medical practice which he had run with his cousin Dr. James Thomas and his wife, Gloria Thomas, a nurse; he had also vacated his teaching position at the A.M. Daglioti Medical College in Monrovia and the eight roomed home he had built.



I had given up my teaching position at the University of Liberia. I barely had time to say goodbye. We had withdrawn our children from school and had left family and friends behind. We wanted to survive the atrocities, the shameless ethnic killings, the burning of villages and sometimes, it occupants, the gleeful killing of intellectuals and anyone for whom a grudge was enough to be sentenced to death.



Our B+B, once assigned in Bayswater, the children travelled by train to attend school. I had enrolled them as soon as we arrived. The younger two, Cassandra and Michael were at Brackenberry Elementary School and the older, Malaika, at St. Mark's Anglican Secondary school in Parson's Green.

I worried about them. Until now I had driven them everywhere. Now, I accompanied the younger ones to school; the older child, Malaika, had adapted to travelling alone.



The cook who dished out breakfast in the B+B on Queensborough Road, was a Jamaican immigrant.

I remember finding this odd. Officials of Countries, where people ranted against immigrants stealing jobs, still hired immigrants to carry out delicate duties. Just as I found it odd that a Haitian once guarded our hotel room in New York when my husband was detained for not having a transit visa. We were flying from the Caribbean via New York back to Liberia and he didn't think he needed one.

Our fellow refugees included a Somalian family who had fled an uprising in their home; my family--my husband, Grenadian, carrying a Liberian passport, our Liberian born children and me, a US, Virgin Islander, and an Irish family. Why the Irish were placed in the B&B I never found out.

Perhaps they were fleeing the Protestant/Catholic clashes in Northern Ireland. We ate our dished out breakfast, read about the horrors that were taking place in Liberia, searched for work, shopped for clothes and books in second-hand stores, to sustain our family of five.



After three months in the B & B, we were assigned a two bedroom apartment in St. Clair's Mansion near Shepherd's Bush. We needed several trips by train from Queensborough Road to Hammersmith to transport our belongings. Financial assistance was expected to last until my husband and I found employment.

I was eager to stand on my own feet. Staying at home was not an option. I had been working since I was fourteen and very independent. I could not conceive being dependent on my husband or a government.



While searching for teaching job, I sought temporary work and found one at H. Samuel's Jewellers that hired extra staff for the Christmas season.

Here I was, a trained university teacher, working at a jewellery shop, with people, for whom every second word was "fuck." I was appalled at the language. In Liberia, people cursed when they had been provoked or angered. Here curse-words naturally attached themselves to nouns. Everyone hung out at a pub after work. I couldn't join. I was a mother of three with limited funds and an unemployed husband.



My husband was told that because he had a Swiss Medical degree, he was required to sit exams and to familiarize himself with British medical culture. While contemplating his next step, he also sought temporary work and was often told he was over qualified. I remember he had applied for a vacancy at the post office and was turned down.

I imagined the people at the head office thought he was a mad-man who fancied himself to be a medical doctor. Why would a doctor apply for a position at the post office?



Fullham Cross Girls' School

During my free time, I volunteered at my son's primary school and was privileged to chaperone classes on field trips to Kew

Gardens, the Natural History Museum and other places. We allowed ourselves simple pleasures and took our children to the Planetarium, Madame Tussauds, parks, zoos and fairs.

We made small sacrifices, took advantage of the rich surroundings so that we could have a normal life, and educate our children

The New Year, 1991, brought a brighter outlook as I had been offered work as a substitute teacher at Fulham Cross Secondary School, an all girls' school. I was unimpressed by their lacklustre attitude towards education.

Attending classes was a chore and a bore for these girls. Their goal was to finish school at the voluntary leaving age, have children or work in a shop. Students lacked motivation and teachers showed little interest. They felt these students were a lost cause. A bright spot was the students from India and Pakistan who studied seriously. Second generation West Indian immigrants were already falling into the trap.



The urge not to fall into complacency coincided with an embarrassing encounter with a student one Saturday afternoon when I was on my way home. She asked me if I lived in the neighbourhood. In answer, I pointed to the building in which I lived. "You live there?" I heard the emphasis on THERE. My new home was marked, a place where homeless people were housed.

A big scarlet H had been plastered on my forehead. I vowed to get out as soon as possible. I learned that it was an unmentionable place. If I had known, I would have lied.

The temporary apartment at Sinclair's Mansion had given us more room and privacy. My job as a substitute teacher allowed me to give up the government stipend. I felt better about myself. I

was no longer accepting handouts. It was a step away from dependence, a step away from "homeless."

After six months we obtained British residency. My children were settled in school—my oldest studying German.



Attending a family wedding in London

Despite my husband's large, supportive family, whom I got to know well, and despite being surrounded by a West Indian community, I felt unsettled. Our social rug had been snatched from under us. However, birthdays, parties and weddings helped to make us feel at home.



London market (Hammersmith)

I wondered how these "West Indians," who had left the Caribbean thirty years ago, still sounded like they had never left the islands. Markets and shops, run by East Indians, sold tropical food, and other familiar products. A visit to them was taking a little trip to the Caribbean or Africa.

Our children had attended a private school in Liberia and received the best education available. In the London schools I taught, learning eagerly was discouraged by other students. Working as a substitute teacher, I witnessed the students' lack of will to learn and I worried about how this attitude would affect my children.



My own previous experience with adolescents and teenage students had been discouraging. I had taught teenagers in inner city Connecticut, watched them stare out of windows despite the innovative teaching methods that had been introduced.

One lasting impression was a student lifting a chair and threatening the classroom teacher with it. And I had taught at Addelita Cancryn Jr. High School, a middle school in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, nicknamed "Vietnam." The administration building at that school had been set on fire twice. Adolescent hormones were raging war.

I had vowed not to teach that age group again. And here I was teaching in London in an environment where students also shouted abuse at teachers. Once a student arrived drunk and had to be held up by her classmates. I later learned that her parents were alcoholics. The last straw was a class that displayed their dislike for the presence of another substitute teacher, me, by screeching until the head master arrived. Teaching had

become a nightmare which I hoped to escape.



My prayers were answered when my husband was offered a position at the University Children's Hospital in Basel, Switzerland. But new problems would surface in a country whose language and culture was foreign to us.

© Althea Romeo-Mark

"A Kind of Refugee: Living in Limbo," **WomanSpeak: A Journal of Writing and Art by Caribbean Women**. Ed. Lynn Sweeting. Bahamas. 2013.

- See more at:
<http://aromaproductions.blogspot.ch/2016/07/a-kind-of-refugeeliving-in-limbo.html#sthash.hO7qPWXn.dpuf>





**Happy
Independence Day
to the people of
Liberia**

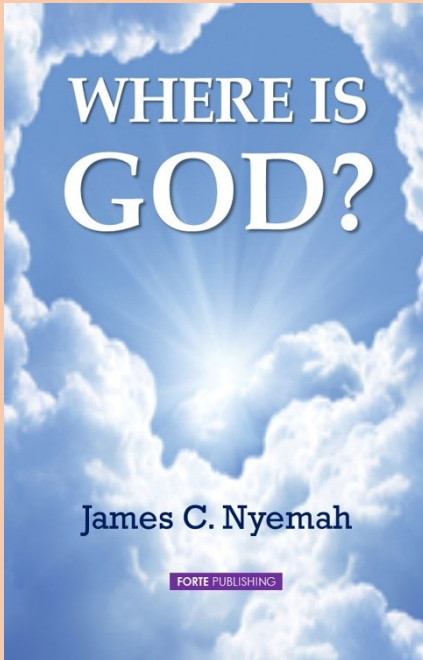
**Happy
Independence Day
Long Live
Liberia**



Recommended Reads

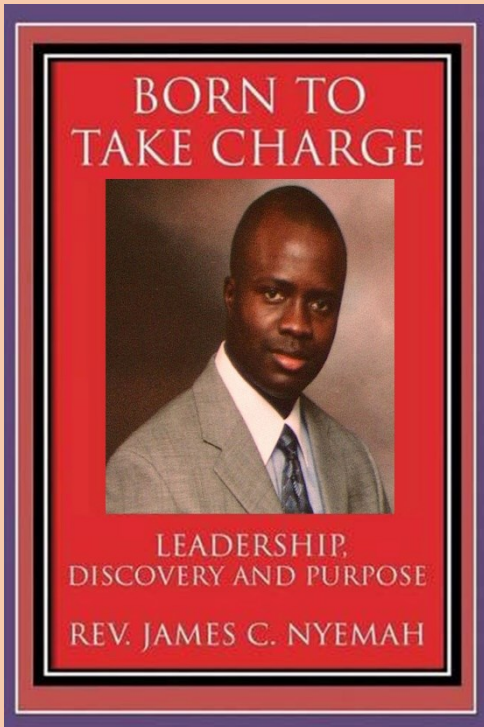
Published by FORTE Publishing

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.

Pastor James

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



MOMOH SEKOU DUDU

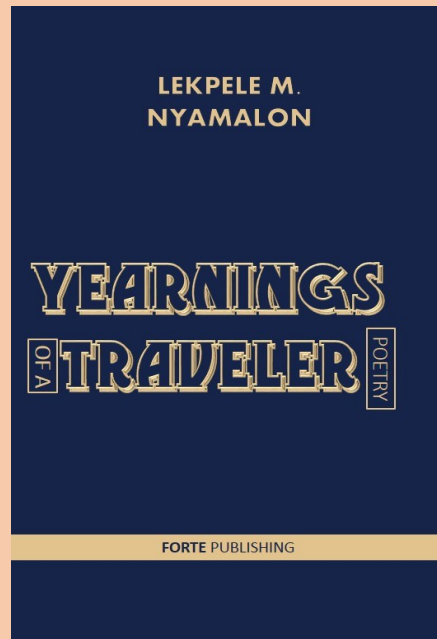
takes us on a mental journey in his latest release, *When The Mind Soars*, poetry from the Heart.

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



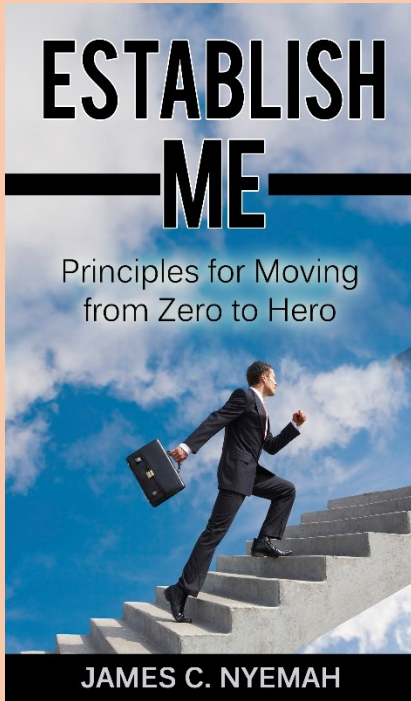
Lekpele, his has been a message of self worth, as we see in his signature piece, My Body is Gold; one of patriotism, as in Scars of A Tired Nation; one of Pan Africanism as in the piece, Dig The Graves. He

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.

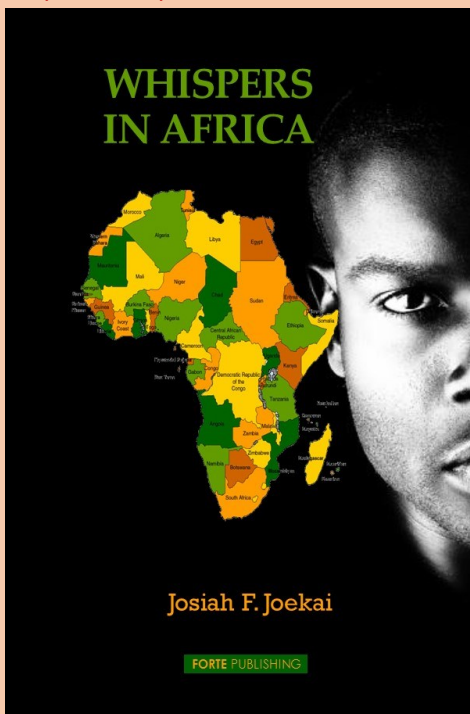
Recommended Reads

ESTABLISH ME in the world is Liberia?

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

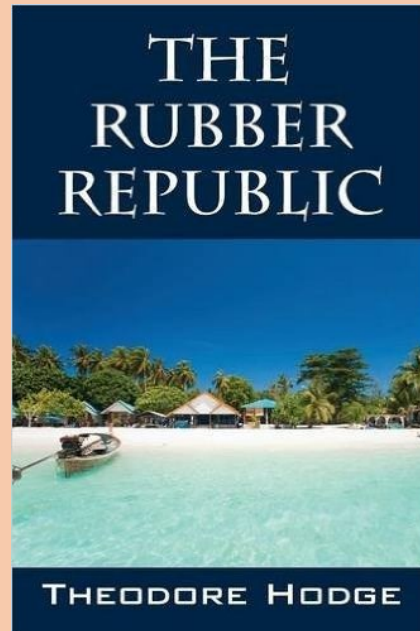


In his latest work, Ps. Nyemah lets us know that God can **Fix Us, Mold Us, Create Us** and then **Establish US**.



Coming soon from FORTE Publishing

The Rubber Republic

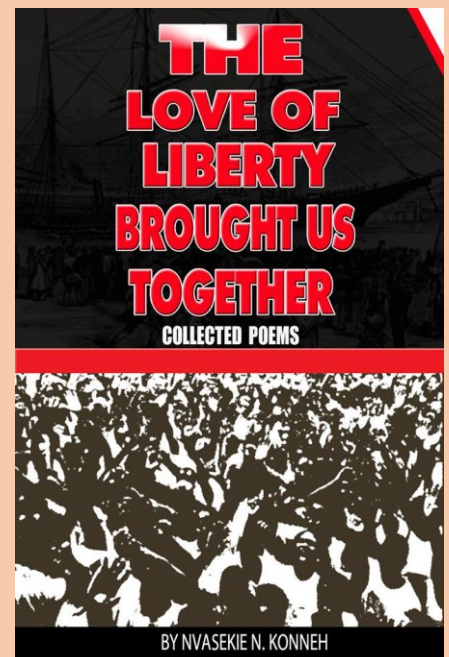


From relative stability to upheaval, military coup, violence and revenge. . . **The Rubber Republic** covers two decades, the late 1950s through the 1970s. Set mainly in West Africa, the story takes the reader to the United States and a few

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

Nvasekie Konneh

In his latest endeavor, writes about things that divide and unite Liberians. The book title plays on the motto of Liberia, THE LOVE OF LIBERTY BROUGHT US HERE.



Coming soon from

Clarke Publishing by Nvasekie Konneh



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.

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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 is attends school. She is in the 7th grade.

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Around Town



Happy July 26 MAMA LIBERIA

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Traditional Dancer from the Gio Tribe-Gio Devil



Photo: S. Mark

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A scenic view of Monrovia, city center



DK, one would only ask if they are unfamiliar with LIB





Bomi County, a perfect view



Down town Pehn Pehn Hustle



This exotic waterfall is a great opportunity
To expand tourism if developed.



Forget us not

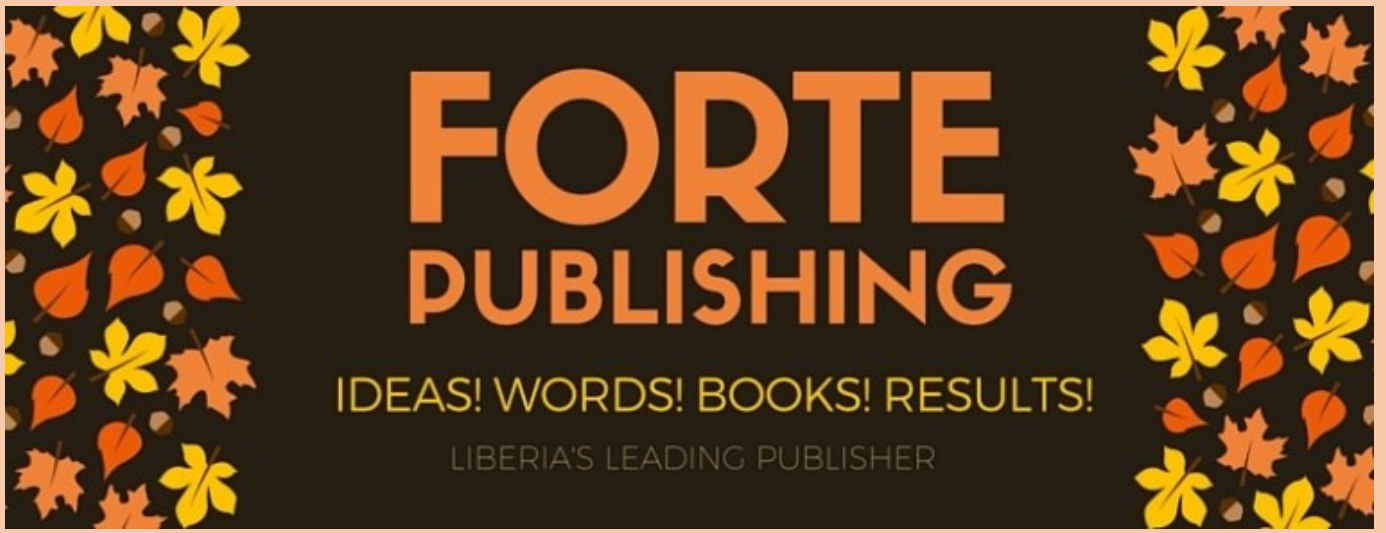


The People's Monument



Local Dish, Fufu. Hustle; real life situations

Credit: Darby Cecil & Daily Pictures from around Liberia



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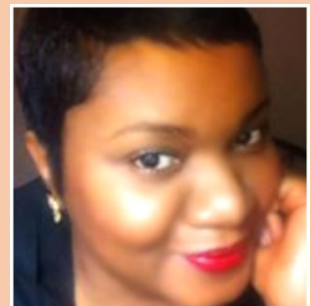
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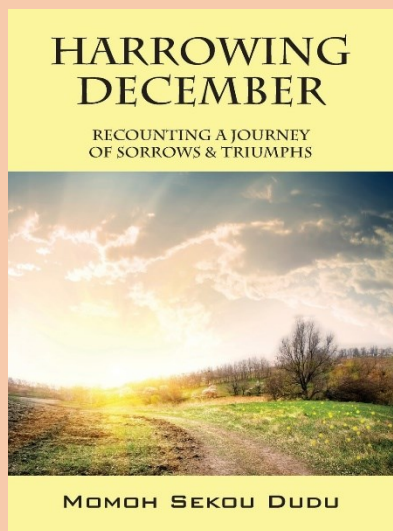
VAMBA SHERIF
Editor - Short stories

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



MOMOH DUDUU
Editor- Reviews

Is an educator and author. For the last decade, he has been an instructor at various Colleges and Universities in the Minneapolis metro area in the state of Minnesota, U.S.A. At present, he is the Chair of the Department of Business and Accounting at the Brooklyn Center Campus of the Minnesota School of Business at Globe University. His works include the memoir 'Harrowing December: Recounting a Journey of Sorrows and Triumphs' and 'Musings of a Patriot: A Collection of Essays on Liberia' a compilation of his commentaries about governance in his native country. At the moment, he is at work on his maiden novel tentatively titled 'Forgotten Legacy.'

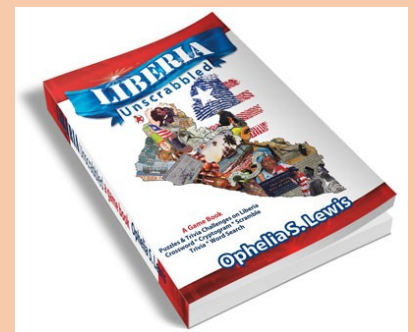


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OPHELIA LEWIS
Editor- Anthology

The founder of Village Tales Publishing and self-published author of more than ten books, Lewis is determined to make Village Tales Publishing a recognized name in the literary industry. She has written two novels, three children's books, a book of poetry, a book of essay and two collections of short stories, with the latest being *Montserrat Stories*. As publisher-project manager, she guards other authors in getting their work from manuscript to print, using the self-publishing platform. Self-publishing can be complicated, a process that unfolds over a few months or even years. Using a project management approach gives a better understanding of the format process and steps needed it take to get an aspiring writer's book published.



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Editor

D. Othniel Forte



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

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

However, all is not lost. A new breed of creative minds has risen to the challenge and are determined to change the dead silence in our literary world. In order to do this, we realized the need to create a *culture of reading* amongst our people.

A reading culture broadens the mind and opens up endless possibilities. It also encourages diversity and for a colorful nation like ours, fewer things are more important.

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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