

THE TAKE OF WAPEGOTSA

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All these goddesses might be eye-catching,
But only one will forever be breath-taking.
And to me, she will always be more,
More than just a memory,
Because I feel her, and she feels me.

This is to the one,
That one willing to talk things through.
That one argument makes more sense than the otherwise silence.

To the one,
That one whose eye contact is locked in mine. That one moment is the story of our lifetime.

To the one,
That one smiling yet everything around them seems to be in disarray.
That one stare that transmutes negative energy.

To the one,
That one who asks what they can offer, before they ask for something.
That one question that makes you appreciate their kindness.

To the one,
That one waiting for as long as it could take. That one extra chance that melts my heart away.

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To the one,

That one whose eyes are comforting. That one gaze that caresses my soreness.

To the one,

That one whose forgiveness is unconditional.

That one encouraging ear that listens to my helpless explanations.

To the one,

That one fighting sleep to see more of me.

That one ever-present company that creates warmth in the cold nights.

To the one,

That one holding my hands in theirs.

That one tender touch that relaxes all the muscles in my body.

To the one,

That one supporting my wildest dreams. That one act of kindness that gives me hope.

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She Goes for Real

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First time I told her I love her,
She took away my sight,
And I thought she had swept me by the feet.
I poured my heart to her,
I thought I sang my heart out just like the birds do,
Any competition?

She looked away, her head held high,
Her hands on her waist.
I knew this was the time to make a move,
My hands would do the magic.
To put them on my head,
Would surely be the last nail to my coffin.

Soon I would hit a snag.
Creative hands I have, they have created great arts,
And so I put them to use,
Grab my knee and stoop as if to kneel.
Suddenly she looks straight into my eyes.

And just before I make contact with the ground,
She lays her smooth, feeble hands on my shoulder,
Her smile almost sending me to the ground,
Which magnetic force is stronger?
Her eyes seem to pull me up,

While gravity seems to be robbing me from her hands,
She wins this round fair and square, referee?

She says yes, and a cool liquid washes down my stomach,
Or did it come from my heart?

Maybe I should have said that I loved her sooner.
Nothing has been lost however, it was worth the wait.

So, patience seems to have paid off.
Even though I did not go lining up at the bank,
I still smile for my pockets are full,
Of the pink light of love.

What currency shall come to the stage and compete?
I guess none of them measures up to this pink love.
Soon I am up on my feet,
And her hug seems to ground me to the earth,
I am one with her, one with the breath,
Or is it just her sweet smile that almost has me petrified?

Second time I said I love her,
My voice was somewhat dry.
My lips were stiff like wood.
This is what she told me later.
She looked no longer in my eyes,
But her eyes gazed beyond,
To the distant sun setting over the horizon.

If this were any other day,

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It would have been my best evenings,
To call her my sun, and I the moon.
Did we not used to exchange the roles that we played?

Maybe it is not the time for role play.
It seems like she wants to walk away,
So, I take the chance to respect the gravity.
My foot reaches to the ground,
Leaving her little time to respond.
Gravity seems to have won this round.
Perhaps the battle was won before it begun.

They say that gravity treats us all alike.
It knows no broken heart,
And neither does it know fine love.
Whether you blow a kiss to her or curse her,
She will always show you her true colours.
Perhaps that is the only thing I didn't show my lady.

But she says that now she knows my true colours.
She fixes her gaze at me, and tears well in her eyes.
The first drop falls to the ground,
And off it goes with the reflection of me.
My trust has gone with the tear.

But just as the eye creates more tears and is the source,
I still love you like you were part of me, she says.
She kneels down in front of me and hugs me,

Trembling like a tree that is at the mercy of a whirl wind.
Even though the weather was calm.

You have my second chance,
I haven't loved another.
Your place in my heart is here always, she says.
Even though you went away,
I lit the fire waiting for you every day,
And indeed here you are.

I lost my way a bit,
I thought I knew too much. I left for the signpost,
But it didn't lead me anywhere.
Let us rekindle this fire once again, cheers.
Or is it just lit?

Third time I say that I love her,
I said it to myself a thousand times,
As I was visualising how it would all go down.
In my vision the beauty was blinding,
My heart was beating inconsistently.
She was standing, glowing, right in front of me.

I could smell the scent of her body,
It was just like that of flowers,
Fresh, minty, and therapeutic all at the same time.
No expert of perfume making would match up to this.
There I stood rooted to the ground, smiling.

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I swallowed hard, it was just an illusion.

Back to reality Mr,
I stand at the side of the road and watch her leave,
The hand that I held now rests in the warmth of another.
When I called to say we should talk,
She came with company to be safe,
She doesn't know what I am about anymore, she said.

Do I snatch those hands from another,
Is it a game of might?
Would she look me straight in the eye and say no?
Hi there Mr, can you blame her?
You went and did it again,
You broke the trust for the second time.
Did you think you'd break the bank again?

It seems now you'll have to line up like the rest,
And wait till it's your turn to be served,
Or maybe you've been served already.
You are just not satisfied with the service.
They say their hands are tied.
You have to see the manager, they say.

How can I ever tell her what I have learned,
In going astray?
I was on a mission,
I thought the other one was sweeter, so I tasted.

My gut feeling said they were all tasty.
But did I follow Florence Scovell Shinn or a hunch?
You know she said, never dismiss a hunch.

But now I have to accept,
The bitter pill I take; I guess the ship has left.
How do I sit well with this,
If am the captain of the ship,
That is being steered off by an alien?
They say not all that is lost is gone,
But I see her going, I'm losing her!
I sit down on the grass, maybe I should wait,
And hope that she comes back with,
The third and lucky chance.

Oh Mr, such ideas remain little more than pious hopes.
No, I am sure to be steadfast to this love,
I will pay love with love, oh, is there any chance?
Is this what they called gnashing of teeth.
Let the teeth grow old, it's the tongue I need to taste love,
Love, Oh my Love!

Life is selfish and mean,
She takes away what is mine in broad day light.
I am now moody like mother hen,
Who's lost all her chicks to an eagle.
I'll now walk with my feathers ruffled.
I will now dress in black, as I am in mourning.

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I loved her doesn't sound right.
Don't they say we live in the now?
How about, I cheated?
Not fair at all, I wasn't alone.
So now, life abandons me when all bridges are burning!
So now, I am surrounded with dead matter
So now, I will be called her erstwhile lover
And all this just because I reneged!

Am I not beautiful anymore?
Nonsense, take me to a court of law,
And I will point out to the devil,
Alone I will not take the fall.
Hi there Mr, get up and dust your coat.
Accept your fate and move on.

His eyes were smarting from the rash of the strong winds. Wabuatsi could not believe that he was unblinkingly looking at the girl that used to love her. Her name is Nnana, and she is looking away with tears glistening in her eyes. No, they are not tears of joy. There is nothing good from this scene occurring right here. It is certainly a separation between the two lovers. However, it is hard to tell whether they have really fallen out of love.

Perhaps the separation has been forced upon them? No, Wabuatsi's unfaithfulness is the unquestionable reason for

this. It is him who fell under the temptation of having a clandestine relationship. Should he blame the devil for this, I am sure Lucifer would be laughing hysterically in his chambers. Reason: He knows he does not have the slightest influence, let alone knowledge, of this accusation.

So, should he blame God instead? Sometimes they say that He gives and takes as He wills. So he probably took Nnana away from him, but how? Of course, through the clandestine relationship. Is that soul not a daughter of the Most High too? But what would the creator benefit from such an endeavour? He would benefit not, to break up a union that he witnessed being made, even though he was not invited. So in conclusion, He was, and still is, merely an observer. In any case, His work was done in the beginning.

So, Wabuatsi remains standing by the roadside thinking. He cannot afford the luxury of sitting on the grass. The birds singing beautifully on the tree he stood under, took none of his attention. His sensory organ for the sensation of sound seemed atrophied; and so even the crickets' chirping, fervently trying to notify him that it was getting dark, did not register in him.

Trust he had been given by Nnana, and trust he had broken. Chances he had been given, and now it was evident that her patience for him had run out. She could not tolerate his infidelity. To her, it was apparent that she was alone in this relationship. She cared more than he did. She loved more than he did. Clearly, she had everything to lose. Wabuatsi could easily go running back into the hands of his new mistress. Maybe grass was greener on the other side.

It is only the mosquitoes that brought Wabuatsi out of his tirade of thought. A few metres from where he stood, the street lights were already ablaze. Thanks to technological development, the neighbourhood was now lit up in a bid to make it more secure.

Humans were now training to be nocturnal — an unnatural trait, by trying to do business during the night. They also said the lights abated crime, as most criminal activities tend to be carried out when it is dark. But evil nowadays has evolved too, and most of it occurs in broad day light. So on the other hand, it could be said that the evil doers had also gained from the lighting project. As he walked home, he forgot to purchase food. The experience he just had, had thrown his thinking pattern out of kilter.

Perhaps Wabuatsi should have dedicated his erstwhile union to the Creator. He did not even give thanks when he was given a second chance. Is it too late to ask for a second, second chance now? Maybe their involvement of the Creator could have been helpful, in giving them a stable foundation. On this thought, Wabuatsi stops in front of his door; and before he opens it, he puts his hands together and says something that would seem to him, a prayer.

“My Father who is present everywhere, I am your son. We haven’t spoken in a while. Boy, we haven’t spoken consciously at all! My Father I am sure you have given me the freedom to make my choices, and have taken to watch from the back. You know, yesterday I turned thirty years old. A lot of time has passed since I came from your abode, Father. Yesterday I was ecstatic with joy, having lived thirty years on this beautiful planet of yours.

“But just look at me today, I do not see the beauty of life. I feel empty, Father. The girl, your daughter, whom I thought I would tie the knot with, is no longer my companion. Father, I really hoped for a miracle to save this relationship. Although to be honest, I realise that it is my lack of integrity that has led me here. Even though I fell into temptation, my love for Nnana remains the same.

“Father, I am sure you are aware that she is the only one I truly love, and now I have broken her heart. Father, please

forgive me for my transgression. I guess I did not value her love, respect, and honesty. I went against my word twice, to be faithful to her only.

“Father, I am feeling awful. I have even lost my appetite. My heart is hurting, and I do not know what to do to alleviate this situation. If it were possible, I would spit it out, just to end this suffering. Father, here on earth, I have been taught that you are a merciful God. Please pacify my heart”

Wabuatsi broke from the prayer. He could not say for sure how he felt, although it was strange. He felt like he had ignored his eternal Father for most part of his existence. He got into the house and lay on the bed. He did not even want to switch on the lights. He was afraid that he would see the reflection of his face on the mirror. He closed his eyes and listened in the darkness.

He could hear several things. From far he could hear the sound of the whistling pine. The crickets and frogs were also making their usual nocturnal noise. His neighbours were also moving up and down. He could hear some of them laughing, and this made him shudder. The reason was because the laugh cut straight to his heart. Now he focused on his heart beat. The pulse rate was high.

When he did not get a miraculous response from his Father, he thought, “Now what kind of father are you? I have talked to you, but I haven’t gotten any response. This is the reason why I do not talk to you. Every time it crosses my mind to reach out to you, I remember that you will always remain silent. It is absolutely useless to share my problems with you.

“I would better off remain alone, just like the spiritual orphan I have been; and just like it has always been, I will look for a solution out of this vicissitude by myself. Father, this might just be the last time I talk to you, because it is pointless”. And with that, Wabuatsi started sobbing. The last thing

he managed to think of before he drifted to sleep was, "Nnana I have to let you go!"

Early the next morning he woke up, and kept his mind on the task ahead. He had to go to work. Of course the previous day's events crossed his mind, and once or twice he was tempted to reach out to Nnana, but he managed to erase the thought from his mind. His appetite had not returned to normal, but that night he was able to eat some fruits.

Again as he lay in bed and closed his eyes, his attention went to his heart. He was obviously thinking of Nnana at the same time. So he cried again as the words came to his head, "Nnana I have to let you go!" Over a period of three months, he went through the same routine. He had regained his appetite, and begun to even think about forgiving himself, rather than asking for his Father's help.

He had accepted that it was his actions that led him to the predicament that befell him. The Father had already given him the freedom to make a choice. And did he not utilise the gift? Of course he did; and even now, the choice to forgive himself was staring at his face.

In a year's time he had made peace with himself. This, however, did not stop him from thinking about Nnana, but for the first time, he felt light at heart. Something felt good in him. Perhaps his Father had eventually helped him to deal with this situation. Could it be that every time the words, "Nana I have to let you go", crossed his mind, it was the Father speaking through his thoughts?

He had heard somewhere that the Father speaks through us, in a voice we can recognise. But he still had that grudge with the Father. A Father who could not have a conversation with his son; so, he left it at a maybe. When he got the restless urge to go to the house of worship one Sunday morning, he decided to try it out. But he would not stay more than an hour, a point he made in his mind.

As he settled down on one of the benches in the middle of the building, in came Nnana through the side entrance. She seemed to scan the area, deciding which spot would be best for her, then she chose the exact bench that Wabuatsi was sitting on. Feeling uneasy, Wabuatsi looked up the ceiling, and he did not realise how fast it happened, but his thoughts raced to questioning his Father.

"Father how hard can your test be? Was it your idea that I come here and meet with Nnana? But couldn't you have just told me earlier?" When Nnana took her seat beside him, he could not fail to notice because of her perfume. Pretending to be undistracted though, he now embraced the thought of conversing with the Father. It was now the better option, just to buy him more time. So he tuned in, "Father, you have a funny way of talking to me; you slip your ideas into my head, and it is me who freely acts on them. Now I find myself in the same church, and on the same bench with Nnana! Alright, maybe this is now my chance to officially ask for her forgiveness.

"Of course I am not asking her to take me back, I just want closure on this matter. It will be easier for both of us if we have clarity." As the mass went on, these two children of the Father could not help but steal quick glances at each other; and of course, they ended with a smile. Indeed, the house of worship turned to be a paradise for them. The mass that Wabuatsi had suspected would be boring, turned out to be splendid, or was it just the company of a familiar figure that made it even more interesting?

After the mass, they decided to have a talk. Nnana was in good spirits, and somehow, Wabuatsi suspected that she had a partner to be happy about. But as if picking on his speculation telepathically, she said, "The only thing that I am happy about is seeing you, and not that I am thinking of someone else." In the end, a truce was drawn between them, and they

decided to become friends. As each separated to go their way, it seemed that that happiness remained with them. It was clear that none had the urgency to get into another relationship. Perhaps this should have been their beginning, but instead, it was their end. Could they all end like this, as beautiful as they begin, relationships? That is something only God, Wabuatsi, and Nnana can tell about.

But such information is hard to come by; and besides, as they say, "Dead men tell no tales." Now, you might be reading this, telling yourself that dead men are those in graves. Those bodies lying motionless, just waiting for worms to devour them as they decay. You keep chanting the affirmation, "I am alive", every single day, but deep down, your attention is not aligned with your intention. So, most of us are already dead inside; what other people would call, not the living dead, but, the walking dead. We seem lively, but we are moving closer to drawing our last breath.

Shall the Observer Interrupt Judgment Day?

Conceived on the 16th of October 2021

Seated at the desk, writing my sometimes chronicles, I reminisce how I would have long walks meditating on the creation of this marvellous script called, 'Sometimes'. There were times I would finish my reciting with the words, "If I die to-day know that..." I find myself smiling at the image brought forward from my past. This young man while pocketing, not avoiding the stares of passers-by, would be reciting canticles, while treading different routes at his small village. Fun times they were! Then suddenly from my open kitchen window, I hear shouts of, "Thief! Thief!" (As I translated this, I had to fight the temptation to write it in its original form; which is, my mother tongue) I rush to the window, and I am amazed at the large crowd matching towards the gate.

Just what might the thief have stolen this time? Judging by the size of the crowd making its way to the gate, I surmise that it must be something valuable, and that it must be a huge person doing the stealing. This is just another confirmation that not all evil deeds happen after dark. It was barely 2 PM. Distracted from my creative activity already, I walk to the corridor to have a better view of what would transpire. I thought I could watch it all unravel. And behold, my eyes settle on a beautiful goddess, obviously younger than me, and well-dressed she is. No, this cannot be the thief, she looks too smart for that! Or have I judged her already? And yet here she is looking for a safe place to escape the approaching mob, led by yet another woman. The one who had supposedly been stolen from.

This world has managed to turn a beautiful goddess into

a thief now! Just what is impossible on this earth plane? One is born so pure and perfect, and people come welcoming the new-comer with gifts. It is common that among the guests there will be those that are negatively-oriented, or in other words, sceptics. In their mind they say, "Welcome to the world, now you are all beautiful, looking like an angel, but wait until the world takes you into her hands". One wonders whether they are really sceptics, or just realistic. Maybe they are the most honest of the human kind; those who do not sugar-coat what the reality is. Yet there are, still born into this so negatively-portrayed world, many children, every day. Do they come in to try to change the situation, or go through it as it is? For this goddess, I do not think she came to change the dire situation. In my biased judgement, she only came to experience it.

There was no chance to say that this was just but an attempted robbery. She was caught in the act, was she not? There was no evidence to tie her to the act of theft, but either way, she was in the scene; and she matched the description according to the victim. But does it get easier on the thief if their attempts fail? No, I do not think so. That was my conclusion after observing the approaching crowd. Many will say that, "If you let them go, they will come back, and they will not only rob you, but they will take your life too." "No mercy shall be shown to a thief", some have declared already.

Within a few seconds, I am wondering what made this beautiful girl to take another person's property without permission. And what was the property in question, clothes! Oh, marvellous Creator, do you not clothe us!

Was she planning on selling them, or did she just have a shortage of clothes? Oh my, does a thief draw a plan before, or after taking their contraband? To what extent was this female member of society pushed, to make such a risky choice, to steal? Did she, after weighing the repercussions, decide

that this was a lesser evil compared to other evil acts? Perhaps she compared herself to the government that steals from its citizens. The government that charges you to do anything, maybe only except breathing. In any activity that one decides to partake in, the government will be waiting hands out, expecting you to give what is due. You pay to put up a structure, to repair it, and even to take it down; and there is more that could take a whole novel to narrate. If at all there was such a thing as small sin and bigger sin, then hers would be the smallest. Could she be some Robin hood, taking from a bigger thief, and giving to the less privileged?

But I will let you in on a secret observation of mine. You know, it was always said that the victim of this act of theft was a government official; county government to be specific. Looking at the kind of people he had around him, acting as body guards, it would not take rocket science to know that his influence was wide. Is it not obvious in society, that you only have body guards when you have something valuable to hide, or protect? I mean, look at the commoner who walks on the streets without a care as to who is walking beside him. He has nothing more valuable than his life, and some are ready to give theirs, to be rescued from the torture life has taken them through. No one without money will have body guards.

As a tradition, our government official always treated his bodyguards—some would call them goons on close observation of their behaviour, to some alcoholic drinks every so often; and who knows what else they did while indoors, these guys who always seemed to be charged all the time. They looked ready to give their lives protecting, not only the boss, but his name too. Dear reader, you know, you could get in big trouble if you defame a big man. The consequence would be analogous to that of murdering him. I have seen several times, people shedding tears because their big man's name,

and character was defamed. If one day you come to my home in Nyanza county, you would get the gist of what I mean when I say, my people are loyal to the core.

So on this day, the thief must have done some research to know that the bodyguards were not around, as they had left with their boss. Still, I do not understand, that after putting her life in such a risk, she found nothing of value than clothes. Or was it that everything in the house was enormous in size? It was also whispered, by those who had set foot in the house, that the government official had two huge televisions, and some seats that people had never seen in that town. One of the televisions was still resting in its box, yet to be opened. The guy also had a refrigerator. His next-door neighbour would take her food to be stored in this fridge. I do not know how this was known, but it was also said that he kept cash in his house. If you are following, you will see that the guy was driving attention to himself; and obviously this is how the thief was driven to his home, perhaps just wanting to confirm the rumours. They say that rumours are half-truths, right?

I know some will read this and say, "You will never understand a woman, she goes in, but does not find anything more valuable than mere clothes!" Another one, after thinking for a long time, will come up and say, "You know, maybe this could be bigger than what you are thinking. I am thinking that there was more between this lady, and the government official. Perhaps she was here to take them clothes, and later visit the witch doctor. We might be looking at a twisted love affair, a broken heart maybe? Or she wanted to take the man from his wife, and keep him all to herself." At the mention of this, you will raise your eyebrows, and twitch your ears, as if it was an antenna searching for a signal. But this is not the time to make such assumptions; and besides, we should keep away from gossip—what this generation calls tea, as it has been advised in the scriptures. Indeed, it has been

served to us in plenty, and most of the time, even without us making an order for it.

The thief reaches a point of awakening. Without knowing it, she denies Herself saying, "It is not I, the thief". The words are said as the thief is almost in tears. Her lips are literally trembling. She sees the mob agitated, and heading for her. Almost forty people are heading to where the thief stands. She is already at the balcony, and the only trial at escaping, would be to jump to the ground. Which one would be easier, to jump to death, or wait for death? What would the thief go for? Does she have enough time to think, and make a sound decision? Is any decision even sound at this time? The observer is almost emotional over what is happening. His heart begins to pound on his chest, and by this, he knows that he does not have the stomach to watch all this. Perhaps he is just too sensitive. Things are moving too fast, so he turns and begins walking away from the scene.

The thief is almost facing death. The heart is throbbing, begging to be let out of the chest. The rib cage, that is supposed to protect vital organs, now seems like a real prison grill. The blood vessels thicken. The blood is ready to gush out at the slightest prick. The body is suddenly warm, then hot in a second. Blood is sufficient everywhere, as all the senses now work appropriately, in tandem. She now becomes aware of the body chemistry; knowledge long forgotten, and lost in the secondary school books. She can explain what fear is, and differentiate it from sheer anxiety. She can clearly tell that all her sensory organs are working properly; she needs no third party opinion on this. Why did all this not come so clear before the action — theft?

The body is prepared for death, whether physical, or non-physical it does not matter. The preaching about eternal life is at bay; too far to be fetched, too complex for this fleeting moment. The eyes are now searching. They are reacting to the

impulse, "What pit shall I dive in, what space shall I fit in...?" The famous, "I wish the earth would open, and swallow me right now". The thief seems to lose her mind, as in, being in conversation with herself. Is this not what the medical practitioner would call, 'being delusional, or insane'? But it is a time when sane, and insane mean nothing. Is this the time when one is not the best judge of character? If not, what is the use of all the self-consultation?

Okay, let us leave the thief to know Herself. She needs more than just time. I am just the observer anyway, but I still feel what the thief is facing, even with my back turned. I hope she stops all else, and accepts the situation for what it is; the victim of the theft, has come to judge the act of theft. This is surely the proverbial forty days for the thief. I guess the thief has no need waiting for the much-feared judgement day. But wait, what if this was just her first attempt at theft? Could she have been judged too soon? I mean, practically, she has thirty-nine more days! And how many times do you need to have committed an offense, to qualify for judgement? Is it written anywhere? This must be the microwave generation, right? But my God, things happen so fast!

This is the stage of life, with various plays. Can I come back in time, and jump in the middle of this fracas? Somebody teach me about telekinesis, and teleportation. I could use some super powers right now. What other part can I play in this game that is already set in motion? The sound made by the contact the victim's hands make with the face of the thief, does not escape my ears. Only, I shy away. What to do with all the muscle build up? It seems like all my workouts are of little use here...

The Moon

Conceived on the 25th of October 2021

The moon smiles at me and oh, was that a wink?
I know I have said before,
That these tricks don't work on me,
But my senses seem to have made an exception.
I feel my heart melt, and become fluid.
My eyes are bathed in yellow,
What shall I offer to reciprocate this honour?

I am thy servant, and I bow, ready to serve.
But hey, is this what I have been doing all this while?
Now the moon hides part of her face like a shy girl.
Yet her light pierces through the darkness,
And leaves no room for secrets.
We are discreet, and direct,
There is no room to insinuate either.

You can hear the crickets sing her name in praise.
Who am I not to join in this sacred dance?
The clouds are her clothing.
And sometimes they are too revealing,
And her nakedness is exposed.
But lucky are they who see through her nakedness,
For they know her to the core.

Lucky are they who do not bow down,

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And steal a glance at her,
Observing the serenity of her highness.
Did we not come from her womb?
Now you want to look away,
Feigning some aspect of respect?
Or is it fear, you say?
Trying to be modest, or moral, you say?
You lose this chance just like that?

If you miss to see her reflection in your eye,
Then you have missed the chance,
For how else can you enjoy the night,
Hiding from her seductive stare?
Now the wind blows,
And her gown covers up the light.
Who dare falls down not to the tempest darkness?
Men of light train in darkness, and so does she.

I dare not wave goodbye,
For the winds might just offer my hands to her.
So, I stand guard, and wait for her most certain return.
You know it is a circle right.
They call it waning, and waxing.
You know she is a Libra right?

The one who likes balance, and partnership.
And now she is full of wisdom.
She is witty, persuasive, and enchanting.

Princes of the dark light, and light dark.
She is the influence.

She darkens the night, and lightens the dark.
This is her sanctuary.
How dare you sleep while on duty!
You are in sworn service to her.
She rules over your emotions; don't you know?

The scorpion season is ushered in first with ascension,
Then healing, and abundance.
Finally, with the reverence of one's body,
Or the other body
So, make the body clean before, and after the ritual.
Be consumed with fierce love,
Both for the ritual, and the participants.
Burrry yourself in this exercise.

Close your eyes to all else,
And only see their image in your eyes.
Let them see you in theirs.
What is communion?
I consume the fire that is lit in my heart.
Let the flame burn, let the sparks fly.
Until the fire goes in, and into itself, and burns itself out.
Now the queen calls unto me, she is part of me,
As I am hers.

Who said we are not one?

In revering her, she does the same to me.

In the merger we tremble into oneness, and fusion.

Eventually we separate, and each one desires the other,

As if we did not just come into fusion a moment ago.

So, in yearning separation, the yearning of union is fed,

And the endless desire prevails.

My beloved love, Love!

Take away all the lights, but leave me outside at the emblem of the moon, and the stars, her foot soldiers. While many run away from the moonlight, to tuck themselves in the warm, and fuzzy bedding, I am outside admiring the beauty of this creation. While many run away from the quiet village life, I run in the opposite direction, and spend more time away from the artificial lights.

I fell in love with the night sky, and I cannot in all honesty say when this love began. I feel an everlasting connection with the stars. I once thought, "One cannot say that they know village life, if they have not seen the reflection of the moon in their bath water". This came across my head, when I had a routine of bathing late in the evening.

Was it coincidental that the moon was out, or was I just aligned to the moon cycles? It is said that the moon has some influence on humans, the ocean waves, and even plants. There are plants that are to be eaten, or planted according to phases of the moon. Just what power does the moon have on other entities? I am tempted to go into astrology, but I am reminded that the Universe is a conglomeration of complex energies, that work solely in the support of Man.

One time, I challenged myself not to use electricity in my house. I was doing some fast, and an idea struck me, that I could train my eyes, to get accustomed to the natural lights only; for that period of fasting obviously. I marvelled at this idea, more so because I consider myself a person of strong will, and I love challenges for that matter. I did not therefore pay for the electricity.

I had just recently moved into a new apartment— new on my side, but ideally, the apartments were quite beaten by the sands, and winds, and waters of time, and I thought, “To achieve my goal I am not going to put curtains on any of my windows.” This also meant that I was going to have less privacy, now that my neighbours were going to peep into my house, and probably count my few possessions. The only advantage I had, perhaps, was that I lived on the fourth floor, and people rarely came up there.

Every evening I would eat with the moonlight, and I enjoyed it; although, I had to use the flashlight on my phone in the morning, because it was usually darker in the house. At the end of the month, I had not charged any electrical equipment in my house. New bulbs were still hanging on the ceiling unused. At the end of this experience, I appreciated the natural lighting more.

I was reminded that it was actually possible to use natural lighting. My intuition was telling me that, most of our eye problems are caused by artificial lighting, and not the natural sources of light. At this apartment, I found a ladder, leaning on the roof, that was somehow forgotten. I took advantage of this rare opportunity in my life, and used it get to the roof top, whenever it was not raining.

Up on that roof top with the most beautiful view of the night sky, I talked with my Father, my son, and my intended. I was immersed in looking at the stars, and the clouds, and for some reason, I felt powerful having a bird’s eye view. I

felt free just walking, and seemingly talking to myself on that rooftop. I did this until, one day, I came home to find the ladder missing, and I could not dare to ask anyone about it. It was never my property in the first place. The ladder had served me well though.

My relationship with the night sky has been growing strong, I could say, as I get older. There were times I would spend almost an hour outside, just looking at the sky. Some of my neighbours then, thought that I was studying astronomy. Apart from the moon, I used to observe the star patterns. I noted that no star is ever alone. If one was to look keenly, they could, with the help of a ruler, and a pencil, draw a connecting line from one star, to the next.

At some point, I took it upon myself to sketch these patterns. I was always wondering if astrologers ever found themselves in this curious bubble. In public domain, one of the most noted events is the full moon. People have associated it with a lot of beliefs. There are a lot of rituals that are done during the full moon, and the lunar eclipse. I have been at the brink of temptation to do one, or two rituals during the full moon, but until now, all I do is appreciate its glare.

The moons glare, I feel, penetrates deep into my heart; and because it hits all the corners, I feel like I cannot hide anything from her, and neither can she hide herself from me. Do I sound poetic? I do not have the intention, because this the true interpretation of what transpires when I am staring at the moon. This, of course, requires emotional logic to discern, and maybe not so much of mental logic.

I have spent more time just staring at the stars, and any glistening lights in the night sky, to conclude that we are connected. I mean to say that the whole universe, or rather, creation is connected. There is a way I feel, when I am exposed to the natural light of the sky, and this I cannot fully outlay here. The play of words does not allow me, to stretch it beyond the

limits of our vocabulary.

There are those who have supposedly gone to the moon. I am using the word supposedly, because there are so many holes being pocked in these endeavours. Now, if you were to really take this in your interest, maybe you might ask, just what would make nations put huge amounts of money on space exploration. I may not be in my senior years yet, but I can already feel their need to compete to be on the moon, and some other parts of space.

So, the moon, somehow hanging in space some kilometres away from our planet earth, affects our emotions. How do we not ask how these tides work? On what frequency do our emotions run, for them to be affected by the moon? Whatever findings we emerge with from such questions, let it not erase the fact that the moon is beautiful.

I assume that she is feminine in nature. I have not come across any finding, suggesting that she uses force either to conquer, or acquire. One who holds sway over your emotions, surely is very creative. This is creative intelligence right here! Some people might get excited, and say, beauty and the brains. Maybe she is already influencing what I am writing about her.

There could be so much to say, depending on my personal experience of course, but in the end, I want my children too, to have their own experience. They will freely observe the skies for as long as they can, and I will not do more than just questioning their observation. I believe that they will have more knowledge than this generation has endowed in me; and that is the freedom of making their own judgement, without having names, theories, and explanations forced down their throats.

Oh, and now I am reminded of those little ones that also light up the night, the ones we choose to call, fire flies. They

make no sound, or do they? Their light might not be sufficient, but they also just play a big part in the ecosystem. In my younger years, I would always run around, trying to catch a few fire flies in my hand. Once I succeeded, I would observe it in my closed hand at first, then go into the house where the lights were brighter. The fire flies would always put their lights out, and pretend to be dead. However, when I returned them outside, they would once again turn on their flashing lights, and fly away, as if they did not just pretend to be dead a few minutes earlier. It never made sense to me how they feared artificial light, yet they produced light of their own.

I spent my earlier years in the village, and I served my curiosity by observing what creatures were active in the evening. At first I was scared, and I would only go out in the dark in the company of my elder siblings. With time though, I gained courage, and I was then able to step into the dark night. Even in places that were very quiet during the day, one could hear the distinctive sound of frogs, as soon as the sun began to set. The crickets were always chirping, and once in a while, you could hear the sound of a few birds.

My memory is not short of the days we would actually cook supper outside. I would always look at the moon inquisitively. My elder sister, who has since lived on, then pointing at the moon, would tell us that there were two women also cooking *ugali*, many miles away, on the moon. Before she began stirring the flour, she drew the symbol of the cross, and said, "This is to ensure that the *ugali* cooks well." Back then, I would look at her and think, "My sister must be the most intelligent of beings. She knows, not only about life on earth, but on the moon too!"

There were other stories that were more than intriguing about the moon. As we got older, people made them sound scary, but at least, this allowed for the development of our

imaginative power; and this, in other words, is emotional intelligence, influenced by spiritual growth, and the moon. Any coincidences? One may say that there are no coincidences, but what say you, Man? Are you being acted upon, or you also play a part in all this?

This Fleeting Sight

Conceived on the 6th of November 2021

Standing outside in the calm evening,
I feel warm under the hooded jumper.
I have been here more than once before.
Each time it feels different.

My eyes are locked deep inside those of my eternal lover.
The one that stole my vision, and my heart.
When I am with him, I am moved, and shaken,
The whole body just moves with minimal effort.

They call him the sun, but to me,
He is the beginning of my life.
Now here he comes covered in a golden gown.
The eyes are blessed to capture this marvellous union.
But limited in perception,
They do not capture what I am feeling.
This fleeting sight!

What a sight to relish!
An interruption of this event,
Would painfully break my heart.
I breathe slowly, and look meticulously at the sun.
Is there a better vision than that of the eye?
What more can a camera do,
Other than store the evidence of this event.

But today I do not want to take any evidence,
There is no sense in severing this connection.
There is no time to waste in blocking my vision.
I am in paradise; I have waited for this all day long.
I will not hold back my love,
But this fleeting sight!

I have worked so hard to tune in to this event.
It wasn't easy getting the right setting,
And now look at his beauty,
At this sight, I can feel my heartbeat now racing.
Oh, what a sight to behold, I am jealous of my eyes.

How can they alone quench this desire,
While I am left far back just witnessing,
As they satisfy their ever-growing appetite?
I need to taste what the eyes are enjoying;
I need to keep this moment alive,
But this fleeting sight!

I yearn to feel the way the eyes feel,
When this sacred light bounces on their surface,
And back at the sun, to bring in the reflection.
Oh, look at this voluptuous orange rays.

I feel the effect of this light run deep into my heart.
It touches my heart lightly, and tenderly,

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And I am left wanting more of this.
The massaging effect on my heart weakens my limbs.
I swear, I am not coming out of this sacred moment,
But this fleeting sight!

The trees are swaying by my side,
But today, the sun has stolen my heart.
What more shall I do to enjoy this eternal love?
Does the sun feel the love that I send back to him?

Perhaps the eyes are filtering this love,
And sending just a bit.
Do I pluck my eyes out, and hold them in my hands,
To keep this sight from escaping my attention?
I will give anything for this to be possible,
But this fleeting sight!

Now it is like we are entangled in a mad embrace.
We dance together with force, like once separated,
And now, reunited lovers.
The love is ever so new, ever so fresh!

Who dare steal this moment from me?
I am in love.
I waited for my love, but my heart is pounding,
For I can feel the warmth of his kiss receding.
I am afraid that he is leaving me yet again,
I will not let go of him this time,

But this fleeting sight!

Are we not eternal beings, oh my lovely sun?

Will you leave me to be bitten by the cold,

That takes advantage of your night leave?

Stay with me some more!

Am I not the completing piece to this puzzle?

My eyes are now teary from the stinging effect,

Of looking at the sun for long,

But I vow never to close my eyes.

I will not say my goodbyes,

But oh, this fleeting sight!

Soon I cannot feel the vibrancy of the embrace anymore,

And the goose bumps begin to disappear from my body.

His touch is no more.

Why does he leave me like this! My eyes are now empty;

The life in them has diminished.

My vision is hazy.

The high-density vision now does not matter.

I cannot see him anymore.

Now he disappears,

As if going home to sleep with mother,

How am I so limited, it only felt like a second,

Oh, this fleeting sight!

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Now looking forward, all I can see are the mountains.
They seem to be empty of emotion.
Do they also miss him?
When shall we re-join again?
I want to run after him.

May the wind carry me as high,
And propel me to the feet of the sun.
I want to be with my love once more,
And this time forever in union.
But I am forced to wait,
I close my eyes to keep the tears from flowing.
It has been an hour since I blinked,
This fleeting sight!

In my eyes he remains, though it is but a still image!
Even though he smiles,
I do not feel the resulting emotion.
It is but a sculpture; I do not feel his heartbeat.
Aren't the eyes any more powerful?
Couldn't the eyes restore the sight?
Oh, how powerless I am!
I cannot replay the moment as it is gone,
Gone from my grasp.
How slippery is this moment!

I put my hands on my chest to feel my heart,
The intention is to send healing to the heart centre,

And intend to be patient until our next dance,
With my love, the sun, the birther of light.
The one who rekindles the fire of love within me.
He is the only one that my heart beats to.

The only one I ever wait for at the same time,
Same spot, every single day.
My love never falters, even when he delays sometimes,
And other times fails to even show up.
So, I find myself looking again, and again,
But this fleeting sight!

The sun's warmth always made me feel whole in my younger years. Most of the mornings, I would not miss basking in the sun. It seemed friendlier, as it rose from the eastern horizon. I say friendly, compared to the more serious afternoon glare. I would always sit on the veranda blowing away the steam that came from my mouth. Now, where the steam came from, and how it came about, I could not explain, and I did not waste time trying to figure that out.

At that time, I had no alarm to wake me up in the morning, so my siblings, and sometimes my mother, played that role. Most of the time, it was accompanied by a little scolding, but I was still wetting my bed, no matter the scary stories given by my mother, and elder siblings. Even the teasing did not seem to stop the occurrence.

I have an uncle who, in those days, had a trademark clothing. You would always see him grazing more than a dozen

cows by the roadside, dressed in tattered clothes. One would only see him in different clothes on special occasions like funerals. Well, the funerals out-numbered the weddings; and thinking of it now, I think he mostly made it to funerals, because he needed no invitation to attend. So on those few occasions, he was the one getting peoples' attention.

It was him, nonetheless, who was always contracted in scaring children out of undesired habits. With my bed-wetting habit, I was no exception. Dressed in his usual regalia, he would come at me tongue out, eyes blazing, and say, "Oh, my stomach is rumbling, because I slept hungry last night. I have a great appetite for those who wet their beds, and now look who is here before me. Looks like I am going to enjoy my meal today." At the sight of this uncle of mine, I would run as fast as I could, to wherever my mind saw an escape route. I would run, even if I was in the company of adults. Reason, they never seemed like they were ready to protect me from the adversary.

Many are the times I would cry my voice hoarse, just at the thought of this scary person holding me in his grasp. I was not the only one who was tormented by this uncle, who to us then, was nothing more than a monster. But that young boy is all grown now, into a man with beards. Nowadays when I see him, I cannot stop myself from laughing, as our past experience is replayed in my mind; memories of the frightened kid, who thought that his uncle could have had him for supper.

I even once scared his twins, and they cried holding fast to their father's trousers. Their father was laughing the whole time. Oh, that sonorous laugh! In the village, you can recognise his laugh from a mile away. It is funny how they say, "What goes around comes around." I wonder if my uncle had envisioned having children of his own once. If he saw the vi-

sion of his frightened kids running away from another person, just because they were being tricked into changing their habit. I myself never thought that I would one day witness my uncle's kids, let alone playing tricks on them.

Away from my weird uncle. Now I rarely notice the sunrise, and when I do, most times I want to take the picture, and save it for later. But this later rarely comes, because I am bombarded with many worries. It is this thing we call a camera, that robs the invaluable sight from me, together with the vicissitudes. The camera lies to me that I can save the memory for later; and every time I go back to my phone, I can see the image, but it does not invoke the same emotions I had, when I was witnessing the event.

My phone has many saved images of this nature. The sunset moments are all so many in my phone too. I wonder if I am the only one who takes these images for later. Yet there are other images I have seen of the sunset, and sun rise that look unreal. Some seem to show two suns, and others portray the sun being red. So it is hard to know if you are viewing an edited image, or a real one. With technology nowadays, people get cunning, but cunning is deemed creative; and most times they are tempted to create a sun more beautiful than it actually is, as seen with bare eyes.

But we cannot look at the sun for long, as it would damage our eyes, as science tells us. Yet it is said that it is the sun that produces light. This light that our eyes need in order to perceive images. Without the sun, we would not separate light from dark. We would not tell red from green. And the eyes filter just the right amount of light, thanks to the eye membrane.

Let me go back to these precious moments again. We all have them. When we are enjoying whatever experience that demands our attention, we may be alone, or together with friends, there comes a temptation for most of us to take out

our phones, and take a photo image. One might think that the photograph has a better memory than our brains. Perhaps we do not want to trouble the brain with the remembering, but just in case you are still with me, it may come to you that every time you take a photograph, it is for the sake of showing it to somebody else, your future-self included.

The act of photography, seems to rule out the fact that, our brains are capable of carrying out the memory function. That faculty of remembering seems atrophied. So we could take a hundred pictures of a single event, that compared to the mind, is mere child play, when it comes to storage, and retrieval of memory. When they use the word 'crippled' on those who are abled differently, we forget to observe that most of the population of this generation, are mentally crippled. Considering our lazy attribute of forgetting, which seems to happen intentionally most of the time.

No wonder people are taking pictures of trees, monkeys, birds, and of themselves too. Is it not enough, that we can see a reflection of ourselves on a reflective surface, anymore? We spend more time worrying about saving a certain memory, than enjoying, and encoding experiences in our lives. Yet emotions are more in our natural memory, than the artificial storage devices.

You take a picture, to remind your future self of who you used to be in the past. Someone once conveyed to me the opinion that, we only take images of ourselves because of the outfits we have on, and that if we were all naked, then no one would enjoy taking pictures of themselves. Few have the strength, and the courage to look at their naked bodies, let alone the reflection. Most are embarrassed at what they see. They deny what is right in front of them. Perhaps they feel like they need more privacy in their privacy. I do not know what this would look like, but package that in a whole stylish outfit, and you can then take a thousand pictures. And yet

they say, "A picture is worth a thousand words". So, what now about the one thousand pictures? Quite a story to tell.

And was I not talking about the sun just a moment ago? It seems all this is related. Now that the suns light, and warmth reaches everyone, I wonder how it does not bring us to think of the omnipresence of the power, or the force behind creation. Does it not remind us, that we cannot hide from this creative faculty? If one recognises the sun in their early years, how do they come to forget the kindness shown to them by this same sun. Oh, I have seen the elderly remember the sun; but by then, they do so because their body is delicate, and a mere breeze makes them shiver.

We, having grown under the sun, how does it happen that we forget what is needed of us? We, children of the sun, how do we forsake that connection we made with the Father from a very young age? How then do I forget that I should treat another person right? Do I now claim that I have forgotten that the sun rises at dawn, and that its rays fall upon every creation, regardless? Whether seen or unseen. Whether minute or humongous.

The Father shows love to all without prejudice, and it is assumed that His sons are the same, since it is said that his children are made in his image, and likeness. So how messed up does it get, for one to stop recognising the reflection of his Father, and himself in the other person? I raise my daughter, and have to spend a lot of time watching over her, so that she is not raped by some other person's son.

How does this son of the Father forget, that this is also a daughter of the same Father? Should he not treat her with love, and respect, as the Father does? Is he then pretending to have forgotten the aspirations of the Father, or has he totally forgotten, and therefore lost his way? Will he face himself after this horrendous act?

Will the image of the unloving act not haunt him to do another heinous act? He could do it to another daughter, or just end his life from the unsettling image of himself. Will he even have the strength to face the reflection of his image then? He will see his nakedness, and no, wearing a suit will not preclude him from seeing who he really is. Changing his name will have no effect at all. Even making himself up, instead of creating a cover, will expose the sin (doing without conscious awareness) of his actions.

Shaving his head will certainly not help, because it is the eyes that see, and not the hair. It is his soul's nakedness that is exposed, and cannot be hidden behind the mask of pretence he tries so hard to keep on. Walking only in the dark, after lights out, will not hide the trepidation that is killing his insides. And the more he tries to deny himself the chance to confess, and expiate his guilt, the more he continues to die from the inside. Soon he will not take in the weakest ray of light.

Some of us, while basking, are tempted to take off everything they have on, and just expose their whole body to the warmth of the sun. Is it not the same with us, and our relationship to the truth? Some of us are an open book. There is nothing hidden under their sleeves.

For them, they live like they are born a new every single day. They greet the dawn with joy. For them, they do not carry burdens on their shoulders. It is surely them that are compared to little children. I do not think they are blameless, maybe they do not just hold on to anything other than hope; and the awareness that everything will always be alright.

It is them, who would not worry about changing the already existing technocratic systems on earth. To them, the system is the same, and only the people that are different. They focus on living what is truth for them. It is them, who

see the vanity of talking and talking, without taking comparative action. You will see them smiling, and even laughing, when people complain about life getting tougher by the day. Perhaps, the truth that brings them peace, in these seemingly devastating times, is that, what is happening was started a long time ago. To them, trying to bring immediate change, is like standing in the way of an enormous rolling stone.

Deep down, they understand that it is more important for them to do just what their role is. They understand compassionate action. They understand, above all, that there is a law of balances. That there is order, and disorder in the Universe, and that it is pointless trying to prove otherwise. They also know the absurdity of proving anything they know to somebody else.

But who are they? Have you seen them? Are they of the same genetic code as the rest of us? Us who wake up, and the first thing that comes to mind is, "How will I survive tomorrow?" We wake up, and our line of thought has fast-tracked past the present day, into the next unforeseen event, tomorrow. It is even said that, "Tomorrow never comes", but try telling that to the inhabitants of this planet. Yet this saying originated from one of us.

But this chilled people, do they not see the problems that the rest of us are experiencing? Maybe they close their eyes to it all. Others could see them as insensitive, and because we have different eyes, a few will see them as balanced individuals, who are not moved by the status of external life situation. But think again, because it is these deemed insensitive, that would not steal, destroy, kill or lie.

Maybe at the mention of these people, one must be imagining some white-headed people living in the villages. Maybe that could hold some truth, but not all who live in these busy cities are lost in the headlights. Some are just patiently putting down their fifty-year, or thirty-year plans. Maybe they are

just youthful members of society, whose compass is working right.

They are walking around almost taken to be aloof. They could be confused to not fit in, but maybe they just hold a strong support for their opinion in life. Maybe they are what people keep referring to as, 'the saints'. Yet they do not outwardly look like it. They dress just like anyone of us. They talk just like the rest, but perhaps their lifestyle is a little different.

You will see them not engage in one thing, or the other; and no, they will not drive attention to themselves. If anything, they could be said to be shy. But they are just sensitive, and perhaps the reason is that they feel other people's emotions. They also know what the consequence would be, if they were to drive attention towards themselves. The result, instead of being positive, as one would expect, would be negative.

There are those who might imitate them, and get no result as expected. They would obviously loose hope, then others would start whispering, that those unique figures come from the dark side; and who knows, they could say that a voice had whispered to them. Then those who were to learn, one or two things, would leave without the slightest lesson.

Just how much power does it take to be able to control oneself, and not lose it in the face of the storm that comes crashing, from without to within. It is that storm, that makes one to steal in order to provide for themselves, and their loved ones. That storm, that after wreaking havoc within, manifests on the outside. Then later, we are exactly where we were earlier. Remember, that point where one was unable to look at their reflection?

And the sun will always rise in the east, and you will always feel its warmth, even if you do not see the light. When its warmth gives in to the moon light, you will feel the night

breeze settling in. Your eyes will always want to open, and behold this new day. But do you feel born again? Or you feel like nothing has changed? Did you carry yesterday's burden into this day? No matter the feeling you hold for this day, you will not stop it from coming, and neither will you stop it from ending. You will have to hold a different view of each day, regardless. Someone called it perception.

The Take of Wapegotsa

Conceived on the 9th November 2021

I once had a friend, his name was Wapegotsa. Our friendship was deep-rooted into the tradition, and to our origin, as we came from the same neighbourhood. He was older than me, but we related so well, and fused like a plug and a switch. Never did we fight for a single day. Whenever I was sent to go anywhere, I invited Wapegotsa to be my company.

In every task that I was given, I would always ask for his help, and he was so open-hearted to give it, without asking for anything in return. Of course, we shared ideas as we worked, and hanged out in our special places. This was a true friendship, one without a flaw; one that was blessed, and therefore, without blemish.

Every time I got a brilliant idea, I would immediately run to my friend, Wapegotsa, and share it with him. He would always hold my hand, lead me to a comfortable sitting place, and give all his attention to me. This is where we did all the 'behind the scenes' of my perceived forms of expression. Anything that I wanted to act on, would be tried, and tested at this sacred space.

I loved my friend, and his wisdom made me trust him even more. For this reason, I would readily listen to, and accept his invaluable advice. My friend, Wapegotsa, always had ideas, and examples to support his advice, and opinion. He did not just speak out of whim. Who in the world would fail to act on such advice, that was, in fact, free, coming from a friend that I most adored?

And so, who would not want to be with such a friend? Such times of advice, even felt more powerful, as Wapegotsa took his time. He was always relaxed. This had to be his art, and form of expression! We drowned in these moments, and no, we did not need any saving. When I grew older though, I

was forced to move away from home, and settle in a different town.

Our contact was cut, and I missed my friend dearly, but there was nothing I could do about it. In this new town, I interacted with different people, and I made a few new friends. I noticed that they were distinct from my friend, Wapegotsa, so I treaded carefully as he had advised. However, the more I stayed in this new territory, the more I opened myself to my friends, and unavoidably so, was influenced by them.

The closest to me was Epryose. Whenever I was around her, I felt some freedom that was different from the one I felt around Wapegotsa. Whenever I hanged out with Epryose, she would tell me to utilise my freedom; and after I did, all she asked was, "How do you feel now?" I always felt like I had found the power to look deep within me. That I could bring out a creative version of me, that always felt stifled.

When we started out, I was filled with fear of this powerful version of me. I openly told Epryose that, my old friend, Wapegotsa would not approve of this behaviour, as he was highly critical. When I got the chance to go home, I wasted no time in looking for my friend Wapegotsa. We had to catch up from where we left at, so we wasted no time in resuming our culture. Besides, our time together would be limited.

One fateful day, as I was sitting with Wapegotsa, I began to express myself, and the intention was to do so without fear, or any limit whatsoever. The whole time I expressed myself, I kept looking at Wapegotsa's facial expression. I was thrilled, and full of this expressive energy that was burning through me, and I was certain he was going to love it.

However, in the middle of my presentation, I noticed the change in Wapegotsa's facial expression. It was now filled with worry, and I could read it even in his eyes. I stopped immediately to seek his advice. Wapegotsa cleared his throat, and spoke without a slight show of a hurry.

"My friend, Chiotsu, your behaviour has changed since you left for the city, and even though I have not mentioned it, I was hoping that we would go back to how we were in the good old days. You seem to have forgotten the most important lesson, that I have always taught you. Now I am beginning to wonder what they teach you in that town. Consider what other people are going to say. You have found the gift of expression in you, but the kind of content you are expressing, will not be taken positively by people.

"Who even listens to this kind of expression, and besides, what are they going to think about you?" He paused for a while, as if to let me digest his words, and then before I gave a reply, he continued. "Look at our neighbour, Spowopo. He failed in his first attempt at going against the grain.

"I offered him my free advice, of course, but he declined. Nobody in this society accepted his form of expression. If you continue at this rate, you could be an outcast of society, just like Spowopo. Is that what you want, Chiotsu?" Given this time to think, I began to envisualise my encounter with the guys that I grew up with, and it was true that Spowopo was no longer in the picture. I could not even tell where he had gone to.

Now with my chin cupped in my palms, I digested the information given by Wapegotsa. I thought deeply, and to be honest I had much to lose; and for what, the thrill of expressing myself! It would, very much, look like I was so unappreciative, of the support that I had been given by society. My expression was driving at the idea that I was the black sheep.

It sounded like I was insinuating that I did not feel loved, or cared for. While I was swimming in my own confusion, Wapegotsa was rubbing his hands together, and carefully watching, as if he could read my thoughts. I could tell that he had more information brewing. In my imagination, he looked like a lion ready to pounce on a cornered prey. What an easy

catch it would be! My gut feeling was right; he gave me a glaring shot, then started talking again.

"To be safe, Chiotsu," he said, "it is better for you to act like the others. Keep a low profile", he emphasised. "You do not want to disturb the beehive, as you are surely going to get stung". He asked, "Why should you not just be like others, what does it pay to be different? Well, do you know what sells out there? It is making things look different, but ideally maintaining its nature. It is just the presentation that changes.

"What are people going to say? That your parents never sacrificed enough for you? That they never got you an education?" I interjected, and said, "But I need to tell my story! With each day that passes, I feel it filling my heart, and any slight trigger will cause it to explode. I cannot hold it anymore, and neither can I pretend that I am as decent as my parents. They have their lives to live, and I have mine".

Wapegotsa shook his head and said, "Do you know what people would say about this? You are ruining your reputation for nothing at all, my friend. What expression are you talking about! You are surely dancing with the devil. Are you the first one to ever get expressive, and idealistic? Chiotsu, I have seen many who have tried to go on this cursed path. In the end, they are secluded from others; and it is not the society that shuns them, rather, it is them that are too ashamed of their acts. They suffer alone, and in silence. They cannot even whisper their problems to themselves.

"The voice that they tried to raise, now torments them from the inside, in their heads. They are the walking mad men of the village. What a trap you are falling for, my friend! Please, listen to my counsel". For the first time, I walked away from this sitting, with no trace of appreciation in my whole being. I could not even smell the sweet roses, as all my senses were messed up. I was troubled deeply.

Our meetings grew less frequent, by the day. Whenever

we met it was circumstantial, rather than planned; and even then, I paid less attention on these meetings, as my mind was now comparing Wapegotsa's advice, with that of Epryose. They were on two different worlds, and between the two, I preferred Epryose's world.

Hers was a world of sheer beauty, and resplendent joy. She had made it clear, that one needed not to be brutal, when they were honest, because honesty was just that, honesty. In my honesty I did not have to sugar-coat anything, and neither did I have to compromise for anything. For this reason, I decide to use my form of expression to document our meetings with Wapegotsa, so here they are, I am sure Wapegotsa would not approve.

I was clad in a vest,
 Enjoying the warmth of the sun, and the cool breeze.
 Wapegotsa tells me to cover up my body,
 From the top of the head, to the toe.
 You do not want to expose yourself to the old men.
 Listen to me oh friend, for I am Wapegotsa.

Wapegotsa tells me to look for a belt,
 And fasten it tightly around my waist.
 This is to ensure that I never have to sag.
 You know where you come from,
 Your family is very decent.
 You do not want to be different.
 Trust me dear friend, for I am Wapegotsa.

Wapegotsa tells me,

When you go to a new place,
You must put your principles away.
Humble yourself,
And accept what has been brought before you.
Oh, my dear friend, listen to me,
For I am Wapegotsa.

Wapegotsa tells me,
If you have gone to school, act like it.
You should not do those things,
Not expected from those who have gone to school.
You should, act and behave like you are educated.
Do not just mix with people of all calibres.
Listen to me, for I am Wapegotsa.

Wapegotsa now tells me to follow my tradition.
You must eat chicken in your introduction,
And consequently, the wedding.
If you do not, then it is going to be shameful,
For your family.
Nobody has ever gone against this tradition.
Listen to me oh friend, for I am Wapegotsa.

Wapegotsa sees me walking with a fair lady.
It is of interest that he knows her tribe,
Just by looking at her.
If I were colour sensitive,
I would have said she is light in complexion.

She does not seem to care much,
For her light tongue though.
Most words to her are tongue twisters,
But I love her as she is.

Wapegotso pulls me by the side, and says,
Do not do what you are thinking.
You cannot marry her, and you know why.
Remember what the light-skinned girls are known for.
Besides, I am Wapegotso himself,
Listen to me, oh, friend.

Wapegotso looks at me with surprise.
I am putting the truth passionately on paper.
I am in synch with this vibration.
I am saying that I did not find God in church.
So, I will not just go there,
Unless I get the urge to.

Be cautious, Wapegotso says.
You know this is going to stir a fire.
You would not want to spoil your name now.
Listen to me, oh, friend,
For I am Wapegotso

I am now meditating by the roadside.
I have got my full focus on this exercise.

The intention is to heal the world.
Wapegotsa comes and sits beside me,
I know he has a comment, so I let him.

You cannot be doing this out in the open like this.
You know that people think of this practice as demonic.
You know they think you do not worship God, right?
Listen to me oh friend, for I am Wapegotsa.

I now take hold of the microphone.
I am high on energy, and the coolness is oozing,
From my pineal gland, to my mouth.
It flows down to my throat through the tongue.
Oh my, shall I swallow my tongue too!

At this point I let go fully and say,
Who is willing to twerk for the Lord?
Happy are they who get lost in trying to find it.
And when they finally find the Lord,
They are seen as completely lost, and destroyed,
Almost vegetative.

Wapegotsa covers my mouth with his palms,
And exclaims,
Chioticsu, after all the insight I have shared with you!
It seems you are adamant.
Watch that you do not lose control of yourself.
The tongue is slippery.

56 THE TAKE OF WAPEGOTSA

It may deliver you to the wrath of God.

Besides, people are listening,

And watching your every move.

Dear friend, listen to me,

For I am Wapegotsa.

Wapegotsa's hands are now shaky.

The energy from my throat chakra,

Is too strong for him.

He will not be able to hold on for too long now.

His face is now contracting,

As he is using a lot of muscle power.

Oh, my dear friend, Wapegotsa,

This is not a combat you can win.

First off, stop treating it as a fight.

You need a change of perception, a big one.

But I know too well,

That change herself is your adversary.

When the time comes,

The lightning cannot be suppressed anymore.

Oh, Wapegotsa now listen to me.

Wapegotsa is relentless with his grip.

Sweat is trickling from his face,

And his body now seems to gyrate.

Wapegotsa, do you not know,

That when air comes to be released out of the anus,
Squeezing the anus to keep it from coming out,
Only adds it more pressure.
You cannot hold the anus muscles forever anyway.
The moment you exhale;
The air will come out like thunder.

Wapegotsa the time has come.
Your outer old energy, is no match for this inner energy,
As it is fresh and new, it is not regulated.
I am sure you can feel its power already.
Oh, dear Wapegotsa, listen to me now.

Wapegotsa, while your energy is so predictable,
My inner energy is full of uncertainty.
You may just never know when,
Or where it could strike next.

Wapegotsa, I am fully aware of your treachery.
All this time you have been playing me against myself.
I thought you were smart,
Just because you have seen, and heard a lot.
Wapegotsa holds on to my shirt with a tighter,
Yet, weakening grip.
With a squirming voice, now, he struggles to talk.

Without me, you wouldn't be here.
I have made you what you are today.

58 THE TAKE OF WAPEGOTSA

You will be consumed with all the danger out there.
Have you not learned from Wapegotsa oh, friend?

You are no longer my friend Wapegotsa,
I have now known that all you thrive on is fear.
I am walking away because,
I have made peace with that other part of me.
The one that you made me,
To wage war against all this time.

Through this merger, and forgiveness,
I realised that you have been feeding off my fear.
I now realise that I have the power,
To break away from your chains fully.
I have learned from Wapegotsa, old friend!

Yours was just a puppet show,
And you wanted to maintain the status quo.
I trusted you without a stain of doubt,
But you took advantage of my trust, and innocence.
I was none the wiser.

Wapegotsa, I do not ask, or listen to your advice anymore.
So, I have no place for you in my sacred space.
Even if I did, it would not accommodate you.
You may go now in peace.
I appreciate the lessons that you gave me.
Wapegotsa's grip still does not seem to get any weaker.

He is such a fighter.

Wapegotso this is the end, listen to me old friend.

In the ensuing energy struggle, Wapegotso tore a piece of my shirt, and that is what he still holds on to, even to this very date. He holds on to it as a souvenir, and nothing more, hoping that one day I might go back, and take it. There is nothing left for me to go back to in the past though. Whatever Wapegotso taught me was helpful, but he was meant to remain in that timeline.

In this timeline, I have no need for shirts. So, it is meaningless to repair the torn shirt. I took it off as soon as I parted with Wapegotso, and only kept the vest on. I can now freely walk without worrying about what other people are thinking about me. Do they not have enough of their issues to worry about anyway?

Now I feel the breeze cooling my armpit, I spread my hands, and close my eyes. I am free to fly with the wind. The wind now hugs me so tightly. She is ready to whisk me away to greater heights. Who am I to refuse this request? This is surely what Epryose talked about.

Epryose said that, in the light of expressing myself more, I would even love myself more; and with this love, I would understand others even more. With Epryose's advice, it was never a war that needed to be won, rather, it was about surrender.

That separation with Wapegotso was surely a blessing in disguise; and because of it, I have now seen my power. I have tasted my potential, and I refuse to turn back. Yet I do not need to cling even to Epryose for a sense of security. She was

clear that once I tasted the faintest bit of freedom, I would not even seek advice anymore.

This expression is not about the loss of a friend at all. Anyway, in letting go of one thing, we let in new things. Wapegotsa's insight, although invaluable, is no longer applicable to me. I smell, taste, and bathe in freedom, for this is my newly found friend. You do not want to know the things she has been whispering in my ears.

Maybe I have given away too much already. See you later, my friends. I know some of you are close friends of Wapegotsa. I hope you see him for what he is. When the time is right, my friends. So, this is just the beginning for me, as I celebrate freedom with freedom, and in freedom, through the freedom of expression. This is what I call merger, for we are one. So, she knows me more than Wapegotsa did, and yet she does not say. Wapegotsa was an agent of fear. Freedom is just freedom, but actions speak louder than words, right?

Epryose— Express yourself

Wapegotsa— What are people going to say

Chiotsu— Child of the sun

Spowopo— Spoken word poet

Sound and Silence

Conceived on the 6th of November 2021

Silence is uncomfortable, darkness is unbearable.
Blasting sounds, and flashing lights are so intolerable.
But we are addicted,
So life without them is unimaginable.
Like taking sugar, it is a vice that is now incurable.

If you want to preach to the masses,
Get the speakers blasting.
Your breathing has to be unnatural,
It comes with a wheezing sound.
Form a fist with the right hand,
In the air you must begin the thumping.
Your voice must always be commanding,
Spit the words out loud.

Make a personal revelation,
And the story must be compelling.
Get some water in small bottles,
And pass it out for healing.
Apply it on the fore head;
The sign of the cross will always be assuring.
Get your cousin to make a testimony,
And people will come for the anointing.
Heavy yoke to carry, but they have to see it as a calling.

62 THE TAKE OF WAPEGOTSA

You started alone, and their hearts you won.
You stood alone, and now your church they throng.
You get your energy from the crowd,
Now you are feeling strong.
It's taken long, but you have followers of your own.

Silence is uncomfortable, darkness is unbearable.
Blasting sounds, and flashing lights are so intolerable.
But we are addicted,
So life without them is unimaginable.
Like taking sugar, it is a vice that is now incurable.

Darkness has a way of making you see clearly.
Just imagine, you have been raised in too much light.
From the beginning you had two healthy eyes.
But sadly, you still do things blindly.

Like we are under the spell of some black magic.
To the natural lights we have become allergic.
A pair of spectacles will get you a lot of envy.
Perhaps we treat this grave matter rather lightly.

Like the blind man appreciating light.
Close your eyes and feel the eyeballs rolling.
Against the eyelids they move, forever searching.

Skilled image hunters they are,
Can't bear to come home without a catch.

Places they have been, where only the strongest survive.
They still manage to come back without a scratch.

The image resides no longer in the eyes, but the mind now.
The frames are playing, and the head aligns with the motion.
At the back of your head is where the eyeballs focus.
Can you look past the occiput?

Silence has a way of making you think clearly.
From the beginning, you had two heathy ears.
Your handlers distracted you with jingly tunes.
Now there's too much talk, but you are not listening.
Ear pods hugging on to your ears all the time.
They are competing with them hearing aids.
Say you are all ears,
But you are artificially hard of hearing.

When your lips are not moving,
Your awareness is pulled to the energy flowing,
And in it, you are not afraid to be drowning.

It is when you unclench your fist,
That you become a suitable conduit.
Believe it or not, if you just bite your teeth,
It will always open the circuit.

The deaf and dumb will always appreciate,
The sounds they produce.

64 THE TAKE OF WAPEGOTSA

In their heart, there's a rhythm of those voiceless tunes.
We see them smiling, but do you feel them sing?
What we call silence is music to their ears.
Their voice box is locked,
But in their head thoughts make noise.

Silence is uncomfortable, darkness is unbearable.
Blasting sounds, and flashing lights are so intolerable.
But we are addicted,
So life without them is unimaginable.
Like taking sugar, it is a vice that is now incurable.

If you want to enjoy the night,
Get used to the natural lighting.
You cannot struggle to see when the moon is out shining.
Unplug the electrical gadgets,
And just hear the crickets chirping.
The stars are always travelling,
And the sight is so calming.

If you want them people dancing,
Get the speakers blasting.
Get the vixens made up 'cause the video must be catchy.
Call the engineer 'cause the lights will have to be flashy.
Put the filter off, the language will have to be dirty.

That's a heartbreak song,
But everyone seems to be happy.

Feelings must be numbed; they never stop smiling.
They sing along like the artist wrote their story.
Possessed, or not, they are always led to twerking.

Man, take the earphones off, and turn the volume down.
Must it be so deafening?
Now turn the lights off, and take a deep breath.
It shouldn't be so taxing.

You told yourself that you will never write a song.
But wait, can you hear the cells composing?
These words are amazing; in you they got transformed.
In silence there is rhythm,
Do you hear your knuckles cracking?

Silence is uncomfortable, darkness is unbearable.
Blasting sounds, and flashing lights are so intolerable.
But we are addicted,
So life without them is unimaginable.
Like taking sugar, it is a vice that is now incurable.

Time is fluid, only when you begin to think of the past.
Thirty years of living,
But you can remember it all in a flash.
I see that toddler; his body is covered with mud.
Up the mango tree he goes,
Jumping on the lowest branch.

Down he goes, to him another pleasant activity calls.
I thought I would watch as the play went on and on.
But just a little longer, and he has a family of his own.
He's busy planting a garden,
And the children follow along.

A day is pretty solid,
Considering how long each minute lasts.
Two hours of working,
But the moment is moving like a slug.
And here comes the manager insisting that I am late.
Would I prefer to do overtime, or rather take a cut?
How did I let this happen, my eyes were on the clock?
How did I fail to notice that the hour hand is stuck?

I thought my day had begun but now I start from scratch.
Maybe I should just quit 'cause this is such a waste.
That would give me the time to sit, and meditate.
Whichever choice I go with, my life is still a mess.
Even if I change my mind everything remains the same.
Twelve hours I have been awake,
But this day just never ends.

Sitting cross-legged on the carpet, I put my hands together,
and draw a long breath of fresh air. As my chest moves upwards,
and the air fills my stomach, I immediately become aware of the energy.
Letting the air slowly out through the

nose, makes the body dance in a spiral manner. It is like I am dancing to the wave of this unfathomable energy.

How come I must be very observant, to be aware of this energy. It is like one must take a pause from life; by this I mean, you must withdraw from all the noise around you. There are always separate noises from all corners of your reality, all calling out for your attention. The result is that your senses, and sensory organs are worn out, but they become addicted to these ever-pleasing desires; so we please the desires unconsciously.

The other side of the withdrawal, which is not the same, but would sound the same, and ultimately confusing, is that one must dive deeper into this space of reality full of noise. You dive into much depth, to a level where all the noise now becomes silent.

Sometimes when you maintain silence in the middle of noise, you will become aware of this subtle energy. Have you noticed even once, that there are always instances when all the noise seems to slowly disappear, only to come back again?

Sometimes a little music amid silence, will make you aware of this energy. If the music is slow enough, you may notice your body dancing without much effort from you. What a way to conserve your energy! It is from this practice that I asked myself, what is the beginning of silence, and the end of it; and from where it ends, what is the beginning of sound, and the end of it.

At least each object when hit against the other, produces sound, and after some time, we do not hear the sound again. The reason for this, as it may seem obvious, is that everything vibrates. Sound is what we hear as vibration. What we call silence therefore, is of a much lower vibration. We cannot say that silence is the lack of sound. I like to say that sound comes from silence, and after some time drowns back into silence. It

is like an everlasting loop. They keep feeding into each other.

Silence is something. You cannot say that after the sound is not audible anymore, then there is nothing. This nothingness, is what our ears, and mind perceive as silence. Do we not know that the mind only perceives of what it has been trained to? Therefore, it would not perceive nothing. I do not know if this is in the arena of debate anywhere else, but I am sure physics, and quantum physics would have other theories.

Anyway, I have not found a machine, obviously man-made, that superseded the power of the brain, and the body. It is more like, we just do not know how to attain awareness, that is already present with us. Can one make an object that is smarter than them? However, such are not the thoughts that are crossing my mind, while I am observing my breath in meditation; instead, they come as a result of meditation.

I get to serve my curiosity, and take it as a mental exercise. I could say that I am not at par with knowledge in physics, as I have not gotten professional training on this field. But we all experience physics; whether we are privy to it, or not. I just know, that I am not in a position to publish an acceptable physics paper, so to say. Nonetheless, I will continue to play the mental jargon, and see just how smart the brain is.

As I come out of my meditation, I open my eyes, but maintain my breathing pattern. I feel relaxed, but there is a burning sensation in my left eye. I am not blinking, as my gaze is fixed to whatever is ahead of me. I have a feeling, that I am trying to perceive past the physical objects, and into the void. This is making my eyes to dance. My left eye seems to catch an irritation, and tears begin to flow down my cheeks. I am guided with my body, and facial muscles to close my eyes yet again.

The eyes are not accustomed to being open, and not look-

ing at anything in specific. My vision is too spread out to picture anything, and that is why there is a stinging effect in my left eye, but I still wonder why it is only in my left eye. I am now left with two options; either to close my eyes, and continue with the exercise, or bring my breathing up to the shorter, and faster breath. This decision usually depends on the time that I have available. All this time, I am still aware of the energy now running through my face.

Immediately I begin to breathe faster, I become less aware of the energy. Soon, I am back to the noise of the surrounding environment. My mind goes fishing for everything that it deems fit to offer at my table. But it seems that I have no power to turn down what has been brought to me as offering. Over time, I have learned to accept all that comes, but I choose which ones to focus on. I learned this after having futile battles with the mind; it was the only master then, and obviously, we cannot have two masters fighting for the command of a vessel. I could say that I have become wiser, but to the observer, I have actually lowered my guard, and decided to become even more stupid.

I surrendered. Not by the famous, 'if you cannot beat them join them'. No, I withdrew my seemingly confrontative energy, and decided to observe, as if I were separate from it. Through it all, I knew that it was the nature of the mind, to be restless at times, and sometimes cool. It is unpredictable, and sometimes, it leads one to wonder if it is them that are thinking. I will refrain from giving an answer too obvious, unless you overthink it. Shalom.

Unprecedented Colission

Conceived on the 23rd of October 2021

The sense of smell is the most deceiving.

The most delicious.

It sticks too long, probably like a sore thumb.

It takes time to whiff it off.

Yeah, yeah, another boring literature you think,

And on to the next page you want to flip.

Just like those vicissitudes you'd merrily press skip,

But instead of them going away, they cause lack of sleep.

Fine day it was until evening,

Devil take it, today there is no thanksgiving.

Temptations come, yet it's water that I am sipping.

Thanks to that tradition they chose to call toasting,

They said raise your glass,

No matter what you are drinking.

Yes, I reminisce the sound of glasses clicking.

Careful Mr, you don't want the liquids mixing.

The result would be analogous,

To that which is called spiking.

You should have seen me staring without blinking.

We all choose our preferred way of passing.

For that, every adult administers,
Their choice of poisoning.
Taking alcohol is known for the purpose of weakening.

When taken uncontrollably, they call it using.
On rare occasions it is bought on one's behalf,
And this is now called treating.

Deservedly, the table was filled,
With drinks of her choosing.
All thanks to that act called dedicating,
For a moment all the DJ played, had to be to her liking.
It's her birthday guys, so no hard feelings.
By majority rule, I couldn't help but join the singing.

In no celebratory mood,
But I join the party without knowing,
And she was beautiful so I am not complaining.
Suddenly, I was pulled into the act of dancing.
It was at her behest, but really more of coercing

Soon the effect of alcohol began unravelling.
Barely acquainted, but we began conversing.
Her ears she gave, and said I was enticing,
And I had to prove that I mastered the art of storytelling.

Oblivious to the world,
We were lost in our own indulging.

72 THE TAKE OF WAPEGOTSA

It was getting sweeter,
But the time to leave was fast approaching.
Assuredly in these dim-lit rooms we are apt to fondling.
Without words,
I could see where she thought this was leading.

Hey Mr, keep in mind that she did the act of marrying.
After this both of you will start regretting.
Because what you do will be hard forgiving.
In my being was put to test the art of listening.
Eventually, I decided that this was all but tempting.
As I left, be sure that my heart was throbbing.

When I lay down,
I couldn't stop the frames from playing.
Gone was the feeling of trepidation,
That had held me captive.
So, I smiled all night under the influence of smell,
But it is good that I know what I want.
They say that we breathe in oxygen,
But I must have breathed in her scent.

And now it has filled my lungs.
Now the inbreath, and the outbreath are her instead.
Is this what they call self-balancing?
But how can breath make me rise up, like the sun at dawn?

How can breath make me wobble,

Like a gecko going up tree?
It takes time, but it is energy alright.
How can her breath make me take off my crown,
And bow a couple of times?

How can the vision make the breath move,
Almost to a standstill?
So my hands are hers, and not mine anymore?
I rub my forehead, and I feel the change in texture,
Not of the head, but the fingers.

Was it love at first sight?
But she was drunk, and I sober!
I was conscious, and her almost unconscious!
But her eyes were sleepy, and the lids almost closing,
To give a good night salute.

And mine were timid, and fresh as a tulip.
But the kiss was fine!
Her lips soft, and warm, just about enough.
And then, I put pressure onto her to say,
But you just said that...

Finger on my lip said, no buts Mr.
Before I knew it she was pushing,
Pushing me back to lean on the chair.
No more enticing for me!

The mouth now had to quench a different desire.

This food tastes different.

Who says there is lack?

I am wealthy! So now I am watching from below,
Like a hen protecting its chicks from a far off eagle.

The only difference is that I use two eyes,
While the hen uses one, the other faces down earth.
I did not make it to philosophy class, but, this is life!
While I use two eyes to look her straight in the lazy eyes,
Her focus, and determination seem to supersede my own.

Who is the sober one here?

Who is the passionate one here?

Who is the sexy one here?

Who is the one who seeks control here?

She was right about one thing though,
I seek control of my partner, control in terms of love.
This however is unlike manipulation.
I guess I'll save this for the replay.

Lost in my journeys, I focus on the progress, and I do not want to lose an inch of experience in this. Then suddenly appears an experience that I have been craving, and controlling

at the same time. Wait, did you not hear, that the Scorpio season was fast approaching? My journey has been brought to almost collide with, my closest neighbour, Libra, the balancing force.

I did not see this coming, not even anticipated the collision. Have I not been too careful with my cruising lately? How forgetful have I been though, to assume that accidents happen, even when one is fully aware, and most careful at their tasks. The Libra queen, expects me to express myself, and I know from the word go, that it is not going to be easy on me.

Beside her were her bodyguards. An aware Scorpio never lacks words to say though, and this was not the time to sting my way out of the situation. It is now a game of wits. You know we love a mental exercise, right? "Isn't my moon exalted in Libra?" I asked myself. And in a second the answer came, "Of course, I am a lunar Libra. Well, let's put your expression, and persuasiveness with the passion of a Libra".

They love compassion, don't they? Perhaps that is why the Libra queen asked me to entice her. So, first I tell her that my home is not quite far from hers, as we are related. Of course, this takes her by surprise, as she thinks that I am talking about earthly relations. I am forced to take her off planet earth, and show her our planetary alignments. She is awed now, and asks how much of a Scorpio I am.

So I begin by saying, "I love money, pleasure, and sex." She says, "Tell me some more", of course intrigued by these subjects; I mean, who would not be. "Allow me to treat you like the queen you are." I say, and it got her leaning back with a smile. "Wow", is all she could say. I was of course assuming, that I was now the king of this momentary kingdom, and I would make the most of it.

After a while she drew back, and pulled her bodyguards with her, as if she was consulting them. I was close enough,

but it was as if they were conversing in a language that I could not understand. It was not telepathy though, because if it were, I would have intercepted the conversation. That is a Scorpio specialty.

I held my position knowing that she was convinced, and hoping that she would let me make a peaceful crossing. She then comes back, now more impressed than before. Was it because of me, or the content of the bottle she had sipped a few times as we stood? Perhaps it was the safety, and counsel provided by her company? The happiness was driving her to me though, so I figured that her interest in me had grown.

Well, is this the night, that I do not regret colliding with someone? Indeed, they say that some accidents are meant to happen, and this is more than just a coincidence. Have you heard of synchronicity? The Libra queen leans forward, perhaps too close to my face now, and says, "I have had more collisions and most of them have not been accidents at all. If things were all okay, and all factors remained constant, would you join your planetary alignments with mine; as free and almost reckless in expression as I am?"

Carefully measuring my words, I said, "For me, anything is possible. I have no limits whatsoever." "Would you come, and save me from the collisions, and still take me home; of course if I am not in a position to get home by myself?"

"Yes, you will not remain the same forever, as nothing is ever written in stone." She looked at me straight in my eyes, and asked, "Are you certain?" "I do not mind the collisions as long as you come back home, undisturbed by the experience. Treat your collisions as holy, as if you were participating in a religious ritual," I replied.

In the end, the Libra queen was enticed, and she greeted me. This was a blow to the Scorpio king. The king treats his queen with respect. The king reverses her queen, and it is a conscious ritual. The king now caught by surprise, leans back a

little. He knows the sacredness of this crossing, and while he had said that he is for spontaneity more than a strict setting, this kind of spontaneity was unconscious. The lowest level of the thought-producing faculty.

The queen, in misreading the king, now pulls back, and even though she is still interested, she looks disappointed. Eventually, she releases me from the confines of her crossing, so, I count this as a blessing, and a curse. The bodyguards however, are obviously mad at me for disappointing their queen. Oh, I am sure that at her word, they would have me roughed up.

The blessing that comes has the potentiality to become a curse. The thing that is received should be freely given without clinging. At least I returned the greeting, but I consciously did not want to proceed further than that. For the queen, she does not see the essence, because she is under influence. I count my blessings for this is the thing that I have craved for, talked about, and now I see it disappear before my eyes.

But have you not heard, however, that he who cuts the craving of a pleasure, learns the importance if it? This a noble experience, as in, ultimate mastery. Perhaps I had thrown a chance to the wind; the one that would have led to the practical of all theories. As I get back to my astrological setting, the smell of the queen arrives with me, and clings on to me, almost confusing my cruising.

This is the best I have had for the Scorpio welcoming though. But I have not experienced it in a wake state. I know this is just the beginning. The image of the Libra queen is still stuck to my head. Am I not the ardent teacher of detachment? It seems the teacher has more to learn, for he has become his own student once more. Which other student shall follow the student-teacher? Hello fiercely-loving Scorpio, you chose love and indeed it is the highest, but what can you compare

it to? personally, I do not know, and I am more open to surprises, for I am just an explorer in this realm. So, the adventure goes on. How do you say no, without actually saying no?

Dear Seeker

Conceived on the 22nd of January 2022

Dear Seeker,

Salutations are important, for we are social beings. We like hugging, embracing and shaking hands, and kissing too. Well, all these need a physical meetup, where after, people exchange banalities. And because I cannot afford to do either, because of geographical reasons, allow me to say to you, may this day come to you with blessings!

It is said that everybody has the opportunity to communicate with the Universe. This means that, for every question that one puts forward, there is an answer; and because we are billions of beings, the answer could come in a billion different ways, just for each individual to comprehend. Comprehension, will be dependent upon the degree of openness of the questioner. Perhaps a better example to give, would be the tonne of information currently available to the masses. Some are in print form, and others are in audio, and video format.

Still, some questioners say that they ask, but do not get the answer. Somebody suggested that we should at least focus on an answer, instead of the answer, because it is not a 'one size fits all' kind of situation. It is true that we have an information overload, and sometimes when they say that we are in the information age, I cannot agree more. I could also start sharing my sources of information. I could get students, and teach them about the way to getting the truth. I could produce lectures upon lectures, biased on my understanding of the truth.

However, in my short life on this earth plane, I have seen that examples are easier ways to pass knowledge. It is a wise way to conserve energy, and time. This, while getting one to also discern. So, I will do just that, and give my experience starting the next paragraph.

For this path, I gave up all the plans I had for the future. They were beautiful, and ambitious. I had clung on them, like the baby they were, although yet to be born. I burned, and threw away that map, and instead picked one that had no directions, but a destination. I was going to churn my own way through. What a risk it was!

I painfully let go of my close relationships for this uncertain path. Those that I had known, those that were dear to me. But why? It immediately dawned on me, that I could not bring them with me. It became painfully clear that I could not manage to carry myself, and the weight of others. Not that they were a burden, but they would slow down the process, or I would lose focus altogether.

How about the sweet foods? Oh, my body was addicted to sugar and fat! Yes, the sugars; my system was constantly craving for them. A banana on the table, I had several times frowned upon. A cup of porridge brought me no happiness. I wanted only the deep-fried foods. All the fizzy drinks. And lo, all these I had to leave, because they could not last long enough. They could not feed, and keep the new me!

I left the religion I was born into, to come to this path. Yet I always thought that I would be a religious person. Above everything, I always knew that I would be closer to God. I reminisced on those Sunday mornings, that I carried my notebook, and Bible, without as much a care to who would be watching me. But still, I left this for uncertainty! How do I start knocking on the door that is written unknown, and sidestep that which is known to me?

How did I give away my routine to start afresh? I must say I became a fool. Yes, one who realises that he does not know anything, and accepts that to be his truth. The word truth, changed its meaning, as I started relating with it one on one, and not through an intermediary; and yes, as much as it was not showing externally already, the truth had started healing me.

How do I tell my lover, that we have to end the relationship, because I will not be committed to it? What a foolish thing to say to a girl, that you are beginning to know yourself! This would be weird

enough. As if I was not aware of the number of people, who wanted to be in a relationship. As if I was not aware of the pain I was inflicting in the heart of this young, and gorgeous goddess.

What nonsense! That I am beginning to be honest for the first time? First with myself, and then with other people? How unfortunate it is, that lies begin to become distasteful in my mouth. I am swiftly made aware that lying to the other person, is basically trying so hard to lie to myself; all this without flinching at all!

How do I start becoming so aware of every action, and choice that I make? How did I start telling everyone that I love them, and with the mention of love, my body trembles? I guess this is confirmation that the truth vibrates in us. But this got me in trouble, as I was left justifying why my voice was shaking, while saying those words. I thought I was as honest as I could get, but I was at a loss as to how I could prove my honesty, pure as it was.

In this path I felt love pass through my body like never before. I felt like sharing all this love with everyone around me, because I could not keep it for myself. I wanted to get on a high platform, and share all that I had learned; I mean, what is good news not shared? Just how could I pour in other people's hearts, this ever-increasing love?

So, I gave up most of the physical connections, for the spiritual, and unseen connections. I gave up loud music, and noisy environments for my inner sanctuary. For this path, I gave up proving myself to people, and just focused on what I was getting, from what I was doing.

I gave up the most craved for activity among the youth of my age, sex. You know what this generation believes about sex; most say that they cannot do without it, and here I was, pushing it at the side for a while. I did not know how long it would be. Perhaps time would show that I was a fool, or that I had outstretched my capability to withstand the lack of sex. We call it celibacy.

I gave up titles, and put more focus on the process, and the result of what I was doing. This is where I began to see the importance of

practising what I was preaching. It would not help just taking up a name to feel that I belonged somewhere, I had to know what that box, in the name of title, meant to me. I had to give up just talking, and do more practise.

Yes, this path was scary. I can remember my reluctance to start new things. I remember my heart racing at the thought of taking on what I was unaware of. I was afraid to give everything up, only to lose it all, because I put all my money in one basket. At times I was afraid of having my eyes closed in the dark. Yes, those first attempts at meditation in my room.

To be honest, it seemed like I knew what I was doing, but I knew nothing. It looked like I was commandeering this ship, but on the contrary, this ship was commanding itself. The ship was large, and it seemed like I was the only voyager aboard. It was not even my ship to begin with, but just a tool to get me from one place to the next.

I kept peeping in, getting scared, and going back to my normal life. I was back and forth, in and out, and eventually, I took this to be my new reality. All this at the expense of being viewed as stupid! For this path, I gave up my earthly, material desires. They say that you have to nail them on the cross. So, I did, and watched from a distance. Suddenly, there was not much of a reputation to guard.

Do you know what it means to have no reputation to guard? This means that, I had come to the realisation that there was something greater than fear. On this path, I had seen that there was nothing external, that was different from what I already had within me. I realised that I was the driver of this life; and more importantly, I would not lose anything that was priceless on this path. Yes, the feeling of loss was gone, kaput!

The type of fun on this path is not pleasing, if you are trying to explain it to another. Somebody will stop you midway through and ask, "Now, where is the fun in that?" Fun, in this generation, has to be something that has been approved by the majority. It must have achieved acceptance on social networks. It must have been

viewed, liked, and commented on by as many of your friends, and even strangers, who know nothing about your personal life.

In this path, letting go means something totally different. The interpretation of these words, by the current inhabitants of the world would be, to throw all cares, and have fun. Well, of course, this is associated with dancing vigorously, having as much sex as possible, and other obnoxious activities. Letting go, is taking as much drugs as the body can, or sometimes, cannot take. Maybe until you black out. They say that we will deal with the case later, then the excuse is that, we only live once.

But on this path, I also let go, and by this, I also choose not to worry about tomorrow. I choose a path of bliss, but my state of joy is not infused by drugs. No, this is all natural. Just the mere thought that I am free, fills me with joy. Just the thought of my freedom of expression, and freedom of choice, sets my heart ablaze; and this is what charges me. And I let go, spreading my hands, and closing my eyes, and getting lost in all this radiant energy of life.

Yet on this path, enjoyment has taken a different path altogether. I enjoy more of the outside spaces. I enjoy more of the natural sounds: The birds singing, the wind blowing, the water flowing and gushing. I enjoy looking at the night sky, and even at the sunrise, and sunset. These are priceless. These have only a positive effect on me, and boy do I not smile all the time.

I had to give up going to parties. I left all the groups that I thought I needed. It dawned on me that solitude was more important. Not because I was an introvert, but it gave me enough space to grow, and know myself better. Of course, eventually, I learned that I could not be alone, because in secluding myself, I was getting closer to oneness, unity.

How do I tell my friends, that I left the friendship to show that none of us was dependent on the other? That either of us could make it without the other? And this was not to break the relationship. No, the intention was to strengthen it; to remind each of us that the strength of the group came from within each person. Each part of

the group was important.

In this sense, one person breaking out of the group, was not a reason for another person to break down. None of the group members, would depend on the group for a sense of direction, and belonging. In other words, there was no reason for clinging onto the group anymore, if it did not resonate with either of us. There was no point sticking on, and pleasing others.

When I chose this path, I thought it was a one-time thing, but it soon dawned on me, that I had to choose it every single day. I still had to make different choices, while going through the same circumstances. There was no guarantee that I was not going to find it challenging. People noticed the difference, but they could not put their hands around it.

How do I tell my family that I can put them first and last, and yet it does not mean that I do not love them? In fact, this decision will be made in love. Only, this love will be unconditional, and not that I would be trying to pay love with love. This is the kind of love that takes love where it is missing, and also gives to those who do not.

This is the kind of love that speaks for itself, without me saying a thing; it is through action. When I took this path, I knew that things would be said about me, and that I would be called names. But I chose not to focus on the things that I could not control. This would only send me into an unnecessary depression. I had the choice to choose peace.

So how can I convince you, that this path gives me internal peace? It is more than anything I have ever been given on this earth plane. I feel like I am always in the presence of the spiritual, or metaphysical. I am always helped to manoeuvre. This path is the funniest thing I have experienced in my life so far; one full of freedom and power.

The answer to the above question is simple. For the sake of my internal peace, I will not break my back trying to convince you to do anything. It is better to talk about it, or just create awareness of

the possibilities. I want to spend only the energy that I am meant to, and conserve the rest, because I will need it to tread the rest of the path. So, as you can see, I will always put myself first.

I do not know what is best for you. It will be a waste trying to convince you to do one thing, when your heart is in another. The heart chooses what mostly resonates. As much as my growth was not forced upon me, I cannot force anything upon another. This would be the utmost infringement of free will, and my Soul would torment me if I did this. It is also uncharacteristic of service-to-others; the guiding force for my actions.

Do I willingly go against the path of least resistance, then go into healing later? I think I would crash against myself before I leave this earth plane. Such a huge amount of energy would be spent here, and time too; spent making corrections for going against what resonates. Now, this could be surely invested appropriately!

I have met a few who think that I am being so hard on myself, for abandoning the rituals that I consider unnecessary. I do not disagree, for everyone is free to observe, and give judgement. "Let everyone be the judge of their character," someone once said, and I say the same to you too. You who thinks that my decisions, or actions are radical. In the end, I only see the benefits, and as it is with miracles, I cannot explain further.

The choices I make to leave, or include some rituals in my life, I do all in love. You know, in combat it is necessary to respect the opponent. The opponent is never the enemy; even as you come against each other, you respect each other, and the battle too. Such is my position. I bow to all that cross my path. It does not matter whether we meet for a second, or eternity. All are important.

So, I chose this path, regardless of all the accusations levelled against me. Some have said that I have now joined the devil-worshipping faction, they call it the illuminati. Some have said I that am an atheist. Some generally say that I work with the dark. But I continue to smile. I continue to experience more love for myself. Why? One may ask. Because it was once said that, "Ye shall know them

by their fruits."

A Dance with Death

Conceived on the 19th of October 2021

When she comes with the speed of wind,
I wait with open hands, just to show I know.
One of the few that have met her more than once,
Don't I know this route well enough!
Most of us do not hear her footsteps,
Because our ears are open only to the blasting sounds.

And we dance to the sound of darkness,
Till the moon comes on,
And now the night begins.
She smiles at me because she senses my love.
Her smile is contagious; it makes the love complete.
She whispers into my ear,
About the first encounter that we had,
And off we replay the fresh scripts.

She had waited for me at the table,
But I almost stood her up,
I was shaking on the other side.
When I finally showed up,
I couldn't believe she was the one all along.
Is this the one that smells of blood?
I sat at the table avoiding her big round eyes,
Wondering what my defence would be, pause.

Forgive me, but is there a chance that she is a Leo?
Fire sign ruled by the moon', a thought whispered to me.
Maybe I should stoop and kiss her feet,
This is the time I need suggestions, anyone, my guides?
Am I at the right place?
I asked myself, thinking I was talking slow in my heart,
Oops no secrets here!

She told me that I was in the right place,
How could she have heard my voice?
I reclaimed my courage.
How could she be all this beauty?
Contrary to what I had heard.
Well, you don't know until you know.

Oh! Is that why you delayed to come?
You should have come early, we just missed the dance.
So let us enjoy this time,
Allow me to treat you as the guest you are.
How could I turn this beauty down?
I felt myself relax,
But I couldn't feel my heartbeat anymore,
Was I too relaxed or was I just out?
So this is death herself, pause.

You seem to be loving these visits,
My lady whispers in my ears.

The voice is warm, maybe purer than gold.
This has become a blessing, not as I thought it would,
But who said that once you think, it's real.
I tell the others that it is all pink in here,
I hope you receive them often like this,
How many have come?

She smiles and I see the moons reflection on her teeth,
The artist that I am, I couldn't bring this art to life!
Let's dance till dawn, the music is just getting started,
She says, as she walks briskly to the open space before us.
How do I not have this over there? I ask out loudly,
Knowing there are no secrets between us anymore.

My thoughts, her thoughts, our thoughts,
Now we manifest without a second thought,
Do we need to create twice?
Do we need to think twice?
Do we need to analyse?
No need, pause.

As I told you before,
Those who come with fear receive fear.
Those are they that come once,
And don't even wait to see me.
Fortunately, for you, you haven't seen what that is like,
Are you having doubts for them now?
Tell them not to fear, but would they believe you?

I have seen you try to break a leg for them,
Were you trying to evade this date?

With less words spoken between us now,
We dance to the music,
That plays more in my heart than the ears.
I have never been to any dance ball,
Leave alone a dance class,
But she guides me through.
My limbs follow as if I were a robot,
And she, my controller.
Let no one disturb this moment,
Not even a stray thought.

Soon the thoughts are gone,
And I look at her eyes and see the reflection of the sun,
Now I hear the sound of my heart returning,
I almost go in tears,
But as soon as this feeling comes over me,
She taps my forehead twice; I know what follows next.

I open my eyes startled, why does she leave me like this?
As the moon disappears, so does she with it!
Oh, dear death, nonphysical as you are,
Till fate puts us together again,
And I strain to see the lessons before me once again.

"We, gentlemen are a blessed kind. The Lord loves us, and he finds many ways, to show that He is always ready to forgive us. Today, we have received another sign, that what we have been preaching the right gospel. We have with us, proof, that the efforts we put on earth, investing our faith in Jesus Christ, is not all in vain". The Christian Union chairman paused for a few seconds, looking at his audience.

He had a long face, and a small mouth decorated with a moustache. His beard could not have been bushy, because the boarding master would have plucked them out one by one, with his own hands. But perhaps he was well shaven because of the saying, "Cleanliness, is next to godliness." The trousers he had on, reached at the ankle; just a sign that he was quite tall. The sleeves of his sweater could not have covered his wrists either. Whenever we were in prayer, one would always feel his outstretched hand on their head, and without difficulty, they would know whose hand it was.

He took his time to pronounce his words, and this, as I had learned earlier, helped him to control his stammering trait. As he spoke, he searched our faces as if confirming that we were really getting the message. I had always taken the teaching that, maintaining eye contact, is a good communication skill, so I got mine locked with his. Every time he paused, we nodded, and it seemed like we were punctuating his sentences.

Once in a while you could hear shouts of, "In the name Jesus Christ", or "Amen", or "God is good". These affirmations, were guidance to the Christian Union chairman to take a pause. He paced up and down on the raised platform of the laboratory— we used this room for the Saturday evening service. Massaging a certain pamphlet in his hands, he continued, "In my hand, brothers in Christ, I have a message. It is an article containing a revelation of one our faith, who spent time with Christ Jesus.

“Now, this is obviously good news for us, the followers of Christ, but we are in a difficult position, geographically and spiritually. I do not need to remind us, that we are in a Catholic-sponsored school. That there are slight differences in where our faiths stand. This article, contains some information that would not be taken lightly, if it falls in the hands of the school administration.

“I will share it with you, but you have to be really careful brothers. I have printed four copies of this article, which means that each class will get a copy. This material, strictly remains a property of the Christian Union, and should not be shared with non- members. Once everyone has read it, the copies should be handed back to me. Rejoice in this good news brothers, and may the Lord be with you all.”

As the chairman resumed his seat, members were again in affirmations of their choice. The choir leader then led us in a hymn, and afterwards, we sat in groups discussing the contents of the article. Throughout the week, we were occupied with sharing the revelation contained in the article, and the theme for the consequent Sunday services, was aligned to prayer and fasting.

The revelation was about a girl, originating from South Africa, who had gone into a seven-day fast. They were fasting as a church, but she is the only one who had an intriguing experience. According to the text, on her seventh day of fasting, she passed out as she was praying in her room. When she came to, she was no longer in her room, but in a space that was bright, and peaceful. Beside her she saw Jesus Christ, who told her that she was in heaven, and asked her to request anything of Him. The girl requested to be shown hell, and Jesus Christ agreed.

They travelled from the brightness into a dark space. She asked Jesus where they were, and he confirmed that they were in hell. In this dark space, there were spaces like rooms,

that had occupants. There were people of all ages, and even children too.

Pointing to the room before her, whose occupant was a very young child, she asked Jesus, "What is this young boy doing in hell." Jesus then replied, "This young man was disrespectful to his parents. All he ever cared for, was playing with his toys, and watching cartoons on the television. He did not listen to anything he was told by his parents." In another room she saw a certain musician, whose songs were very popular, so she said to Jesus,

"This lady has sung songs that have made an impact on people for decades. People love her songs, so why is she here too?" In reply He said, "This musician was given the talent to sing, but instead of using it to spread the truth to the people of God, she led them astray."

In another room she noticed a popular religious leader of the Catholic faith. She was astonished, and asked Jesus to tell her why this man, who had served God, was in hell. Jesus said, "This man was given the chance by God to spread the gospel, and therefore lead the people to the light. Instead of doing as he was directed by the Holy spirit, he led people away from the true gospel, and vested authority on himself."

There were so many people, each in their own room, sadness written in their faces. They all looked lonely, and worried. Obviously feeling their pain, she asked Jesus if anything could be done to alleviate their suffering. Jesus explained to her, "Everyone on earth has been given a guide, the Holy Spirit. He is in service to those who are open to his guidance; however, there are consequences to going against that guidance. The consequence for those you see here is judgment. So nothing can be done, other than waiting for judgement day."

Other than there being mentioned a Catholic man of the cloth, this article could not fall in the hands of the school administration, because it disqualified what Catholics were

taught about purgatory. A place where believers would go first, before being directed to either hell, or heaven. If at all this information got leaked, we would all find ourselves in trouble.

Even in those days we thought that our secret was safe, because we had trust amongst ourselves. I mean, who would want to put another brother in harm's way? Also, we did not have phones in school, so the idea of someone taking a screen shot of the article, and sending to the administration, was not possible. After a few weeks however, our chairman and other top officials, were summoned to the administration office. They were grilled for a whole day, then set free.

When we reunited with them, they told us that the school had already learned of the article, although they did not know who the source was. All they knew was that it was in the possession of Christian Union members. The administration, had then directed that the officials confiscate any copies they came across, and the matter be buried. Buried, so that the rest of the school does not hear of it.

The effect of all this, was actually opposite from what the school expected. In a short while the copies disappeared, but the information reached every student. From then on, nothing could be done, and funny enough, it was the Catholic students who were interested in the story. But they were getting somehow fabricated stories from third parties, who for one reason, or the other, wanted to either crush, or give hope to their faith. That was the first time I read of someone coming back to life, other than Jesus and Lazarus from the scriptures.

After that article, the secret hate that always existed between Catholics and protestants was deepened; and while we of the Christian Union spoke highly of the message of hope, and the power of prayer and fasting, in me was engendered a grave fear instead of hope. The thought that I would one day get to answer for my transgressions, and that my position

as a Christian Union leader, would not give me a free pass, tormented me. I feared judgement more than death itself. I always thought I would finish school with honour, but I was caught up in a case that led to my indefinite suspension. I could not believe that however God-fearing I was, I could not get His help through my predicament.

I was also embarrassed, because I was a Christian union official being suspended from school. When I walked out of the school gate, I did not want any of my school mates to set their eyes on me. I feared the fact that my future, was in the process of being altered, and there was nothing I could do about it. It was a difficult time for me, especially mentally, but I finished high school not wanting to associate with any religious group. That part of me died.

After college, my awareness was pulled again to the issue of death. This time though, it was near-death experience (NDE); what others would call, partial death. At the mention of this, anybody would naturally want to brush it aside as fast as possible. "How can one die, and come back to life, is this not only heard of in the case of Jesus and Lazarus?" One might think.

I had not planned to research on this topic, but I was in search for the truth. One thing led to another, and I found myself getting information on near-death experiences. Of course I read them with a pinch of salt, especially because this information age has given space to misinformation. With everyone calling themselves a content creator, it is easy to get yourself consuming inaccurate information. When I kept coming across stories from different sources though, I concluded that what I was getting was true. However, it still worried me, that all I was getting were experiences from people in faraway places. Like the doubting Thomas, I wanted to at least meet up with one of these people; and that only meant that it had to happen in my geographical location, because I

had no plan of moving away.

"Gentleman, I like your work, I would like you to come back tomorrow," the old man was saying as he held my pay for the day in his outstretched hand. For a moment I was held in thought. This old man whom I had only met that morning, had decided that I was trustworthy. I hesitated to take the money, because I was not sure if he was joking, or not. Not that I did not want to take my pay, but the next day's pay as well! That was something new to me. Nowhere had I gone for work, and the employer offered to pay in advance, even if it was a few minutes in advance.

First of all, I measured the amount of work I had done, and compared it to the pay, and to me, this looked like easy money. Yet here was the owner inviting me for the next day's party. I took the money, and cancelled the plans I had made for the next day. This was three years, after I first came across knowledge on near-death experiences.

Earlier that morning, I had woken up to cut down the grass in the compound. I had been busy weeding the crops in the farm lately, and had not gotten the time to handle that task. I had just started slashing, when a friend of mine called on to me over the fence. It was a living fence, and the hedge was not so high, so I could see his face.

"You are up fetching water early, but where did you leave your jerricans?" I asked, since he was coming from the direction of the stream, with nothing in his hands. After giggling as he usually did, he said, "It is not always true, that whoever comes from the stream, must be carrying some water. Anyway, I am actually from across the stream, and there is a job for you, if you are open that is." I looked at the overgrown grass, and then back at my friend. I could always come back to slash in the evening. I agreed to his invitation, and he told me to wait as he went home to get his hoe.

We got into the *shamba*, and picked the lines we would

work on. There was no time to waste, since other people had started before us. We obviously had to catch up with them. By tea break, we had caught up with them, and we then reduced our pace. During the break, people were making fun of the owner for offering just two short cakes, with very dilute milk tea. I had already notified him that I could not consume milk, so he had black tea prepared for me. I offered my short-cakes to whomever felt the need.

At exactly 11:30 AM we had finished our lines, and were given the permission to leave. In the spirit of togetherness, we helped those of us who had not reached the end, then we all left. As I walked home with my friend, we shared our opinion on the old man. "He seems like a person of integrity, and he looks like a good soul." I said. The job that was supposed to last a few days, spilled over into weeks. In the course of the job, the old man and I became fond of each other. I could see how he talked, and treated other people, and I was impressed.

One day, as I was almost finishing up the day's portion, he came and stood next to me. He always had a way of knowing when somebody needed the motivation to finish the remaining portion, especially when it was almost time to leave. He looked at me, and asked, "Gentleman, have you heard of near-death experiences?" I said yes, but in my head I was like, "Here comes another long talk about unconfirmed information." He then asked, "Do you believe in them?" Again, I said yes.

"Gentleman, if indeed you do, then believe that this old man has had a near-death experience in his life," he said. In my head was opened a closed gate, and a voice said, "Finally, I get it from the horse's mouth, but wait until you hear the whole story, and then discern whether it makes sense." "It happened in 1993," he continued. "I was walking home from work one day, following the normal route. I walked past the

market, and crossed the bridge as I had always done. However, a short distance ahead, I met people running to the opposite direction. There was commotion as people started wailing. I tried to ask what was happening, but got no reply. A few women walked passed me saying that Mwamba had died.

"Of course I was surprised that people were mourning my death. So I walked back to the bridge, where people had gathered around the victim of death. When I got there, there was more wailing. I saw my neighbour also crying. I went up to him and told him that I was not dead but alive, but he wouldn't hear me. I tried to talk to other people, but they too could not hear, or see me. Looking over the body that was lying down, I realised that it was me. I lost consciousness, and when I came to, I was in hospital.

"I was told that I had suffered a heart attack, and that it was Dr Quincy's efforts that had saved my life. That vision has never gone away from my mind, and from that day on, I became a different man. I used to say that I knew God, but from that time, I became more loving, and caring towards others. I did not have any fearful thoughts on death, because I knew that when the time came, I would rest assured that all would be well.

"I am a Christian, but I do not discriminate anybody for choosing a different faith than mine. I am actually a chaplain, other than being a retired teacher. In my role, it is important to hear what people think is right for them, rather than telling them what to do..."

The old man had a tendency of talking a lot, but he never offended those around him. He avoided negative talk in his *shamba*, because he believed that the negativity would reflect on the yield, and eventually on the consumers of the food. It seemed that he had chosen to make everything serve the cause of good, as the opportunity presented itself. That said,

I had been given the opportunity to confirm my belief, and the fact that I could make my judgement in observation of the old man's words, and actions, made it easier for me.

One time when we were all alone with him, after we had shared a lot of information, I said, "Old man, I have realised that you are wise, I hope your children get to inherit this wisdom from you". He looked at me frowning, then said, "My children have their own lives to live; their own choices to make. I cannot teach them anything, because they choose what they desire. Sadly, they are all lost in making their idea of life come alive."

I was not a parent then, but I felt his pain. That all he could do was be an example, and anything beyond that was not in his control. We spent many days with the old man, and I marvelled in his peaceful space. The only advice he gave me was to marry as soon as possible, so that my children would not have a hard time growing up. He kept referring to himself as an old man, and I did too, but honestly, there was nothing that was old about him. His energy was young, and his mornings were always full of hope. A positive energy was always oozing from his space.

When we were done weeding he asked me, "Do you think I am going to get good yield from here?" After scanning the *shamba*, I said, pointing to various sections, "The lower section does not look good, but with enough rain they will improve. The middle section looks really healthy, but the upper section will not do so well." He looked at me, then at the field and said, "We have done our part, now leave everything to God. He will take care of everything, you'll see." When the harvest season came, the old man got a bounty harvest. And he still lives...

Am I Not Poetic Enough?

Conceived on the 7th of January 2022

"In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God." A quote from the New Testament of the Bible goes like that. I would not imagine, that there are words that we utter, that were not first conceived in our mind as thought. It is only then, that we choose a form of expression for it. We could utter it out, sing it, or write it.

The choice of expression is always different, depending on one's choice, or one's awareness of their ability to use their gift of expression. The power of expression would also depend on the same awareness. With that, I take it that the first Being ever to express Himself was God. Having conceived a thought, He decided to utter the words. The first person to use the power of thought, with that of speech combined.

I take poetry to be an idea that has been expressed. It does not matter whether it is drawn, sang, recited or spoken, or written. There are energies always dynamically playing with each other, and so, they merge, and create something beautiful to be perceived by our ears, and eyes. The Creator, or God, therefore, was the first poet. This is supported by the fact that, we think that God's creation is not only beautiful, but perfect; and you, Man, are not excluded by the way.

Sometimes, we think that we are not perfect, but has there been a clone that looks better, thinks better, perceives better, and performs better than you, Man? Look at the flowers that bloom at only specific times, supported by seasons that do not come accidentally. Even the leaves that fall to the ground play their role. In reality, there is no waste of any kind. Anything that decays, plays a major role, especially for that which is born to replace it, so to say.

And do we not sometimes get lost in our own thought, trying to analyse the importance, or meaning of this creation, or that creation? Sometimes, we think that the Creator made a certain mistake in creating one, or either creation, and we get lost, looking for a knowing into the secrets of creation. Do you think all this happened by chance? Was it by chance that the Creator made oxygen, or water? We still walk on this earth plane in awe of this creation. We still visit various places, just to see this marvellous creation. It all started out with an idea, and then it was manifested. What do you think, distinguishes poetry, from other forms of expression? I would not know the answer to this question, since I consider all creative expression to be poetic in nature.

Anything that wants to engage your creative mind faculty is poetic, that is how I see it. It is usually brought about by a push, and pull of the concerned energies. Think of this like conception. Two, or more energies have to come together, to create something new; and just like in relationships, there has to be coercion. They have to come to a resonant agreement. In the end, people think it is a work of magic, but there was really a combined effort from the intermingling of energies.

There are different species of animals and plants. There are different sounds made by different animals. Not one creation looks like another. This is authenticity at its best! And what is this if not poetry? Do you sometimes imagine, that the creator has time to set out rules for what qualified to be ugly, or beautiful, poetic or not poetic, boring or interesting? As I sat thinking about poetry, in my unchained thoughts, I witnessed the projection of the following image.

I am on stage performing one of my best crafted pieces. I am moved by the energy of the performance. I am lost in the art, then suddenly, a shoe is thrown at my face. The stench hits me, before

the shoe makes contact with my face. I almost lose my balance, but not because of the shoe; the stench seemed denser than the shoe.

I wonder whether it is the shoe that has been pinching the wearer, or the wearer, the shoe, because they seem to have suffered more damage. "This is not poetry, not the type that we are used to," someone says from the crowd. "You do not use ambiguous words," another one says. They are used to rules and formats for everything. Has poetry lost its spontaneity? I wonder. Why does everything have to look and sound the same?

"He stole my idea," one man screams at the top of his lungs. His flailing hands pointed at me. Even thoughts are monitored for approval now! How do I tell them, that we think, and draw from the Divine mind? How do I say, that creative energy is available to every potential creator? That the one who acts on it, gets the breakthrough before the other?

How do I explain telepathy, that we all are, and that thought forms move freely from mind to mind? Have I not been prolific enough? "Why all the esoteric cloud?" they ask. I then remember that poetry used to be marked with red ticks some time ago, and we would get remarks, for just writing anything that we thought would get us marks.

Our creativity was rotting away in our brains. All that jewel rotting away! We surely settled for less. Now it does not make sense for me to look for approval from anyone anymore. Goodbye gratification! Poetry has evolved too, you know. Just like any poet, I am being as limitless, and boundless in my form of creation. Are you mad that you are not opening your mind to what I am saying?

I suspect that you have come here with your filters on, so that anything I say will have to be assessed, and critically analysed first, before it is accepted. You have already measured your appreciation for this presentation. This you did, even before I came on stage. But I am just giving a story of my experiences, and just because they are unique, it does not mean that they are not true.

Is poetry not supposed to make use of your creative, and critical faculty? You know, this will enrich your perception, but you refuse to take in more than what you know to be true for you. If poems are taught, then it is not okay to strive to grasp the meaning.

How do you expect me to express myself boundlessly, when you are the ones who create the bounds? There is only so much that I can do, that is, for myself. The rest of the work falls on you, dear listener. Times have surely changed; now I defend my models of expression publicly like a dissertation, and the marking is also done with blue ticks nowadays. What has become of poetry!

We have all been gifted in unique ways, at least we can all agree on that. Maybe it is from this point, that we conclude that we are different, but are we? We all emerged from the same source, the Creator's thought, or creativity. There were just different energies at play, and so, the result looked different. This, to me, is a representation of freedom of expression.

Do we need to make rules on what is to be considered poetic, and what is not? I am sure this would lead one to poetically object, with a drawing, a song, or a written word—well, now that there is spoken word. From perfection, we have invented some of our own creations that clearly show imperfection. That is why they are invented, but forgotten as fast as they are accepted. Some do not see the light of day.

Are you any different from God, the Father? How can you be different from your biological parents, your progenitor? Two people cannot create, unless they have so desired to co-create. And look at the way one creation seduces the other, pure artistry! Who then is not gifted? Everyone has some idea going through their mind, and I dare say that,

everyone has a desire to bring this desire to manifestation.

I could have easily said that, we all have the power to create, but it would have been monotonous. Have we all not heard this, or similar words before? Everybody gets that chance to get to a stage in their mind, and proposes an idea of sorts to all the other thoughts. The idea could be challenged, or supported by either side. Have you not had times, when you create a very beautiful experiences in your head, and at that very moment, an opposing force tells you that you cannot afford to bring it all to fruition?

The belief in oneself obviously takes precedence. If you have faltering faith in yourself, and your creating power, then you fail, or you create something mediocre. But wait, is everything that is conspicuous beautiful? Maybe, considering that the definition of beauty is reliant on the outward appearance of things. But please, consider that both creation, and perception start in our minds, and this does not happen minus emotional logic by the way, ask any creator.

So, do I have to create something sophisticated, to be termed poetic? Do I have to come up with something hardly anybody understands, to command their respect? But what would be the use, if they cannot apply it in their lives? And yet, some say that simplicity, is the ultimate sophistication. I believe this statement to be true, basing on my observation of nature, or creation.

Everything seems simple, until we sit down, and employ our critical-analytical gifts, thereby complicating the issue. Man will sit down, and begin tearing things apart to make meaning from each component, and someone said that this is the main ingredient to Man's downfall. Creativity is not viewed critically from mental intelligence; rather, it is from emotional intelligence.

But it is the mental intelligence that actualises it. You create a play in your head, then it must be acted out. You must

choose the best actor for it, choose the best stage, and even the best time for action. Perhaps our body organs are needed to actualise God's poetry too. Someone observed that God does not have hands to pull us up with, so he uses other people to help us.

From the above statement, it seems that God is only an energy, a thought. It could even be poetry itself, depending on other energies to be actualised. Does this mean that we are separating God from His creation? Like I said, creation is the intermingling of resonant energies. The poet, knows the power of his expression more than the audience, but this could also be left to the audience to decide. That is why, sometimes we have judges governing expression expeditions.

Do we not have scientists in various sub-fields studying, and giving their opinion on God's creation? We even say that dinosaurs died out, because nature could no longer support them, but others say that Man killed them all. Do you take the weather as God's poetry?

Has anyone cracked the question of the beginning of creation, and even that of the reason for the creation of Man? Perhaps we will never get that. I have not seen a poet that gets down to tear down his piece into smaller pieces. That is usually left to the audience. We either choose to enjoy, with the emotional faculty, or analyse with the mental faculty.

Who will be the judge for what is poetic, and who decides whether one is a great poet, or not? Do you think our judgement of God's creation has evoked any emotions in Him, positive or negative, if any? Still, we will have poetry from all the various fields of expression, and we will have uniquely presented poems. Will it all be consumed as entertainment, and can all those being entertained also create poems from other poems?

See, that is what happens, since we all draw from the Divine mind. Can anyone copyright, or patent an idea, or a thought? Can they prove that it was restricted to their mind only? Prove that what they are thinking about, no one has ever thought about, or that no one will ever come to think about it? What is poetic, and what is not? This question is not any different from the one that asks: What is creative, and what is not?

What Do I Know?

Conceived on the 11th of January 2021

On the eleventh of January, in the year 2021, I walked to the bus stop. This place already reminded me quite a lot about the university. It was here, that I had boarded a bus back to school, every time I was coming from those long school holidays. Even the short holidays ended up being long, to our excitement, and the long ones became extremely long, and we almost regretted choosing our university. It did not help that the university vision was, “To be the university of choice...”

Campus life was a thrill, but that was almost a year ago. I could not believe that two years had elapsed, since I last set foot on campus. And perhaps the other thing was that I was alone, not entirely alone, but my friends were not there. No one I knew was in the vicinity. I was in the company of strangers, and I did not feel like a comrade anymore. The comrade power in me had dissipated, and the flame was far from lighting again. Perhaps all that was left was a scent of smoke.

I also had no luggage, apart from the clearance form I had neatly tucked in an A4 envelop. I looked a little out of place, and one would have easily mistaken me for a first-year student. I looked for a vehicle to board, because I did not want to spend more time standing outside. In the vehicle, the passengers all minded their business, and I also drifted away to my creative world.

I could not believe that I was finally going to collect my degree certificate. I always knew this day would come. In fact, it should have come earlier, and had only been pushed forward thanks to the lockdown, which was a result of the common global pandemic—COVID-19. I do not mean to sound cynical, but I was happy that there was a delay in collecting of the certificate.

The piece of paper that would validate my degree studies. The paper that was supposed to open the door to career opportunities. The paper that would set me straight into my profession, of course including my practical effort. It is not that I was not proud of the course I had taken; I was just in the realm of questioning reality. All through the journey to school, I kept looking at the vegetation along the road, it was all green as it had always been.

The weather here was always rainy. Even when it failed to rain, the trees managed to convince us that we should have hope. How many times had I taken these trips to and from school? The last time I was on a trip from school was my graduation day. That was a happy experience for me. I thought it was an occasion to mark the end of the four-year programme, but I never knew it would go down as it did in detail.

On that day, it was apparent, that some of us had gotten a way to get their hands on some cash. People had changed. Something out of the school environment had begun changing their lives. They were different, but so was I. The graduation regalia had so tried to make us look the same, but it could not fully cover the clothing beneath. Is this not what systems do though? There was uniqueness in our clothing. I for one had a t-shirt beneath my graduation regalia.

Most of us had suits on, and the shoes told it all. It set bare the contest as to who had gotten their hands deep into the cash. As I walked from the square that day, I remember hurrying to catch up with some of my friends and congratulating them. These are the friends I had seen going out of their way to utilise their talent, at such a time that I thought I did not have a purpose of my own. I respected them for that. I wondered what the world had for us, but at least for them, they had set their foot in, and tested what they were passionate about.

Still thinking about money, the last time I was in school

attending a friend's graduation, I remember going to the cobbler to have my shoes cleaned. It had rained heavily on the night before, and so it was so muddy. I could not be the only one with dirty shoes, so I went to the shoe shiner. Only, he could not get the change after cleaning my shoes. So, I told him that I would pay him back after the graduation session, but I ended up forgetting. So, as I walked past the cobbler's spot on my graduation day, I wished that he would be there, but so much time had passed, and I had forgotten his face. That was a debt on my head...

The driver went off the road, and I got concerned over this. I was no stranger to this road, but the diversion we had taken was new to me. I observed that none of the passengers were complaining, so I maintained my cool. Further along the way, I realised that we had taken a different route, because of the 'Road Safety officers'. These were not the lot to take bribes along the way. If you were on the offence, then there would be less bargaining. So, most drivers chose the easier way, a route unknown to the officers. This, however, had a lot to say about the health of the vehicle we had boarded, and the driver too.

Now look at me, I had not known that the driver would take a different route. Maybe the driver himself had not anticipated the officers. This was how the world was, uncertain. Most times people use their phones a lot when travelling. It is usually a way to distract themselves from the stare, or, a few times, the stench of other passengers (it is public transport ha ha), or to avoid sleeping. I had always used my phone too in the past, but on this trip, the only application that was open throughout, was the notepad.

I had been thinking through a lot of things along the way, and I scribbled them all down. Correction, not all, but at least the ones I could grasp long enough to record. Thoughts are slippery, especially the ones conceiving life-changing ideas.

Imagine how many thoughts go through your mind, even now. You will certainly not be able to count them, because the counting thought will be easily seduced by another thought.

This is how I imagine it in my mind. I am walking through the street with a very attractive lady, but every step I make, I see more attractive ladies, and I cannot stop noticing. If my grip on the lady beside me is not strong enough, I may easily let go of her hand and take another, and most likely take a different turn. Okay, so this is what I recorded on the notepad application:

What do I know? I know nothing apart from my name, my friends and my family, and the date and day of my birth. Of what relevance is trying to know too much? Trying to analyse, and figure it out is fruitless. Do the birds care if we notice them? Does the wind care if we feel it? Does the stomach care if we eat, or not? Does the mind care if we are not paying attention?

What am I creating every now moment? Someone said, "Now that I know that I know, I would like to know the I that sees me, when I say that I know that I know." Look, I do not know what will happen tomorrow, let alone what will happen in the next moment; and neither do I seek to control the outcome.

The beauty of letting go! Who sees it though? Set one free, but out of being abnormal, they struggle, seeing that they are unchained, they run and chain themselves back. They have grown comfortable to the feeling of chains on their hands, and feet. They will surely kill you if you try to unchain them.

You become a threat if you tell them the truth. The truth will set them free, but they are used to a different truth; one that serves their ignorance, and keeps them comfortable in familiar variables. They seem hypnotised, but by who? Who got close enough to do it?

Who is well known to them? Damn right, it must be themselves! Deep within, is a dragon in chains, and because inner reality is outer reality, then that is what is projected on the surface. One

might try to unshackle them from far, but the dragon must set itself free. "To be, or not to be, it can be no other way," is this Einstein, now in my thought? Let us grow together. You ask if I am rich, I say, let us get rich together.

We finally arrived at our destination. The school had not changed much. The compound was big, and the buildings were just there, as in, dead and not able to take account of who came in, and who went out. That was the role of the guards at the gate. I went to my former faculty to greet some of my former lecturers, but unfortunately, they were not around. So, after less than two hours on campus, I was on my way back home with a certificate in hand, the proof of my university education.

Now, my thoughts ran back to when I was sitting home for over a year. Not literally sitting, but I had done more of sitting than I done in those lecture rooms. I had, in fact studied, on my own volition, more than all the assignments I had done in the computer laboratory, the library, and my room combined. What did all this mean? I had been auditing my life, and this was the reason why I had pushed back on collecting my degree.

Like someone taking a break from a relationship, I had taken a break from my life. "Wait, that is not possible, only the dead take a break from their lives," your mind observes. But I had gone through death myself. Whether it was physical, or metaphysical can be left to debate. I was only then trying to make meaning of my university life. Four years invested into studies, making friends, and having fun, maybe not the so expensive fun.

Money had been invested into my education; a lot of money. And while on campus, I had thought of the brilliant ideas I had about repaying all those who had sponsored my education, and life in general. I had a meal thanks to someone. I was able to shower with soap, because someone made sure. Uuh, for the parties, I found my own way, just like any other student does. What happens in Rome, stays in Rome.

I was grateful by all means. It even felt unfair, that I seemed so disrespectful of all those who saw my potential. How were they all able to invest in me, and here I was putting my life on halt! Now, picking this degree meant good. It was a sign that I was a step closer to getting a job. I mean, compared to one who had no certificate, I was better off. Compared to one who had practical experience however, I was behind on that interview line.

My certificate was in my hands! I should have been celebrating, but I was not. One year of sending job applications had consumed my energy. That was just to add to the fact that, I was not as passionate about the course I had studied, as I was back then on campus. I was no longer committed to spend long hours developing applications, or even customising them. For that reason, I had done away with all the development tools on my computer.

Every time I closed my eyes to view my future, I did not see myself in the technology field. All I saw was this guy being in service to an energy. All I felt was love being the intermediary between me, and the next person. I knew I wanted to share what I had discovered. This new Self wanted to teach. This new Self wanted to move from one place to another, impacting the lives of others. But still, I had no name for it.

Therefore, I was still confused over celebrating my certificate. How long should I take, to have a change of heart over what I really love? Did I even have a choice? It seemed like I

had put my life on hold, but I had unknowingly made a choice all the same. I had chosen service, but did not fully know it. But I felt it in me. I could not outright lie that I was enthusiastic about a career in technology.

Perhaps a job would provide an opportunity for me to break through. Maybe then, I would see things clearly. I had unsuccessfully tried to apply for voluntary positions, thinking that those would provide me an opportunity, to satisfy my desire to offer service. There was a difference now; I had a certificate, but would it lead me to my passion? Would it get me a job? More importantly, was I proud of the achievement?

Not seeing any major changes, I was thrown again into the job application space. Soon enough I got a job. Not by my own effort, but someone else's. A breakthrough indeed! The certificate had also proven useful, but networks preceded the papers. In this new job, I was going to offer service too, but was it the service I had envisioned? Time, the healer and true predictor, was going to tell. It was her duty to. Round one, my certificate had been number two on influence. Not so bad, huh!

Chained Expensively and Enslaved Freely

Conceived on the 22nd of January 2020

Necks are nothing more than hangers for them chains.
Yet our ancestors in them were obviously in pain.
In hands, feet, waist, and wrist they were used to restrain.
So it is surprising to see human kind wearing them again.

We all grow too comfortable in our chains.
Paint them in gold, and make them look expensive.
But chains are just chains.
Flossing with gold chains, huh!
I got bronze, she got silver.

Darling look I got you a necklace,
And look she can't hide the smile on her face.
Out she goes feeling like an empress,
At times forgetting that it's life that is priceless.

And now she will go looking for matching bracelets.
Lost in thought, but her fingers know what to caress.
Try convincing her,
That these things are all but worthless.
She has a dream of winning a beauty contest.

Necks are nothing more than hangers for them chains.

Yet our ancestors in them were obviously in pain.
In hands, feet, waist, and wrist they were used to restrain.
So it is surprising to see human kind wearing them again.

Lord, wash my ears.
They say it's beautiful when it glitters.
Then again, not all that glitters is gold?
Is that why the alternative is silver, brass, and bronze?

All that rusting, does it mean the chain is old?
Why are you frowning, don't they say old is gold?
And this one with the cross, is it really close to God?
When you are massaging it I see you look rather bold.

Wash my eyes, Lord.
Tear earth they must to mine the gold.
Our feelings are numbed truth be told.
No, wait, the truth is said but ears we fold.
Unaware of her value, maybe we need a dowsing rod.

But tell me,
Do you remember Michael performing that song?
It's not easy to forget, the title is Earth Song.
It engenders a magnitude of emotion,
Every time we sing along.
Oh, I forget that we forget, so let's just move along.

Necks are nothing more than hangers for them chains.

Yet our ancestors in them were obviously in pain.
In hands, feet, waist, and wrist they were used to restrain.
So it is surprising to see human kind wearing them again.

You know I am a brand, so the chains I must have on.
I do not like to hide, so I'd rather show how much I own.
Just a clearer picture to show you where I belong.
Critics will say that to them I am nothing but a clown.
But let's face it, it's not a vice to feel so proud.

The cheapest of them cost just under ten pounds.
Yeah, I have insured them just to show I am not a fraud.
The cost of insurance, obviously I can't say out loud.
But I would tell if only you were my true friend.

I only do this to show the extent of my freedom.
If I could, I'd put it on the billboard.
Don't be afraid to exercise your freedom.
If you are feeling lost, it's something you can count on.

Wait, you realise you are chained right?
I will set you free, even without financial might.
Are you crazy, these are very expensive chains?
Do you know the value of gold?
Who put the value on gold? I do not know.

Necks are nothing more than hangers for them chains.
Yet our ancestors in them were obviously in pain.

In hands, feet, waist, and wrist they were used to restrain.
So it is surprising to see human kind wearing them again.

The jewellery stores are full of all types of chains. Most of them are those worn on the neck. Some are worn on the waist, the wrist, and others on the legs. Some are real gold, and others are just smelted. We have some of them being fake as well, and for this reason, we need people qualified to check whether the jewels are of the right quality, or not. We call them appraisers.

In the streets, we meet people wearing all sorts of jewels. Those with gold are given more respect, because then, it only means that they have a lot of money. I have worn a necklace once, and no, it was not gold or silver. I would not know what it was made of, but I did it for the sake of love. My partner and I had decided to buy matching necklaces. It had a heart carved at the centre. The heart was halfway split, so that my lover had the other half.

Whenever I wore it, I would go and check if my partner had won hers too. So much pressure for nothing, right? After I lost the necklace, it never came to my mind to look for another one. It seemed like something that would weigh me down. To date, I still think that all these chains people wear, would weigh me down if I wore them on my neck, and are they not cold, those chains?

At one point, I stopped and wondered why we like wearing these chains so much. I was taken back to the time our ancestors were slaves. There were all sorts of chains used to restrain them. Some were on their necks, and others on their

feet. All the chains meant then, was that they had no freedom to do a lot of things, among them, walk away and go wherever they wished, and at whatever time they pleased.

Those chains were not all gold or silver, but I know they were strong enough to ensure the restrained never broke loose. Whenever I think back to this slavery, I am filled with a surge of emotion. To think that our ancestors were taken to new places, and not allowed to come back to their roots! They were not even given the chance to say what was in their hearts; and the chains reminded them of their nightmares every day.

So, now whenever I see these chains being worn, I ask whether this are to be as an eternal reminder of what our ancestors went through. But I doubt that this is the case. You can tell from the emotional state of the wearers. They are usually happy, and I think proud of the load on their neck, waist, wrist, and legs. These chains, to me, have a metaphysical meaning to them.

Every time I see people in chains, whether in gold or silver, I am reminded of our unawareness of our freedom of choice. Unawareness of our purpose. We are lost in ritual, doing things unaware of how far their effects reach; and the major difference between now, and the colonial times is that now people voluntarily buy, and wear the chains. Imagine, in the colonial times, if one was told to pick a chain of their liking. This would be depressing, there is no joking about that. But what has changed? Can someone tell me how, and when, the emotion on chains changed, from a negative, to a positive one. How did the feeling of being chained, change from one that was frowned upon, to one that is now envied?

Evidently, the majority in chains are the celebrities, especially musicians. Do we now use it as an identifier? But we envy, and think highly of celebrities: To the point of thinking that what they do is right, and what we do is therefore wrong.

We look up to them to set the trend for fashion. Indeed, old is fashion, but who would have thought, that something that evoked negative emotions not a long time from now, would be adored now?

Do we have some sort of memory loss, or have we just forgiven, and moved on? Are we willing to carry all this history with us? Perhaps it is for this reason that the fight for freedom keeps morphing. Is it because we have kept it alive in us? Here we are, still showing everyone that we have not embraced our freedom. At least that is what it seems to me, and this is what we will teach the next generation.

Who would be willing to leave their chains to another, especially if they are gold chains? No one. In other words, we were given freedom, but are afraid to embrace it, so to say. The slave was set free, but keeps running back to slavery. It is comfortable to be in chains than to be free. Does anyone take offence in what I am saying? I only mean to point out my observation, which is true.

We even have our names written on our chains, to mean that we are nailed on the cross for as long as we live. Would it really matter if it were real gold, or fake? Would it matter if it were gold, or silver? Would anyone deep in sleep, be happy if you startled them from sleep, especially if they were dreaming? They would surely be mad at you.

We are in a dream, and quite comfortable in it. We are in chains, and comfortable in them. Is there any difference in these two things? From where I sit, they look the same. Who would want to give up their ice cream in exchange for a carrot? Who would be willing to give up their chocolate, and instead accept a plate of beans for a romantic gift? Who would give up their life now, for a better one in the future?

If I wear a chain to show that I am not ready to set myself free, and some people adore me, it only means that they too are asleep, as I am. If I steal a chain from you, you will chase

me to death. Yet I would think that it would add any value to my life. I stole it because I thought that it had added value to your life. What really adds value to life though? Can we add anything more to this life? Something more than the Creator has already thought up?

Of course, the things we buy end up enslaving us. Is it easy for us to be enslaved to people, or things? The thought of control also nurses our ego. Anyway, that gold chain, expensive as it is, has become your master. You fear losing it. You cannot share it with another. It has not improved the value of your life, yet you will keep it safe; away from the reach of a thief. You are a slave. You are literally chained. You are chained expensively, and enslaved freely.

And are we not literally chained? Chained to this life we cannot escape. Sometimes we do not like it, but we cannot swap it with another. Really? No, that is not true. We can change parts of our lives that we do not feel resonates anymore. Maybe we are chained, in the sense that we have to live. We already found ourselves here right, so let us live.

Sorry for digressing. We are chained to the systems that we found here; to the point that sometimes we think that we cannot break away from them. We find solace in these systems, and even look down upon those who are not chained in the same systems as we are. It is said that there are those who chain themselves to religion with a gold chain, while others with silver chains. Alan Wats says that it is the one who unchains himself from the wheel that is better off.

The reason for them being better off, is that they have tested the nature of being chained, and of being unchained. In that sense, they understand both situations. Therefore, they have no fear at all of either being chained, or unchained. We have all comfortably chained ourselves to our beliefs, and like babies who do not know what they would do without their parents, we do not know what we would do without our

beliefs.

We feel safe in them, and would not swap them for another. Does this sound familiar? Would I be willing to lose my identity? How would I start taking up a new identity? How do I assimilate something that I do not know? How does a drug addict unchain himself from the only pleasure he knows to be a safe zone; paradise, so to say? How do they face a reality different from their own, alien?

What do you believe in? What I tell you will not matter. What you read about, or hear from someone else will not matter either. From chains to beliefs, you must be telling yourself that we are in two different worlds. Believe it or not, everything is usually a metaphor for a metaphysical force, or to put it in another way, in everything there is a metaphor. One who has walked away from a belief system once, can easily question the importance of their belief.

"I want to wake up the same time every day, take the same meal, go to work, take another meal..." This is just an example of what order would sound like. Most of us have chained ourselves to order, so much so that when we have chaos, we are broken, thinking that we have lost all our investments. What then shall we call our own? That which we get from chaos, or that which we see in order?

There are systems of religion, education, medication, and many more that are deemed to be airtight for many generations to come. For that, they are trusted. They say, "If you want to survive, you go with the tried and tested systems. It is stupid to go against the grain." Every species wants to pass the test of evolution. What is a better choice than chaining yourself to those millennia-old systems?

It is a tempting offer. Would you want to know why other systems are looked down upon? Or better yet, would you like to unchain yourself from them all? There surely is a competi-

tion between systems, and you are not the one reaping the rewards. You are just living, thinking that you are safe. The words, 'unchain yourself', would remind me of setting oneself free, which goes hand in hand with, 'the truth will set you free'.

There are legacies that we strive to build and leave. We want to leave that to the next generation. What if something happens, and what you have worked so hard to build is destroyed? Is your faith resting on something else outside of you, or within you?

Dear Ghost Writer

Conceived on the 22nd of July 2021

An alien entity has taken over my thoughts, and I have been put on the side lines. It thinks, and imagines beautiful ideas. Still, I am the one to act the ideas out. My mouth has to sing the songs, and my hands have to write them out. I am not sure if I should bring the ideas out. I have separated myself from these thoughts, as I believe they could ruin my reputation.

How do I take a pen, and strike out on paper, these alien thoughts? These thoughts want to show that I am proud, but I am the humblest Soul. These thoughts want to show that I am aggressive, but I am not. This is insubordination! Should I not be the one in control? I think I will lead this vessel just fine. We should lay low, and protect our dignity.

I will leave no loophole for this entity to usurp my control. I will not be led to ruin, so here is what we are going to do. But please, before I lay out my plan, this is only between me and you, not the alien entity. I plan to build a fortress. A wall high enough to protect myself from the alien entity. High enough not to give one the temptation to try climbing it. Within these walls, my power will reign, and nothing that goes on in these walls, will be leaked out.

Nothing will be sneaked out, and nothing will be shared with external entities, lest we risk being put on the same scale of measurement with the rest. Ground rules are as follows: To maintain security and privacy, we shall not share our thought. Soldiers will be posted on guard at different points. They will arrest any thoughts, thought to be trying to sneak out by order of the alien.

Only those aligned thoughts will be rewarded. Creativity shall by default be unmeasured, and in the end, we only serve one master, me. You do not stand up to question anything

before passing through me. Above all, follow my authority to the latter. We will perform only behind the curtain. Leave the others to face the judges. Leave them to face the people, but we can do no more than watch. No voices shall be raised higher than the one in command, silence. No light shall shine more than the one in command, darkness.

No stage shall be performed on other than the one within our confines. No papers shall be signed, and no names shall be made to the public. This is our place in society. There are voices to be heard, but certainly not yours, not unless you are reporting to the authority.

I hear a cry for democracy. I hear them cry for freedom of expression. Some are saying that they should be left to their own devices. That they are ready to suffer the consequences of their actions. They will not blame the authority for any resultant action. That they are growing tired of selling themselves short. That their efforts are not appreciated. But is this not democracy I give here? I allow you all to express yourselves, but I am the one who allows what goes out.

The thoughts were tired of this tyrant rule. What was thought to be freedom was seen to be slavery. The slave thoughts decided to free themselves. They were the ones empowering the authority. Secret meetings were held at great risk. A letter from the alien entity found its way to the table, and with such exhilaration, the leader of the meeting read it out.

Dear ghost writer,

I can see you hiding behind the curtain. Afraid of the light you are. Yet your inner light reaches us. You are an empath; you feel the energy of the crowd, and you know that you are going to be overwhelmed, so you take the pen instead, and grab a book. These are the only things that understand you, the only friends that you

ever connect with. With them you blend nicely, you fuse your energies, and create something that people love.

Time passes by when you, and your team are at work. Pictures are painted in your head, and images flash like frames. You are the one to interpret them into words that we, the readers, and the listeners, can understand. The love that you put into your writing reaches deep into our hearts, and there we need no further interpretation. It is like we see through your eyes, and hear through your ears. This is love; this is creation. How simple can it get? How complicated can we make it?

Every time you think of getting on that stage, you stop to imagine how people would react to your presence, your voice. In this vision, the crowd is silent. The paper held in your hands is shaking, because of your shaky hands. Your palms are sweaty, and your voice is shaky too. Your knees feel wobbly, and you wonder if you are loud enough. At this thought, your vision becomes hazy, and you misread the words. You shake your head to get these thoughts out of your head. How messy could it get? You did not let the vision get to the end. The whole vision was taken over with fear. Is this what they call stage fright?

You let the fear shape the vision. You did not take it into consideration, that you could create the vision to go as per your liking. This is the same fear that makes you to hide behind the curtain. You let other people take credit for your work. You are thinking that the crowd, has already chosen who they want to hear from. You assume that they have chosen their favourite star.

But guess what, you will never know what the crowd wants, until you try. There is a difference between assuming, and imagining and doing it. Whatever is meant for you will always be yours. Do all the writing, and know that you deserve to go out to the people, and perform your works. You are a creator; you can create your work to the last stage. If the result of the presentation is fame, then you also deserve that. Your energy would have put you in that position.

If otherwise, you get to be jeered and booed, then that is not your fault. Maybe the strategy was wrong, or the audience was just not ready for your energy. It is them that will have to adjust to reach where you are. Not you stooping backwards. You continue to work, for even those who heckle get to learn something. They continue to see the difference between you, and other presenters. They see the uniqueness.

However loud they may shout you down, you would have achieved your purpose; to deliver the message. You could not force the food right into their throats. Whether they take the food, or not, should not worry you. The food, once delivered, will always be available, and there will come a time when they will be hungry. Others will just prefer a different variety of food, other than the food that you have presented, and that is also okay. It is their free will to choose. Thank you.

It is always hard to let go, I understand why. It is because we love big. Because it is an energy imprint. It is made in love. Feel it, it is like tearing part of you. It is always there, really can't go away. If you are ghost writer, your energy is unmistakable. If they do not get to know your name, they will feel your energy, and it will never depart from them.

Tears were daring to flow from the reader's eyes. With every drop of tears, his voice was raised higher, and became firmer. He had started reading with a slight ounce of doubt, but at the end, he was confident. The murmurs that were at the beginning of the meeting, were now toned down. It cannot be called pin-drop silence, as one would have thought that they were in a void.

The members looked in the, now warm, space before them. They could once again see, not only the full spectrum, but also, the source of all light. The voice of the reader

seemed, not to come from his mouth, but more from the heart; and the words did not disappear, no, they played along in the space before them. They turned to look at each other, and witnessed what they could not before. They could communicate to each other, even without using words.

They had that freedom all along. They could see the light in each other's eyes. Some were flickering, and others were steady. The reader, without uttering anymore words, sat down. He was vibrating as if charged with new energy. He felt like breaking into a song, but he looked at everybody's face, and sat to digest what was going on within.

Their hearts seemed to be beating at a uniform rate, and no fear could be sensed from the members gathered in this meeting. There was a conscious decision that day: The wall was to be taken down. Everybody else knew what their role was. No one would be needed to do anything for somebody. No one would speak for the other. What one felt, the others felt too. What one saw, the others also saw.

Contrary to the chaos that the authority had predicted would happen, there was much peace instead. There was interdependence, each seeing the strength of the other, each appreciating the other. When the wall finally came down, their powers were even heightened. A song was heard from one direction, and the voice was pure.

I am free, I am free; free as a kite.

Unbridled as the wind.

Courageous as the ocean tides,

I rise above the ground.

I shine with brilliance like the sun.

Where the rays don't reach, my heat is felt.

My light I reflect like the moon.

Brave as a cat I land on my feet.

Creative as I am I don't seek to please.

Time passes without notice inventing this piece.

You can see it through my actions, I don't need to speak.

Happy feet doing the action I'm running in the streets

Lucky fingers on my guitar I'm plucking on the strings,

Clapping hands and stamping feet the baby mama sings,

Fluid bones and hot blood, the lean body swings,

Eyes closed and ears open, I don't miss a thing.

Their bodies were gyrating with joy. Their legs could not hold it anymore. The members started running in every direction. The hands could not just be by their side, so they were raised, flailing above the head; and yet, there was order, and not unrest. And the reader at last sat on the grass, and took the pen and paper. Pen, he had crafted himself. Paper, he had designed himself. And he wrote:

Soldiers, colonels, commanders, regiments have a stage: The battlefield. Teachers, lecturers, students also have a stage: The academic circles. Boxers have a boxing arena, and footballers have the stadium. Lost is he who thinks that he has no stage to perform his acts, and Shakespeare said that, 'Life is a play, and the whole world is a stage.'

This life could be a book, unpublished. At the top of each page, one could only find the words 'chapter'. With that, we could then

begin to write every chapter as we see fit. For us to fill the page, we have to come up with a plot, and for the plot, we would need a character. So yes, you could be the director, and the producer of your story.

Because you are the creator of this story, you will make adjustments as you proceed. We could take victory with the completion of every chapter, or wait until we finish all the chapters. Just how playful, or creative can one be with this setup? Could one allow another to tell their story better than themselves? Could one be a better actor for another person's role?

What now must I do to be the best actor for this role. How can I produce the best? I could assume the magician's role, and create wondrous acts. I could be an alchemist, and be secretive about my endeavours. I create the variables of my actions, therefore, I will create flexibility, and limits where it seems appropriate.

Behold, I wild the pen in my hand. Like the magical wand, it concentrates my energy to whatever my focus is directed at, and my imagination is painted on these clean sheets of paper. Words cannot write themselves; it is only by my power. The pen cannot hold itself upright, it is only by the power of my hands, and from the seat of creativity, my ideas flow through the hands.

Filled with joy, I pause for a minute, and admire my creation. So, these beautiful things have come alive. I have brought forth great works sought out for millennia. For eons, words have danced to the strike of the synapse in the brain, and the words have been used differently. Aspiration, and motions make the difference from one wordsmith to another.

So, this is my stage. Someone could act out what I write, and someone else could draw what I have written. Yet another could break out in song, then it becomes a stage, within a stage, within a stage. The ink never dries out, and the energy never depletes from my hands. What is the worth of this creativity? Shall I base it on the emotional energy, or the time spent?

Who is the audience of this performance? Do I present it to myself, or the other self? And what of the grand Creator, architect of the world stage, does He marvel at my creative art? I may dedicate my life to making Him happy; and because he is present everywhere, I sing to the birds, I recite for the wind, and dance with the stars. And all the words dance in the space before my eyes, before they cement themselves on paper.

It is only I who can erase what I have written. Only I who can open, and close this book, and the Creator is just a witness. He watches closely, at what I am doing, but never interferes. He has given me free will; the freedom to act as I see fit. The aspiration, love, is beside me, and because of her, others will read, and understand my story.

It is her that empowers the emotional energy that flows through me. This is what brings meaning to what I write, say, and sing. Unseen to the naked eye, unless we are talking about the third eye, information is first read through the heart of individuals. Chapter after chapter I continue to write. Volume after volume I continue to publish. Let all this be printed in our hearts and minds.

Dear Man

Dear Man,

Greetings to your bright thoughts. I presume that not all of us are having a good day. I was taught that it is a good gesture to know one's well-being, before getting down to the business at hand. I am aware that the larger population is not doing okay. If they were, more than one percent would be wealthy, right? And not a small percentage of people would be feeding the whole world.

I suppose we are not okay, and perhaps we are not going to be. Should I have started with the good news first? No, I prefer to state out the problem first, or rather, the fact without fabrication. People generally believe that getting an education is the ticket to escaping 'the poverty trap', as it is called. We absentmindedly, sometimes, say that education is the key, but even the wealthiest educate their kind. What should the poor ones do, if the rich themselves strives to move further away from poverty?

And are we somehow going to blame them for being wealthy, as if that would alleviate world poverty rates. At school, the children are taught the same curriculum. Are there secrets to being wealthy that one family keeps from the other? Maybe, maybe not. Perhaps the problem is that we are striving to be among the wealthiest. Competition at its best.

Is it everybody's dream to be wealthy, and rule the world's economy? And why would one block the other from their dream anyway? Do we all not deserve to live, and fulfil our dreams? If we consider this using a pyramid, we will have a few people at the top, and most will be at the bottom. The latter are the ones struggling to survive.

They are the ones who struggle to educate their children, to pay their bills, to get decent medication, and even a decent meal. There are people whose dinner table is characterised with business chatter, while others eat silently while their thoughts are loud, as they are worried about what they would do, to get above the poverty line. Two people on the same planet, but in two different worlds.

Somebody worries about adding more cars in their garage, while another person is worrying about getting a day's meal. One child would be worried about what to wear, and another will be worried about passing an examination. One person will be worried about the cost of sugar, and not necessarily start cutting on the intake. Okay, did I hit a nerve, jokes aside. Another person will be worried about their weight, and not cut down on their food intake anyway. We all have unique problems which require unique solutions. At least that is what is said when they separately want our vote, but when it is required unanimously, they say, "We have a common problem." They will even use idioms to capture your attention. A speech will begin with the words, "The elephant in the room is..."

We are still talking about problems, as if there is no positive thing to celebrate in life. One question: Do we all need to be at the top of all this? If you manage to answer that question, then the next would be, can we all be at the top? Thus far, I can say that all our problems are self-inflicted. Does it sound fair? No, it does not, but it is a truth that will painfully cut through our hearts.

We will all deny it, and be ready to point fingers at the top one percent. They are the ones to blame, right? Let us imagine that they create, and fund research institutes, maybe create disease, invent cures, and build hospitals and pharmacies as the point of seeking medical services. Perhaps this is true, but if it is, then we have enabled it. We have created the need for all these things to be created.

The above-mentioned things can only exist if one thinks that there is a problem to be solved—a friend of mine who happens to be an engineer, recently told me that engineers create solutions. He was however adamant to accept that we are the creators of the problems. We necessitate their profession—engineers. What is the niche? We have all forgotten how to treat ourselves, and we do not pay attention to our bodily needs that much. There are those who are aware of this knowledge though. They know that people are too lazy to remember what they know, and because a vacuum exists, they decide to create a solution. Meanwhile, the rest of the people

wait for the solution, and surrender their lives to the minority, who now seem to them as saviours. Soon, we find that those services are not affordable, because they require a lot of resources to accomplish.

We are also not able to educate our own children. We cannot think of a set up where they would get knowledge. I repeat again, we think that we cannot manage to pass knowledge to our children. Passing knowledge to our children, of all the things! Someone sees the opportunity, and sets up a system of education. Soon, we find out that the same company of people that provided us with the health services, provide us with education.

Sooner or later, education becomes expensive, because they are trying to provide the service to everybody. Everybody else who has thought themselves to be lazy at thought; too lazy to pass knowledge to the next generation, our bloodline. Then we cry that we cannot afford education, but we are soon made to accept that we have no choice, but to toil and pay up for education, as some have suffered in the face of ignorance.

Ah, the card of democracy is dangled before us, and we are tricked that we can change the education system. So we do attempt to change, just so it becomes bearable, but soon, we realise that the older system just morphs into a new one. We are unable to remove mental cramming activity, and replace it with inculcation. But why do we expect an education system to impart knowledge to our children? Is that not too much to ask of it?

And look at the parents, their situation is pathetic. They do not have much to do anymore in their natural role to inculcate knowledge into their children. Of course they are occupied every so often, looking for a means to pay for this education system, and they are paid a pittance for that. And even before they clear the school fees, the government, with a smiling face, would be stretching its hands, asking for one form, or another of its dues; call it tax or whatever.

We settle in with the fact that the same company of people, build

libraries, and fund the publishing of books. Subsequently, they decide what to be taught to society, and what not. What can be accessed by society, and what cannot. Consequently, a certain percentage of people will end up in the different professions made available.

As we are still grappling with all this, a bone is thrown in our mouths. It is the reward for toiling, and sweating after paying school fees, buying books, and sitting exams. They call it a job. We jump into the reward with enthusiasm. Suddenly, we are offered a chance to be impactful in our professions, and earn a little bit to pay bills. Some of us even invest, and begin to become wealthy themselves, but not as wealthy as the top one percent.

Soon, we sadly realise that we must stick in these jobs. We do not own the businesses, and if we manage to start businesses, we need funding from another source, a company of people. It becomes increasingly painful to quit your job, because adverse consequences will follow. You will soon be unable to pay rent, purchase food, and pay school fees. The only option remaining, is working until you can save enough to survive before you quit. The other choice, which is not a choice anyway, as it is almost naturalised, is, work to retirement.

Our work environment is controlled just like the schools. We have rules of engagement. You will be paid for what you contribute, or less sometimes. You answer to a boss, who answers to another boss, and so on; and at the very top, the boss answers to the top one percent, who made rules on how to do business, and the same who own banks.

For those who become inventors, they turn to those who can fund them, and their eyes settle on the same company of people. They are the ones wealthy enough to give the funding. In the end, you realise that they hold sway on the product and its distribution. Without funding, the invention collapses. The world now rides on money, in fact, they say it revolves around those who control money.

In society we are given seeds to plant, insecticides to spray, and

fertilisers too. Again, we find ourselves in the leadership of the same company of people. At this step, they also fund research on anything pertaining agriculture. Some have even patented seeds. Hallo, is anybody following?

Someone is patenting seeds! Do we all not see plants growing by themselves in the forest, dropping fruits containing seeds, and seeds giving birth to new plants? It is natural cycle.

We are suddenly unable to collect seeds from nature, and plant them back in the soil. We are made to rely on the seeds in the shops. We are made to believe that they are the best; but these are seeds that are manipulated. We are taught best practises of agriculture. Please tell me once more that grafting is okay. Why does it sound so artificial? Please say again that insecticides, and fertiliser affect the soil adversely, and they affect the atmosphere negatively too. But please do tell, do you see the same thing applying here, dear Man? We have again become lazy at thought, and allowed other people to do the thinking for us.

The cost of seed, the cost of fertiliser, and the cost of pesticides eventually affects the cost of food; and just before we forget, when we get sick from all this fertiliser and pesticide, we will go to the hospital where the same people owning the seed, own our medication. Your health is totally in the hands of somebody else. One could conclude that you do not take care of yourself. What do we call an adult being, who is taken care of by another adult? Would useless be precise?

In the houses we live in, we pay rent or mortgage, and both of these could take a lifetime to pay. In the city, we live on other people's buildings. In case of a disaster, we depend on aid, which is mostly foreign aid. We are clearly unable to take care of ourselves. When the whole rescue operation is over, and you have received medication, you still go back to the storey buildings. The sad fact is that we cannot afford to stay in the best places.

I could bring in many other things, but it will always take us to the same conclusion, that we are not entirely in control of our own

lives. We are comfortable in our position, many of us that is. We are comfortable paying other people to provide solutions for us. And where did our problems, or the problem originate? I saw somewhere, someone had given meaning to each letter that make up the word problem. Allow me to share it here. Predictors, Reminders, Opportunities, Blessings, Lessons, Everywhere, Messages, Solvable. Think about it.

There are questions that I would like to ask, and perhaps you could answer this for yourselves. Firstly, is it all necessary? Is education necessary? Must we all go to schools to be educated? Are there other sources of knowledge, other than the laid out programmes of education, or what we call the curriculum? Do we all desire to be taken through the same filter?

Even if they say that education is free, are we free to choose it, or otherwise choose alternate programmes of seeking knowledge? Are other programmes available? Are they talked about, and promoted as much? I know you know that there is informal education. You received some of this before you went to school, or even as you still attended the formal education system.

Depending on how old you are, and where you are, you must have spent time with your parents, and your grandparents for the purpose of informal education. The amount, and nature of this form of passing knowledge, has been changing over time. For some, it is not even available anymore, as priority has been placed on the formal system in school.

Is it a must to go through the system? I do not think it is a need, but the authorities have made it a must by law. What problem is this a solution to? Parents are no longer able to educate their children. They are bombarded by the daily struggle of going to work to provide for the family. It has become a subject of choice, whether you will stay with your children to educate them, or you will go to work, and look for money to pay another person to educate them.

Is the family not the basic unit of organisation? If the family does

not have freedom from that set up, are they going to have any freedom from that point onwards? We have forgotten, or rather, neglected our role to pass information to the younger generation. This is the problem. Or to put it clearly, we are the problem. Individually, then consequently as a community, because one man fails to do it, then the whole community fails.

It is a fact that a lot of information, or knowledge, now I am reminded that information does not necessarily lead to wisdom, has been forgotten; so much so that the current education system, has been ordained to be the only correct one, so to say. It has been made to look clean as a whistle, and has been validated. It has been portrayed to make sense, more than the other one, which scarcely makes a case for itself.

It can barely afford a voice to be heard. The voiceless do not go as far as winning debates. How have we suddenly forgotten all the information from our predecessors? Why are we shy of possessing this information, in the face of all the other systems of education? We are afraid of not being considered modern. Or is it that no platform will be given to those not commanding modern education?

We cannot afford to give birth to unconventional knowledge; this is unconventional medicine and agriculture. Knowledge really cuts across all the fields. Behold, the generation whose life we had sworn to make better, is already here with us. They have set their eyes on us, and poor us, we do not have anything to offer them, to supposedly give them a better life. We look at them, and then rest our gaze on the system. Meaning, we hand them over to the neatly-set system.

We are at the mercy of a few people supposedly with the craft of agriculture. Now planting has been tied to business as if they are twins. We have prioritised commercial farming over subsistence farming. No wonder we find farmers also depending on government subsidy. Can we not get education from nature? Are we so poor as observers?

Has intuition failed us this much? Did the Creator suddenly

abandon us, to the detriment of our tools of destruction? But there is knowledge within us all, knowledge surpassing all the systems of education combined. There is a pattern that is contained within us all, the secret of creation. It is the same pattern that we see in nature. Every seed, no matter how small or big, contains this pattern.

We are not short of any knowledge, but we have simply given up, or gotten tired of paying attention. It is said that we are in a deep state of sleep. That even though our eyes are open, we do not see. Even though our ears are open, we do not hear. And going against the system, is surely associated with fear. You risk getting the rewards of the system. What you get instead is a punishment for being too smart.

We only believe in education in the four walls of a classroom, or a lecture room. Is it so impossible to teach ourselves, and then, our children? Is it so impossible to ensure that children have the knowledge of nature, just before they are pushed out to go into the care of the system? An expensive system at that. How much could it cost, to teach your children information passed down to you, from your ancestors?

It could cost time. Sadly, this time is what we do not seem to have. We would rather be spending this time looking for money. We believe that we must have money to educate our children with, and by so doing, we are passing that system to the younger generation. What would you lose if you stopped, and thought about all this? What would it cost you, if you stopped, and observed nature around you?

Do we have time to make changes? I am a strong believer in change, so as much as it is uncomfortable, we have to take the chance. Let us be sincere in creating a better future for our younger generation. If we are honest with ourselves, we would recognise that the next generation cannot be helped, without us helping ourselves first. Man cannot rescue another from a problem, that he himself is stuck in.

We have to look deep within, and ask what our worth is. Are we

so helpless that we depend on others to educate us? According to the design of the creator, do we not qualify to contain this knowledge? I am talking about general knowledge. Every creation contains knowledge about all creation, and we are not left out of this group. How is it, that a tree has information dating back to the existence of the first tree, yet we have no information about our origin?

Who teaches bees to make honey? There have been many generations of bees. Yet I see no school for bees. I see no school for fish to swim. Who teaches an artist to draw? Nobody can be taught to do anything. They are just taught a technique, and most of these are through suggestions, which to me, sound like more of a reminder. Like something we once knew, but have only forgotten.

We are not any lesser than the shamans who understand nature, and know how to heal their ailments. Perhaps our main problem is mass production. We want to produce more for many people, which ultimately has an issue with the quality. We have shifted our focus to quantity, and of course, our eyes are on the monetary reward. Or is the problem a few people trying to solve the problem of everybody else?

So, I have information to pass across, but I want to be rewarded for it. So, I will charge for it, and I will give it in bits. I will also hide some that I feel only serve my best interest. It is easier to control people, and things when only a few are aware of the details. When power is given to a handful of people, it is easier for them to misuse the power. Power in the hands of the majority is not easy to misuse.

If everybody realised that they have tremendous knowledge within, they would not surrender the role of education to only a select few. We would not rely on other people to dress us, feed us, or employ us. This feeling of helplessness is pathetic, and this is what the kids observe, even though they are unable to tell us straight up. Maybe they do not say it, because they see themselves going down the same road.

Who will save us? Wrong question. The right question is, when

are you going to save yourself from this disease called dependency? We must have all heard a bunch of motivational speeches. It all becomes boring when all you get is motivation right, left, and centre. Perhaps each motivational speaker, is just trying to share the message that they are passionate about, and the message is that, if they could open their eyes and see, so can you.

But do you believe it? Do you believe in yourself? Do you believe that you contain the seed of creation? Do you believe that there are things that you do not need to survive? A hundred years from now, our towns, and even villages, will be filled with more schools, more hospitals, more factories. I do not know how you are looking at all this, but I think it is more of a sign that we still have not found the pattern of creation.

It means that we have not prioritised personal advancement over external, artificial advancement. So, in a hundred years, if the status remains as it is, with all the factors remaining constant, we would have in fact moved backwards in step. We would have become lazier at thought. We would still be looking for advanced solutions, because the problem would have advanced. And who is the problem, you.

Why do you need a better car than the one you had yesterday? You have advanced. You have created the need for that advanced car. We will invent advanced technology, because we have advanced the magnitude of the problem, and thereby complicated our life more. This to me, would suggest that we have moved further from our purpose. We would have moved away from the much simpler life that the Creator intended for us.

Are we choosing not to share information with the younger generation, because we think that they are not able to handle it? Do we treat children as those who are incapable of making sense of what we know? So, we only give them information in bits, and we talk about them when they are present, but pretend not to notice their presence?

Maybe the questions will never end. Perhaps all creation began

with a question born out of curiosity, Perhaps the Creator wanted to know how it would be, if he manifested himself in everything, in every inch of space. What would it be like to lose his personality, and assume the nature of everything. What would it be, to be thought itself? How can I think myself into being?

Are we not curious of how this all began? Are we all not willing to say, stop, wait a minute, how did it all happen? How did I find myself standing amid all this creation? How am I comfortably walking amongst all these creations, without them bringing me any harm? How does the rain serve me? How does the soil provide food for me?

Now, did you have a chance to be curious in your early years, or you had somebody thinking of themselves qualified to tell you how everything began? Children can perceive what they are seeing. Their brains are untainted, and pure. Why do we not allow them to wonder at the amazing creation? Why do we bring them up first with toys, and cartoons? Why do we rush them to the hospitals, and think we are not capable of finding cure for their ailments? Let us genuinely make it better for the next generation. The fact though, is that change begins with you.

Perhaps you think that I have left you with more questions than answers, but honestly, it is not in my place to give you answers. You can do that better than I can. You can search your Soul, something that I cannot do on your behalf. You can initiate change, something I cannot initiate for you. You can decide, something that I cannot do for you. Perhaps the furthest I can go, is show you this power that you possess. But still, you will have to feel it.

So, do you think that this day is subject to you, or you are subject to it? Do you think that you contain the answers, or they are kept far away from you by a select few? Do you think the Creator has chosen someone to teach you, while you take notes? Personally, I do not think so. It would be boring just taking notes all the time, and saving the action for others. Do you think that you are subject to creation, or creation is subject to you? Do you think you need it,

that thing you have got your focus trained on? Will it be your slave, or it will become your master? Do you think you owe God anything at all? Don't look at me in spite, dear Man. I am in this together with you; it is our mess, but I will do my part. The question is, will you do yours?

A Walk in Space

Conceived on the 18th of November 2021

This is a walk in space.

So, I walk in like Jesus,

Do what I came for, and be on my way.

Bless the road that brought me.

Bless the dust that settles on the platform I sit on,

And on the path I tread, and stand.

Bless the wind that has supported me on my way.

Bless the trees that gave me the shed,

And shelter by the roadside.

May the particles bless me as we collide.

Our collision enables me to fulfil my purpose,

And theirs too.

It is a symbiotic relationship.

May the insects fan my body,

And the butterflies colour my way.

They have ensured that I enjoy this walk.

I am blessed, and I count my blessings,

Even if I do not name them.

May my feet be blessed by the mother energy,

That keeps me grounded to the temple of Pachamama.

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I feel her love flowing from the energy point,
At the sole of my feet, up the body,
Through my spine, and to the top of my head.
She has got me dancing to the sound of her heartbeat.
I am blessed.

May the wind sing my name,
And negate the need to introduce myself everywhere I go.
Her voice reaches far and wide.
Her voice is not mistaken with another.
The wind has saved my breath.
I have not met a greater singer than her!

May the showers of the rain cleanse the air that I breathe.
The rain falls on the ground,
And cleanses the dust from the air.
The rain cleanses negativity from us, and from mother.
The rain massages my body.
I am blessed.

May the sun shine upon my body.
His rays warm my body, and my heart.
My cells vibrate and I begin to be active,
And creative.
I no longer shield my eyes from him,
He is gracious and merciful.

I wake up and smile with the sun,

For the good day that follows.
What need have I for sunscreen?
What need have I to run for shade?
What need have I for shower,
I bathe in his rays. And no,
I will not need a towel to dry myself.

My breath realigns my path,
So I have no need for a compass.
The eyes follow the breath,
And so does the mind.

Am never absent minded,
And never lose focus.
Even with the eyes closed,
I can never lose my way.
I still find my feet on track.

My hands hold the pen of life steadily.
With each strike I create a new scene.
My hands feel the texture of the wind.
I spread my hands, and give myself to her.

May my hands guide me even with my eyes closed,
To where the source of energy lives.
May my hands give more than they receive.
May my hands touch deep into another's heart.
May my hands feed not only my mouth,

But other people's too.

May my hands create a space of love; a garden.
My hands tend the garden that feeds my son.
I pull another up because my hands are strong.
I shake hands to connect with another.

Running around the field of grass, my legs carry me.
Jumping as high, on my way down, my legs support me,
The weight of my body is never too heavy,
For my legs to carry.
May my legs run fast so I may race with the wind.
May my legs help me in planting seeds.
May my legs be strong enough to climb on trees.

May the moon smile upon my path,
So that I do not stumble.
May all that lurks in the dark be illumined.
The moon brings my dark side alive.
The moon helps me to unmask demons.
She bounces off my bathing water in the trough.

I can see my shadows at night,
What need have I for electricity?
She guides my diets,
What need have I for a nutritionist?

The moon guides my planting,

I need no meteorologist.
The moon will bring the ocean waves to me,
I will not chase the waters blindly.
I am blessed.

Most of us would say that they like surprises. I suspect that we like it, only when we are the ones surprising others, and not when we are on the receiving end. Nobody likes it when they are sneaked up on. Life itself has the element of surprise. There are two sides of the coin: The known, and the unknown. We feel comfortable in the known, and very uncomfortable in the unknown.

Nobody sits just waiting for a surprise, we like it when everything is orderly. We certainly like a routine. We want to wake up at the same time, and have foods that we are familiar with for breakfast, lunch, and supper. We want to hang around our friends, and all those familiar to us. A stranger in the room causes disorder, because we do not know them.

There is a friend of mine that I am very fond of. I pass by their home even when he is not around. Most times, I walk into the compound without a prior phone call. I like it when I do this, but more because of their reaction. The same thing happens when I am leaving, especially when I am coming to town from the village.

The second coming of Jesus Christ, is much waited upon by the Christian faith, but the Christ is quoted to have said that, He Himself is not aware of when it will happen; in other words, it is going to be a surprise to Him too. Nevertheless, the Christian faith teaches that Jesus will come back to take

the righteous, as in, those who have been faithful to the Christian tradition.

We are told to be ready for this second coming, but how can one be ready for a surprise? Can one be so resilient, that nothing catches them by surprise? And how About accidents? Nobody ever knows how serious an accident could be, not even how they would react in the face of it, because it is not something that someone sits, and expects to happen.

Yet there are those who like change. There are those resilient enough, to make it to the other side of the tunnel through trying times, but others are crushed as soon as the chaos begin. So, what does this mean? Can we train ourselves to be resilient? It is evident that we cannot be in control of the events in our life. Situations keep changing, and we always have to adapt with them.

Have you ever wondered, how many of Christ's followers would be ready, if He came at this very moment, as you are reading this? Or what would you do if you dropped your phone, or computer, and it broke to pieces as you read this? What if you received a call from your boss, telling you that you are fired? Or someone calls to relay the news, that a member of your family has passed on?

We are mostly told to be optimistic. They say do not think about death, or loss, because if you think about it so much, then it will surely come to pass. When I first owned a smart phone, I felt good. For the first time, I could now join my friends on the social networking sites. I could take photos and videos, and listen to music from my phone, and not necessarily from the radio.

I thought I was not so far off from my friends, status wise, that is. Almost a year later, the phone slipped out of my grip one day, and died out on me immediately. I was not expecting that to happen, but I was not worried either, perhaps because I knew that I could get a backup phone. After repairing

my phone though, it started slipping from my hands again.

I dreamt several times that the phone had dropped, and the screen had broken into tiny pieces. I had no back up, but I was not worried either. Why? It occurred to me, that there was a time that I did not have a smart phone, and my life did not come to a standstill. My life did not depend on the phone. I was not subject to it, but to change. It is not that I was a 'don't care', no, the phone slipping from my hands was an accident that I could not evade. I accepted that, at any moment, the phone could be damaged beyond repair, and a solution would come forth then.

Allow me to go back to the second coming of Christ. I was born and baptised in a Christian family. The message about Christ's second coming would give me chills, especially in my early campus days. Obviously, my life did not reflect that of Jesus Christ. He would surely leave me behind, and my conscience would never forgive me. It would be self-blame, and shame that would then kill me, if I remained behind, that is.

Every time I would catch myself doing something that was not in line with a Christian lifestyle, I asked myself, "Chiotsu, what would Christ say, if He caught you right now? This later made me aware, that we have an essence of us that is, in a sense, dedicated to helping us. I could call it 'your future self'. There is an awareness of us that knows what will happen, not only in the unforeseen future, but the nearest future as well, and it talks to us always, giving us a few hints here and there.

Who has done something, without thinking even for a split second, of the consequences that would follow? This future self is only heard by you; this is the prophet within. How many revelations have you heard, of people getting hints of an accident that could have happened? They follow the hint to make a different choice, and then it so happens that they are saved from the very accident.

These hints are spontaneous in nature, so they cannot be logically explained. A surprise is well planned; and a coincidence is not a random occurrence. Everything has to be in perfect order, for other things to happen. This is synchronicity. There are times that you feel danger lurking, and you save yourself; and yet, other times you ignore your gut feeling, then you suffer the consequences.

Does a disease come by surprise, or a conducive environment must have been created for it by the host? A disease is just a parasite that depends on the host to thrive. A thief does not steal by coincidence; they also make a well detailed plan. I could relate these hints in every aspect of our lives, but I am sure we all know what I am talking about. You can tell if an experience resonates with you, or not.

When I am torn between two choices, I ask myself sometimes, "What would my future-self do?" I recently asked my friends to do this simple exercise. Wherever you are right now, pause for a second, and visualise your younger-self, of course you, being the present self, and your older or future-self. Imagine what you would tell your younger-self first, then your older, future-self. When that is done, you can assume all the positions. First imagine you are your younger-self. What would you tell your present-self? Then imagine that you are the future-self. What would you tell the present self?

If you do this exercise often, you will come to realise that you can be setting goals, and monitoring them from the three nexus points always; past, present, and future. It is already a cliché that all these time nexuses are in the now, so I will not say it. So, being the prophet who fulfils their prophesies, nothing should come to you as a surprise.

A Tragicomic Masterpiece

Conceived on the 18th of June 2021

A blow to the chin of the matrix,
Answered by a jab at the cheek of the Afrikan.
The effect: the stomach becomes hot,
The blood cells become turgid, and the muscles tighten.

The heart throbs seismically,
It threatens to move up the chest,
And escape through the mouth.
The ears are red hot; you know these signs.

Thoughts are fighting in his head,
How now does he feel so small?
Called himself a head boy once did he not?
Is he not the ideal leader now?

I told him this would happen,
Hard-headed brat didn't listen.
Told him to hold his horses,
Instead, he held fast to the reins.

Now the hands are fidgety,
They touch this and leave, touch that and leave,
Didn't he used to brag and say,
Everything he touches turns into gold?

Now his touch is deadly,
Like the poison of the black widow,
He draws the life out of things,
Still, he should thank God for his hands!

He cannot just sit anywhere at all,
He is dripping sweat from everywhere,
Feels like he is standing upside down.
Is he just experiencing a magnetic shift?

This for about two hours.
So, with all his skills, he is not a master yet?
How long till he knows to manipulate time?
How long till he creates his space in this pace?

Yet he preaches the gospel of flow!
Was this collision really necessary?
Did he have to make a fist?
So, he lost control, this easily?

The Afrikan was about to be crowned by the matrix;
To be given a coveted award,
But what he did spoiled the much awaited celebration.
Now a dark cloud hangs over his head.

Some say he has egg on his head, shall he dare pray?
The head is filled with thoughts whirling.

But where is the peace and quiet?
Vehicles moving seem to be running on his head.

The wind blowing,
Seems to break all his operating accoutrements.
Open eyes, but spinning into nothingness, is he petrified?
Can he stay in this world any longer?
Thought he that he was brave.
Going to the green pastures did he say?

Boy did you have to disturb the beehive?
Used to hum in the throat, but it's all dry.
There's light alright,
But you are out of path with the tunnel.
There's a TV screen, but no remote to change the channel.

Said you were hanging them boots, huh!
Throwing the collar, and the blue tie.
Starting a new thing under the blue sky.
But it's said there's nothing new under the sun.
How do you know if you don't try?

Boy it's too soon to be saying your goodbyes.
You are not prepared for this kind of life.
An empty stomach you will go by,
And pretty soon you will just die,
But you made your bed, so now you must lie.

Many I have seen go and come back.
 When asked they sigh and say that,
 They saw the vanity of fighting back.
 Some thought they had even run out of luck,
 Their soul they sold and got drunk,
 And then their life just got stuck.

This is the system, and you are just a tool.
 If you don't see that, then you are a fool.
 And if you try to fight you will surely lose.
 So what is it exactly that you are trying to prove?
 See you are a beggar without the luxury to choose.

But why should I inherit the sin of my ancestors?
 To achieve accolades, so low they had to stoop.
 To get the key, they all had to follow the school,
 After all the years, not an ounce of life they understood,
 And in their repeating patterns,
 Is where our eyes are glued.

Hey don't give me that look,
 We are used to doing everything by the book,
 Too afraid to ask who wrote the book,
 Can't do anything without the stamp approved.
 What is not worth living for, is not worth dying for?

See, with all your talk, still I won't choose the tunnel.
 Talk is cheap, but we seldom find an actionable item.

I will choose the path,
Where my light will grow in the darkness.
In an appropriate time, this light I will begin to channel.
And eventually the voice and the action,
Will be in tandem.

Foolish Afrikan boy lecturing me about time.
Pretending not to know that this world is mine.
Nothing comes to life if I refuse to sign.
Keep disrespecting me, and I will write you a fine.

Matter of fact, take a knee and apologise.
Bow your head and lower your eyes.
Keep that posture until I tell you to rise.
Your soul to me you must offer as sacrifice.

The climber disconnects,
Finds a new support with the tendons.
The dust settles, a new beginning beckons.
Eyes fixed to the new dawn, the old day forever gone.
The matrix is same as old, but the Afrikan is reborn.

The feelings didn't last; the lesson was learned.
There is celebration after all for the Afrikan.
The matrix is not granted access to this,
All he does is watch from the window of time.

It is Wednesday night, and just as my routine, I lay in bed, and ask myself what I thought of during the day. After this, I tell myself so many times, never to doubt myself. I had already planned on quitting my job the previous week, but had not gotten the chance to get to the office yet.

On Thursday morning, I board the bus to work, and settle down. The previous night's conversation, that I had with myself, was still clear on my mind. While I take my seat, I tell myself that I should take this opportunity to resign. So, I take out my phone, and open the notepad application. I then type about three paragraphs on what I wanted to do on this day.

Just as I begin to write the date at the beginning of the material I had written, I mistakenly delete the note! The bus slows down, and some passengers walk to the door. I cannot write another one, as I have arrived at my destination, and have to alight from the bus.

As I walk to the office, I keep wondering why I deleted that note. All the same, I still tell myself that this is the best time to resign. I get into the office, and resume my sitting position. I reminisce on my first week in the office. For a person who had always preferred working in solitude, I had a hard time sharing my space with others. It was an open-air office, which meant that anybody could see what you were working on, from the back, at your side, and even from the top of your head, if they were standing close enough. As I was not given any meaningful task, I had a few applications on my laptop; Microsoft Word, PDF viewer, and VLC media player. In the PDF viewer, was a document about Microsoft Dynamics packages. I was reading from that document, and making a few notes with Microsoft Word.

Eventually, when my mind could not take in any more information, I would always begin to doze off, and this is where

the VLC media player came in handy. After listening to a few songs, I would go back to researching, and taking notes. One day, after I had been in the company for a month, and was having lunch with my colleagues, one lady said, "When you joined us, I thought you were a developer." Eager to know the reason, I asked, "Why would you think that?" "Because you kept looking at your computer the whole time. I envied the way you concentrated in whatever you were doing." We both laughed at her remark. I knew that she laughed just because I did too, but in my mind a voice said, "If only you knew that I was busy fighting sleep during that time!"

So, here I am again today, not having much to do, but getting myself busy either way, waiting for the most opportune moment to go to the boss's office. After looking over my shoulder for about ten times, I decide that it is time. I had been keeping tabs on who was entering, and leaving the boss's office, so by the time I stood up, and headed for his office, I was certain that he was alone.

At the door, I ask the boss if I can borrow a few of his minutes. He looks up at me, and says, "Sure Chiotsu, come in." As I take my seat, I wonder whether the conversation I was going to have with the boss could be heard in boardroom; the rooms were separated by a glass wall. I am sitting exactly opposite from the boss, and he is looking straight into my eyes. He has a relaxed demeanour, that instead of giving me confidence, seems to suck it all out. I feel like my grandfather's gaze is upon me. I try to look for the right way, and right words to begin the conversation, but the only thing that I manage to say is, "I would like this to be my last month here."

A concerned look is written over the boss's face as he asks, "What is the problem." I hesitate to answer, and he asks another question, "Have, you found this place too tough for you?" I only manage to shake my head. "Then what is it?" I

breathe out heavily, and say, "It is a long story." Seeing that I am still nervous, the boss asks me to close the door.

So I close the door, and take my seat again. "Now tell me what is troubling you". You would assume that closing the door would make me feel easy, but it is not enough. As I tell the boss the 'long story', I feel shaky and sweaty, and if I did not have my jacket on, one could have seen sweat flowing from my armpits.

After lowering my mask, I manage to voice my concerns, and it seems like he has understood me. At the end of it all, he says, "All the best in your endeavours, Chiotsu. So, will you be going home immediately your time with us is over?" This question catches me off guard, as I had not thought that far. All I knew was, I was going to resign, and dedicate my time to pursue my passion. Either way I manage to say, "I will still be around for a while." With all this done now, I walk out of the office, and get back to my desk. Of course I put up an act like nothing has happened, but other members of the management are following me with their eyes.

My colleagues, on the other hand, are all going about their business like any other day. As I look at them, it is hard to believe that in less than a month, I would not share the same space with them anymore. Scanning the office, I feel happy and relieved; first for following my heart, and second, for following my instinct, or what other people call, gut feeling.

In the evening, the project manager approaches me in a suspicious way saying, "Hey, Chiotsu, there is something I would like to talk to you about, I will give you a ride home." That gave him away. I knew right then, that the boss had already notified him of our talk. The project manager is standing by the door, waiting for me today! This was something new, and it was clear that he was not giving me any option. I packed my stuff, and walked out with him. Just as we walk out of the lift, and head for the car, he asks, "So, you have bee

in town for a while now, how is life here compared to your home town?" Before I answer this question, a voice in my head say, "This is the hint that he knows, and he couldn't have been more obvious!"

As we begin to drive away, more questions come my way, and I find myself sharing my belief with him. Now, it is not always easy for me to make a man understand my point of view, but to the manager, I try every possible way. By the time we get to town, he shows signs of grasping what I have been telling him all along, and I feel grateful for that. Everything has gone well, until he finally asks, "How is Wapegotsa doing? Have you told him that you are resigning?" This question gets me off guard, but I cannot evade it.

Before I give a reply, I think to myself, "Now look at you, you do not talk with Wapegotsa so often, and you have not told him anything about your decision to quit. Either way, the last time you talked, he was doing fine, so give the man the answer, he is waiting." I tell the manager that Wapegotsa is fine, but I have not told him of my plans yet. He seems to think for second then say, "Wapegotsa is an easy man, I know he will listen to you, and understand." I tell him that I will notify Wapegotsa, and then we part ways.

As I get into the house, I feel relieved for the closure, and clarity that I now have. I cannot stop being grateful for this unfolding. I am so thrilled...Then in my head comes a question, "How are you going to notify Wapegotsa of your decision?" My heart beats faster, and my ears begin to feel warm, then hot...

Serve Justice and Take Revenge

Conceived on the 14th of August 2021

Take justice from one, give justice to another.
Match to the streets screaming your lungs out,
Justice has been served!
You act in the place of the Most High, huh!

Cycle back to how we got here.
First we built the schools from elementary,
To tertiary of course.
Next we create a curriculum,
And in it there is a subject called law.

We, smart enough to study natural law.
The law that creates a balance between all that exists.
We, smart enough to try to imitate nature.
But do we follow her example to the latter?

Alright, here the experts come,
With their binoculars, spectacles, ethograms,
And stethoscopes.
Alas, thought I that law was not a Science!
But your guess is as good as mine,
They break the law into different societies, clans,
And families.

This is where the faculties of law are conceived,
And so unexpectedly born.
Abortion pills or miscarriage would not have worked.
Nothing, and no one precludes this inevitable,
And utterly necessary birth.

Behold, the ignoramus child graduates from law school,
And wears a white hat and the gown is never left out.
These are now defenders of the,
Innocent, until proven guilty.
They are loaded not only with degrees but,
Don't forget Latin, Greek, and the Roman vocabulary.

Oh you ask why,
To confuse the literate and illiterate all the same.
All are the same who are not called learned friends.
Wonder if they are all friends though.
And for that case how are they friends with the accused?

So here I am, being the accused.
The police charged me with loitering, and more,
With an intention to create disturbance.
Oh my father present everywhere,
Even natural law does not stop me from walking out.
This I can do whether in sun shine, or rain.

So someone watched me intently,
And when they were done,

They gave the prognosis,
Of my likelihood to cause disturbance,
And for that, I take the stand.
The judge decides my fate.

No scratch that, in this world, the constitution,
And the lawyer decide your fate
The constitution being the same edition,
All lawyers have a facsimile of it,
But interpretation is where the jewel is.

Wait, are we still together, or I have lost you in the maze?
So if the judge decides that he understands,
Or resonates with either one of the arguments,
Then he also chooses which interpretation to go with.
And they say his decision prevails,
Because other than the gift of discernment,
He has experience.
More than fifteen years in this field,
You think that is a joke?

Okay back on the stand,
Perhaps you are not aware,
What the lawyer really requires,
It's the fee more than your statement,
Just in case you hire them.
They say a good lawyer costs money,
And therefore a highly controversial case will cost more.

In fact, you will need a controversial lawyer,
Or a team of lawyers for that.
One fisherman recognises the other from afar, right?
And sometimes the lawyer requires a lot,
To tickle the judge with,
Or to just massage him with.
The sinews of war,
Is the magic to appeasing the inner man.
Who knows what happens in those chambers.

Did they put their salaries a secret, so as not to be bribed?
Imagine a judge being paid a pittance to settle your case,
You on the other hand can afford,
To pay him the whole year's salary.
You know what would happen here, right?
But in secrecy or not, gifts in kind are hard to trace,
Don't you think?

Too bad I was loitering because I just lost my job.
I couldn't pay my rent and was forcefully evicted.
In the process of digesting all this,
I went to the street and paced up and down, thinking.

I only saw a shiny object next to me.
Not thinking that they were handcuffs I tried to resist,
And there I was pinned down, and as if I knew Miranda,
They read me the Miranda laws.

So I take the stand,
Not having caused any harm to any soul.
Maybe I shouldn't have been engaged in intensive thought.
And who is to benefit from my arrest, the public?
Those people who eyed me while passing from a distance?

I bet the streets have remained safer then.
I would probably have enough space in my cell to loiter.
And I can do it all night long.
Free space, free food and free lodging,
I can't complain.

Back at the stand I face the judge.
Hoisted like the bird of jove aiming for his prey,
His spectacles slightly above his nose,
I wonder if it's the eyes or the nose that needs them more.
On this bright day, I bet he will need the lamp of Heaven,
To see that I am innocent,
Perhaps we should get them contact lenses too.

Looking up at 'my Lord', I begin to reminisce on the past,
Hold your horses I am not about to confess,
I'm still wrongly accused.
In my erstwhile religion, God was the judge.
Believers were often reminded of the vengeance of the Lord.

I swam in trepidation over facing judgment day.

Woke up most nights; my heart pounding on my chest.
All this reminds me of the unnatural nature of natural law.
If you look it up in the dictionary no doubt you will know.

So much to say about God being just.
The justice system on earth and in the land of the Leal,
Sounded all but the same.
It was a good story,
To keep men from realising their freedom. Fear campaign,
To make the sons of God pander to the story teller.

The words of this men of the clothe,
Sounded just like that of these gentlemen of the robes.
Respect authority is what they say.
If you act tough and ask questions, you'll realise,
Abase yourself to technocracy is what they mean.

Silver, and the King of metals,
Had I not, for the limb of the law,
And certainly had none for a lawyer.
This usually is the easiest job for the judge, for sure.
To prove it, there are thousands waiting in line after me.

As I am sentenced to one month in jail, I wonder,
The constitution that I voted for, now works against me.
Do I need someone to protect,
Or defend me against the constitution?
In that case the constitution should be brought in court,

And not just its interpreters alone.

Are we still together?

Perhaps justice has been served but,

Why do humans have written laws,

While animals and plants have none?

They follow natural law flawlessly.

And we are the smart ones? Think again.

Are we not the same ones who commit others to murder,

Or for a long life sentence in court?

But what does that really give the offended, justice?

Remember that saying,

An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.

Would it be proper to say a son for a son?

But an eye for an eye,

Will make the whole world go blind

If it isn't already

So where do we draw the line,

Between justice, and revenge?

Are they the same thing in different clothing?

Justice being packaged in a way to seem fair,

They say, hey let me revenge for you,

And you ask, who are you?

The law it says, but the lawyer is the one.

And the judge the other.

Wait, we need the police to finally say,
The long arm of the law.
So now you paid to make the constitution,
You pay for the judge's and police's salary,
And pay the lawyer too.
You pay for them to take revenge on your behalf.

This of course from your pocket.
Is this any different from bounty hunting?
Ahem, from time to time you will need extra cash,
Because you will pay the court clerk and the guard too.

And just as revenge is costly, so is justice,
Each having a common consequence,
Lack of satisfaction, and loss of time, and money.
So take my justice and give it to another.

I know they will smile for a day,
But what next after I have served my sentence?
My time still remains mine, my freedom the same.
I lent none of it to no one.

Poor judges of natural law.
Forgiveness seems difficult, but it is cheaper.
You will not involve the constitution,
The lawyer, the police, and the judge for that,
Just you and me.

Freedom is what was fought for,
 Freedom is what we take.
 Nothing seems to have changed.
 It is taken from you by those who say they love you.
 They say, we do it for your own good,
 Which is our own good.

Freedom is a treasure! Freedom.
 Freedom is expensive, freedom!
 If it's not free for all, it is not free at all.
 Freedom!

Young kids are sent to the thinking corner, when their elementary teachers decide that they have done wrong. Older kids are grounded, when their parents decide that, they should be given time to think about their 'bad choices'. It is during this grounding, that their electronic gadgets are confiscated, and they are denied TV time.

Adults naturally assume their controlling role. Instead of offering guidance, they bully the young ones into following the rules that they have set for them. These rules, are usually accompanied by threats, instead of a clear explanation as to what their intentions are. So, from a young age, you are made aware that your freedom is in the hands of some other authority—superior, allegedly.

People are sent to jail every day, and in there, those who are categorised as dangerous—even for their fellow criminals, are locked up in isolation. They may most probably not

be antisocial, but they are denied the right to associate with others.

The thought of having a loved one in the walls of a prison, is usually devastating. Naming them sometimes as correctional facilities, does little to assuage the feeling of loss faced by the inmates, and their loved ones altogether. The prison system, which is under the justice system, is so messed up, that after one is put through it, they need to be rehabilitated, before integrating them back to society. It is an unnatural system, forced upon the natural way of life, as planned by the forces of creation.

Someone said that, too many law officials in society, is a sign that we are doing badly, as opposed to other people's world view, that we are doing better. Socially and economically, that is. Think about it, does the increase in the number of policemen, not give a direct indication that crime has increased? Do people not ask for more police, when the environment has become insecure? Yet, there will be an indicator, suggesting that developed countries are doing better, because their police-to-civilian ratio, is higher than that of developing countries. Yet, it is in the developed countries, that we have the most sophisticated criminal activities. Developed countries, have also dedicated more funds in their prison system, compared to developing countries.

We know in our core, that freedom is a treasure. This is apparent when we are negatively affected. When we perceive the lack, or absence of it. As if we suffer from amnesia, we still train the young ones to continue the practise of infringing on other people's freedom. Do you not see? You are doing it at home, and the schools are not doing any better either.

Corporal punishment is used in most of the correctional institutions, but it has only graduated from our schools, and homes. Now this reminds me of my high school days. It was a boys' boarding school, and the most famous saying was

that, "Once you enter the gate, you will only go out on the closing day." I remember clearly how the boarding master kept accentuating that, "I will not issue sick leave unless you are too weak to walk. It would help more if you were crawling."

At school we had leaders, and they were called prefects. Everybody wanted to be a prefect, but we could not all be in positions of power. Who would lead the others? Funny, but the prefect position was coveted, and hated with the same breath. It was coveted because of the benefits it carried. For instance, a prefect would not do cleaning chores. They would not be punished easily, and they would be given bread, most times as an appreciation for their work. Just so you know, bread was a treasure in our school days.

The position was given the same measure of hate, because once in, prefects always automatically cut themselves from the rest of the student institution. They saw themselves as small gods. This was due to the responsibility bestowed upon them. Mostly which comprised of maintaining order. Now, the methods of maintaining order were not prescribed, so it was always normal to find prefects using force-physical, to achieve their purpose.

Many are they who suffered the wrath of prefects. It occurred to everyone that they had the full authority to beat sense into any one, no matter your level of education, and size. And who would let an opportunity to revenge go by, if it came but once. Thanks to this vice of vengeance, prefects always found themselves in tight spots, especially when there was a blackout. Others were patient enough to push their vengeance after the school years, when the prefects had lost the protection of the school administration.

Most of us ended up hating our friends, and most likely ending our friendship, just because they were chosen as prefects. Even though they made it look like we had the freedom

to choose the prefects, our choice was limited by the variety allowed by the administration. The memory of a prefect looking for a place to spend the night, because their bed was damp, is still fresh in my mind. On other occasions they woke up to damp shoes. Some of them had been my friends once, but even if I knew of the plan to ambush them before hand, I would not risk warning them. There were obviously consequences to siding with prefects, but that is a story for another day.

So how do we expect the bandits to stop? You wonder why the gangs do kidnappings, and abductions. It is simple; they were trained. Trained through grounding, and confiscation of their gadgets. Trained to take advantage of the inferiors, or literally speaking, juniors. And the inferiors, were somehow trained to abase themselves to the rule of authority. That pupil, or student marked as a crook in school, is now the one with a law degree, a police, or a judge; and God forbid if they get a former prefect on the 'wrong side of the law'.

We still want to arrest the wrong doers-so to say, make them prove their innocence, then take away their freedom. We still think that we are acting for the Most High authority-what do you choose to call it? We are now the judges who decide the fate of our brothers and sisters, who do certain mistakes that cannot be forgotten. We are lost in this circus, and unbelievable as it may be, we call it justice.

Take another's freedom away, so that those who feel that they were wronged, now feel that they have been repaid. We scream our lungs out, "Justice for so and so. Justice has been served. The judge has spoken; the law has spoken." This freedom! Who takes something from one, and gives it to another, in the name of justice? Would you do this to your kids?

Wrong question, and perhaps one asked too late, because as a matter of fact, we are surely doing it to our kids. Is it not believed that children belong to society? So it means that

when you deny freedom to your neighbour's kid, then you have done that to your own kids as well. How so? The neighbours' kid will one time seek revenge, and what better way to do it than to deny your own kids their freedom.

Do we still wait for that grand judgement from the Creator? See, even before the constitution, we had instincts, and a conscience to guide us. Everybody was aware inexplicably, that choices had consequences. Nobody thought about assuming the power to judge others on behalf of God.

In the face of natural law, there seems to be checks and balances that govern every action, or inaction. Could it be, that we are out of touch with understanding this natural law, or as others may call them, principles of creation? Principles that have been alive, and in use since the beginning of creation. Could it be that when we seek power to judge, then this power is likely to be abused? And as this power is abused then everything goes wrong, which means that no one will be judged rightly, fairly, or deservedly.

There must be a very good reason why, we do not get God knocking on our doors, to remind us of our wrong doing. Do we still unquestionably follow that story, where God read a judgement for the first family in the garden of Eden? And this only for eating the forbidden fruit? Why was that fruit put there in the first place?

The Justice system, that is supposedly an impartial ground to settle misunderstandings, is not any different from all the other systems created by man. Just like the others, its sole purpose is to survive. As much as we, humans, put our trust in it, we must accept its consequences; and so, you will always hear such things as, "The legal system must evolve to cater for our evolving needs..."

Now, if God created us in his own space of freedom, and further went ahead to give us this freedom as a gift, who are we to take it away from those who are created in His image,

and likeness? Why now do we wring our hands and smile, when a brother is being roughed up by the authorities, after we fail to settle our disagreement? Who are we to take one among us, and enslave them? Force them to do one, or two things that we would not do ourselves, so that they learn a certain lesson?

May everyone learn it in their hearts, the nature of forgiveness that our Creator possesses. That forgiveness that is given without really asking. That which is unconditional, and is given eternally. And who is better to mimic more than our parent? Yet, did we lose our way somewhere? I ask myself, because we do not seem to mimic our Father anymore.

It seems that we have taken a turn, and followed destructive thinking instead. But it is part of the creation pattern; that sweet freedom that has no limit imaginable. I met a friend, and we got lost in talk. I was marvelling on the perfection of the Father's creation. "Just look out there, a mango tree will always produce fruit when its season comes, this will apply to all the other fruit trees, and plants generally. We have rains only when crops need it, and later it goes away..."

My friend interrupted me saying, "Yeah, all this shows just how principled the Father is, you see. His design works to the latter, and therefore, no mistakes are made..." I paused for a while, and then said, "You know, I have never thought about it that way. He is principled even in His freedom. These two forces work together." As I pondered on it later, I realised that nothing will ever fall out of balance. It is not a matter of good and evil, but more of order and disorder.

Freedom, I say freedom! My heart bleeds no more, because detached from the game, now I watch it from the top down, eagles' eye. Some call it birds eye view. I want you to see, and taste it for yourself, this freedom!

The Potency of Imagery

Conceived on the 15th of August 2021

Parallel streams feeding multiple consumers.
Puppets and strings in the hands of the puppeteers
Inorganic supplements, junk food for the eyes and ears
Electronic waste,
Seen a lot of televisions kept for a souvenir.

The great wall is obviously the pioneer.
Protesting all the work it had to do,
It came in with a hunched back.
With time it must have gotten tired of fighting back.
Like a soldier ready to take orders from higher ranks.
It stands straight with a flat screen and a flat back.

Channel list like the menu,
Different ingredients, but foods are all the same.
All are foods, but use different names.
Like we have magnanimous strength,
But our problems never end.

And we are now too advanced,
The signal can't be analogue.
Now you can live-stream no need for the antennas.
Notifications are always on;
I am plugged for real.

Front and back cameras on my device,
I can feed the News.
Doesn't matter what make it is, the same face we see.

Oh, I see, the difference is in the volume,
Some of us must have it blasting out.
Remotes in hand, they keep turning up and down.
And you wouldn't know,
Maybe my favourite person is on the show.
Poor is he who doesn't have a woofer,
And his speakers are small.

The difference is in the listening,
I didn't go to school, so some English just passes through.
My earphones are on, but I still want all the devices on.
I forgot my hearing aid, you know I am hard of hearing.
Please tell me, are the subtitles on?
Don't be surprised,
You know we are always multitasking.

The difference is that televisions are never on,
I left my spectacles in, so first, I should have them on.
Yes, you see me watching, but I can't see at all.
I bought it competing with friends just for comparison.
I know it's not essential,
But add it to the list of what I own.

The difference is that some viewers are deep in sleep,

Wake me up when the main character gets the jeep.
Emotions spiking every moment; you are in too deep.
This channel is better than yours,
I get all the News I need. Artificially beautiful faces,
Colour-fill the high density screen.

The difference is that others react,
No TV in this house today,
'Cause Wepukhulu is on the News.
I can't stand and watch while he gets all the views.
Stomach rolls every time he talks; his tongue is loose.
My thumbs down in the comment section,
Never makes the News.

The difference is that nothing is ever so new,
Or is it new because it is a new day?
10 dollars says they will talk about abuse.
50 says that there's a war involving the Jews.
100 says a politician will be on the pews.

Mr president reshuffling his cabinet ministries,
Doctors striking, asking the government for their dues,
Education system is being put under review,
Don't touch that dial, up next is a celebrity interview.

The difference is that you lose memory,
He stood on the podium and said we are fools.
Next day he accused the press of not telling the truth

It's the same monkey, just jumping on different trees,
And the programmer must have all this on repeat.

During the election they said, I am the citizen,
I am the power.
Hurray, the government I voted for has now taken power.
And the games of power started two days later,
When we were watching news while taking supper.
And the headline on the screen was a show stopper,
My brother is mentioned in the list; he is a ghost worker.

This is a corruption free zone,
It is the message on every banner.
But to see the boss, you will need to part with a dollar.
This is for the guard; the boss's fee will be much higher.

Your eyes are addicted to pleasure hormones,
Haven't you seen this before,
Titillating tunes playing tricks on your ears,
Haven't you heard this before?

Yes, there is nothing new under the sun,
But there are new things under the Solar Logos.
Sadly, this is the truth,
And the truth will never make News,
They are on two different frequencies.

You already get how this sounds right?

I am using the word truth and sadly,
In the same sentence.
The vibration is a miss!
And this is also under the sun, remember?
And does difference come from the word defer?
I beg to differ.

The Television was always on, day and night. The newspapers filled the streets from end to end. The radio was blasting with music, talk shows, and interviews. The clothes were probably printed, if not branded.

Obtrusive advertising was like the principle ingredient in processed foods, sugar. I wonder if anyone needed to seek expert advice anymore, because every Tom, Dick, and Harry declared themselves experts in every field of knowledge ever saw the light of day. People talked about what they knew, and what they did not have the slightest clue about, in just about the same breath. Just like they say that the land of Leal, is the land of milk and honey. That all that is done there is singing and feasting...

Nobody ever questions just how boring eternal singing, and feasting could turn out to be. But they believe, because some chosen holier-than-though authority has said so. Like they say that, a certain toothpaste is the only one that makes your teeth white, but the catch is that you have to use it every day, for the rest of your life. Now, if you think about addiction for a moment, you would come to the conclusion that this is not any different.

When you eat ice cream, there is an excruciating pain that cuts through your teeth, and runs into your gums. And a lady

in white overalls tells you that you should not worry; there is a cure for your challenge. When you eat hot food, you obviously feel some pain in your teeth; and a man in overalls tells you, "No worries, there is a cure for that!"

They both dangle some toothpaste on the screen of your smart television, and say without flinching, "Use this toothpaste, and forget about the pain in an instant!" That, to many, will be enough assurance that they can take ice cream and hot food, and use a certain toothpaste later. This should act as a cure, or rather, a preservative for their mistreated, and now, delicate teeth. It does not matter, that they have no way of confirming, whether the person in white overalls is a doctor, or just a hired gun, looking to make some money for an entrepreneur somewhere behind the curtains.

They show you a family having dinner; they are seating in a posh house, all moody. They say that the food is tasteless. Then suddenly, some expert comes along with salt, and as if some magical power has been used, the food picks up a taste from thin air. Well, there you go, you have the solution to tasteless food now. Would your mind not be going, "Wait, stop, food that is tasteless!" Does it not occur to the listener, the viewer that every food has a distinct taste, and that salt is only used for seasoning, or to add flavour?

The result of misinformation, has every person who can light a fire, and boil some water, advising you that salt is important in cooking, for the purpose of taste. And they don't blink while saying this. Worse still, they do not notice that they are repeating what they heard somewhere, and they have not even made sense of it. They have become nothing more than bio-robots. They have been programmed by their handlers.

Mind control, has always been discussed by the truth seekers, but whatever is talked about in broad light, never tickles the ears. Whatever is shown in close proximity, never triggers

the organ responsible for the sense of sight. Anything worth hearing, watching or reading must contain the word secret. Certainly, Secret has to be the introducing word.

Otherwise, as you know what they say, "The croaking of the frog does not stop the cow from drinking water." This reminds me about what my primary school teacher once said, "A bad image makes an impression more than a good one, because it is what you will be forever judged by."

Someone said that, in us, there is a composition of all the principles of creation. Yet, the search for the secret is always on, hidden from plain sight it seems. How hard does one need to look? And those who are aware that humans badly desire to know a certain secret, produce things that are packaged, to seem to contain the answers, that the seekers break their back searching.

"Say these words three times, and this will happen". "Use this product, and this will be the result." "This is what they do not want you finding out about". Oh my dear reader, you must be familiar with the, "Before and after' images. And the tongues of snakes, will find sweet words, to draw the lion out of its den.

Walking about the towns of this generation, will leave one salivating over, not food, but material things. The buildings are painted, and some have faces on them, not of the owners though. Our clothing is always branded, and yes, it is with the faces of those who we now call, influencers. It is their faces on the banners, flyers, posters, and bill boards. It is them whispering to you, that you should try this, join that group, use that, wear that, and buy something.

Even those celebrities, who would not in reality buy those things, still advertise them. Why? They get paid for it. How messed up can that be? You perhaps have never tasted alcohol, but you tell others that a certain brand is the most tasteful! You have never used that medical product, but you tell

others that it is the best!

Remind me again the definition of lying. And what do they say about brain washing? Someone says that it is only our religious leaders who do it. Another one says that we are brainwashed by the West? One could laugh at these sentiments, but a conscious individual would be brought to tears.

But all this tuning, pausing and playing is addictive, you know. The thoughts roll with the speed of the frame interchange. We only pause, when the sensor in the remote allows this interaction. Look at that sizzling chicken put on display, and the customer waiting for it is salivating. Now what effect does this have on you? Of course you would want to buy what you are seeing. Yet, we still ask how children know the names of snacks, that their parents have never heard of.

And we roll with the changes. One time it was, 'I like the sprite in you'. Then it changed to, 'control your thirst'. A little later it changed to, 'obey your thirst'. Then to, 'freedom from thirst'. And we have been changing, with the change in slogan. Sometimes, we even change the colour of our skin, to that which is used in advertising. The one portrayed as clean, or camera-friendly.

By the time we get old, we realise that we have gone back to where everything all began. Then you realise that nothing ever changed in reality, because it was all an illusion of morphing one thing into another, but the skeleton remains the same. Different flavours can be added to water, but it does not change into a different chemical composition, does it? But how does stripping food off its nutrients, only to come back later and fortify it with artificial nutrients, add any value to the food? Does it now become art, or magic? Or has it become a meaningless effort of improving the Father's creation?

You remember that product you used, but did not work well with you? You swore never to allow yourself to be duped again. But then you used another one again; and guess what,

they said the same thing as they did with the first one. They said, "This is the one for you." So like the hypnotised victim of the pied piper, you are following the sound, and most of the time, you do not even know who is playing that flute. Reason, someone was paid to participate in that business called, marketing.

And why are the creations of the Most High not advertising themselves? The mango tree, getting into an argument with the avocado tree, over which one of them produces the best nutrients, or minerals for man? I never heard of such a tale from our distant ancestors. To catch our attention, the image makers use simple things as colour, scent, and taste. Perhaps we are losing, or have already lost, our ability for far sight, and are now completely reliant on the image shown to us.

But look at me writing all this, yet I was waiting for some programme on the television. Seated at my favourite space on the couch, I tune in to the television once more. I am in luck to catch the most hyped show. This had been advertised earlier, and the guest had made it to the interview. The interviewer's eyes are glistening in the blaze of the studio lights. A reflection of the upper lights could be seen in her eyes. She looks at the interviewee and says, "You are a parent, a boss, a sibling..." She grins, and continues, "just pulling your leg with that last one. So tell us, how do you do it; how do you balance your work, and your life?"

The interviewee clears their throat; the audience, who are part of the set, and those at home as well, are waiting. Now I hope, you, dear reader, are not expecting the answer from me, keep guessing. I bet you have heard it for the umpteenth time, haven't you now?

Another interview will happen, then another, then another; and you guessed right! The same questions will be put forward, and similar answers will be given; and the claque

will be there among the audience, ready to do their job, clapping, or laughing even when unnecessary.

But press pause for a minute. There are some among us, whose life is their work, so the question about balancing life and work, would not be appropriate. Then many are they whose work is diametrically opposite to their life; for them, it is a nightmare working a lie, and living the reality, or living a lie, and working the reality.

This is the image-making business. We are ready to make you up, so that your parents can walk right past you. Your pet can walk right past you without whiffing your natural scent, because of the perfume you have bathed in. And the clothes could be won once, only when we are on set; otherwise, they would be too uncomfortable. Meanwhile, out in the streets, the truth, being the secret, is still being searched for.

The Richer We Become the Lesser We Can Afford

Conceived on the 28th of August 2023

Ndada held the remote firmly in his grip, as he kept switching from one channel to another. The content he was seeing on the television seemed to test his patience. He had been in-house since morning, so this had become his routine. Finally, he seemed to settle on one that was airing the day's News. The colouring of the studio must have caught his eye, but the one thing that attracted his attention the most, was the news anchor.

The news anchor, who you can already guess that was a lady, was well groomed, according to modern standards of fashion. Her face was obviously made up. The hair seemed too good to be her own. Ndada now shook his head wondering whether this News affair had turned into a fashion show, or an information centre. In his mind, he thought, "I hope this is not one of those News channels with stories intended to titillate the imagination of the public." On the screen just below the image of the anchor, was the headline, 'The Tobacco Syndicate'.

The News anchor was going on and on about the effects of the tobacco industries, and by the tone of her voice, most of them were negative. "Dear viewers," she said, "did you know that to make cigarettes, approximately 600 ingredients are used; and when burned, cigarettes release about 7000 chemicals to the environment, of which 69 are linked to cancer. Did you know that cigarettes contain nicotine, which is highly addictive? 9% of the Kenyan population is addicted to smoking, and according to reports from the health authorities, tobacco causes many ailments to the heart, lungs, and other organs, and kills 9000 Kenyans annually.

“As it is in public domain, throat cancer is highly associated with smoking, or using tobacco. The rate of advertising these products seems, if anything, intrusive, because it is not dependent on one media. Nowadays they advertise through movies, music, and more. The challenge really is, how to protect the younger generation from such obtrusive, and aggressive advertising of a product that carries diverse consequences.

“Today, if you search on the web, ‘Tobacco producers in Kenya’, you will get a list of the stakeholders. On further research, you will learn that some of them evade taxation, and even legislation curbing smoking in public; but still, the government lets them play. To any citizen consuming this information, it would seem to them that it is a question of the lesser evil...”

Ndada’s consciousness zoomed off to the images playing in his head. He had lived, and shared space with cigarette smokers. All of them were addicted, and for this reason, they would smoke relatively three, or more times a day. They had different excuse for smoking: Anxiety, cold, some said that they must smoke before, or after a meal. The effect was that, the perennial addicts could not do anything whatsoever without the cigarette, which to them, had become fuel for their mechanised bodies.

His consciousness returned again to the television, to the still talking news anchor. She was now saying, “The government, is solely putting its focus on the contribution of such industries, to the GDP of the country. Never mind the number of citizens now addicted to this product, or those who contract cancer from them; and to add salt to injury, you will see these companies doing charity. Is this supposed to be a gesture for us, to close our eyes to the evil they put us through? Some will contribute to the government in form of unconditional grants. Come on now, we all know what this

leads to, and this may explain why the government is obsequious to the merchants, or modern day saints.

"As citizens we are helpless, because we have elected the government to represent us. If they put their own interests before those of the citizens, then there will of course, be dire consequences to be faced by the citizens. Now, to the cream of the cream, there is this thing that now drags the youth into experimenting with smoking. It is called e-cigarette. Perhaps the inventors were riding with the wave of digitalisation, but as it is clear enough already, with the results in public domain, vaping is not a harmless alternative. We have young people trying out vaping, just because they think it is a cool thing to do.

"But what am I saying, is there anyone watching that is actually seeing? Is there anyone hearing this that is actually listening? The human being, I would say, is the most complicated creature, and with his complicated nature, comes, the freedom of choice. And to practise their freedom, even after this talk, those who subscribe to the vice of smoking, will still line up in the shops closer to them, and purchase cigarettes..."

Ndada was driven with a deep desire, to hear something different from smoking tobacco, so he switched to the next channel. On this channel, there was a programme about climate change, and since this was something he was always concerned about, the anger that was building up in him, was somehow assuaged. There were several guests on air, talking about green energy as an alternative source of energy, and how it is the only solution to salvage us from total destruction. One of the guests, who in his introduction, had said that he was the director of 'Go Green Foundation', was given the chance to speak. He titivated his coat as if using the camera as a mirror, and then looking at the panellists one by one, began by saying, "The only way to move from fossil fuels is to

go fully green.” He cleared his throat, swiftly realigned his spectacles, and continued, “By this I mean, let’s start using solar energy more, let’s also use biogas, and wind solar panels.

“Obviously, if we take that turn, in time the carbon foot print would be less than it is now, especially for the most industrialised countries. This would help us reduce the pollution in the environment, and the greenhouse effect will reduce; consequently, fluctuating climatic changes, or conditions, will be at balance, at their equilibrium. We would worry less on the issue of global warming, and minimise the mining of coal, which destroys the earth ecosystem...”

The next panellist given the chance to give his opinion, whose head was already sporting white hair, with a rather young face, was already shaking his head, even before he opened his mouth. From his dressing, anyone, including Ndada, could have concluded that he was from the rural area. Although, earlier, he had been introduced as an activist, his temperament did not suggest anything of that kind. In a somewhat relaxed manner— diametrically opposite of the nature of most activists, he said, “Going green is a fallacy, and a bad dream, that the human kind is supposed to be shaken from, before he gets lost, never to awaken again.

“Of course we have seen the devastating effects of fossil fuels, but green energy is not the solution at all.” At this point of his speech, the previous speaker began saying something, in a bid to interrupt him, but the moderator would not allow; and so, he was therefore obliged to continue. “Moreover, if you look closely, you will find that green energy, heavily depends on fossil fuels to be active. Talk about solar panels that are made from coal and quartz. Both of these substances, have to be mined from the bottoms of mother earth, in order to be used in making solar panels. Then when all the solar panels

have been setup, you will find that the system is still connected to the grid, or is complemented by natural gas, and battery cells, which are part of the fossil fuel family.

"Most plants that boast about producing biogas, are not entirely environment-friendly. The source of fuel that is primarily used in these plants is timber. Now, biomass plants are so many, spread about the continent of North America, and each of them operate daily. This means that trees have to be fell daily, to meet their high demand for wood chippings. For some, the wood chippings are not even enough, and are most times complemented with tyre chips, which are not in the least, friendly to the environment.

"Now, just imagine, if trees take approximately fifty years to mature, is it sustainable to clear large parts of forests in the name of going green? Does the earth have to suffer to give us energy? More importantly, keep in mind that every time we destroy the earth's ecosystem, nature hurts, and this has consequences for human beings too. Every time I hear people talking about going green, I am always wondering at their lack of attention to the details. They only stop at the suggestion of alternative energy sources, by the name, 'renewable energy'.

"You know, if all of us were keen enough, we would realise that production of green energy, is more demanding than production of fossil fuels. In fact, it leads people to pretend that they are not employing any ounce of fossil fuel, but in reality, they are. Yet, they cannot say, because they do not want to hurt the hope, and aspirations of people; mostly people who are lovers, and champions of conserving the environment. But what is this if not living a lie?

"Again, if you look at humanity today, you will realise that fossil fuels are not the enemy, rather, man's excess inexplicable, and insatiable consumption is. Without a ray of doubt, if you follow the graph, or index of energy consumption by

man, it is easy to conclude that there has been a sharp increase over the decades. It is human beings, who have an insatiable appetite for always wanting more. They have it written in their mind that, if its good, more of it is even better.

“So, a typical human being, just because he can afford it, could build three houses. Bear in mind that all these will be connected to the grid. Then he might go further and purchase a fleet of vehicles. The production of each of these cars involve the use of fossil fuels, and aggressively mined material. They could also own electrical appliances that are rechargeable, or volatile, all depending on electricity.

“Look at a brilliant idea that is called large scale farming. A want to produce in large, so as to cater for a large, and growing market, with a growing demand. A lot of fossil fuels will go to the maintenance of these farms; and ultimately, fossil fuels in the name of fertiliser will be used here too. So basically, it is our evil desire to satisfy insatiable, and sometimes imaginary needs, that poses the threat to destruction of our fellow human beings, and mother nature at large.

“The solution for climate degradation, is in the hands of every individual literally. It calls for everyone to take up a role in reducing pollution of the environment. If only we bought what we need, and only used what we need, we would not be worried so much about the growing rate of pollution, and climate change. Consequently, nature always has a way of healing from all the ailments inflicted upon her, and during these times in her healing, it is not usually smooth on our human race...”

Ndada’s ability to hold the overwhelming negative energy in him, seemed to have been overstretched. He therefore saw that the easiest way not to lose control, was to turn off the television. Even as the screen went blank, and black, he still could not stop the tirade of thought going through his mind. He had always thought himself a champion of environment

conservation. He looked around at the plastic bottles he had in his house from beverage companies, and hated the fact that he would have to get rid of them somehow. And by this, they would find their way to the street somewhere.

In his house too, could be found electrical appliances, that were not critical to his survival as a human being. His throat went dry, as he thought himself one of those whose appetite for more things never seemed to cease. He was fond of having his lights on, even when it was not necessary. He had his radio and television on most times, even when he was not listening to either of them. And yet, there were times that he never turned on the television, or the radio. At such times, he often wondered whether these appliances added any value to his life.

And now as he had opened the gates for more thought, he remembered how the subsequently elected governments, had always taken industrialisation as a perfect solution to poverty. Or in other words, as a treatment to our rating as a third world country, and as a bolster of our economic standing. But these steps, and decisions, are always made with full awareness, that industrialisation is sure to negatively affect the environment. It may sound rude, but it is like someone eating poison, knowing the consequences; and of course, when the effects start to trickle down, he will horribly try to run away from the pressing predicament, which is death.

He would have one of those looks, that try to impress on you the need to help one who is helplessly on his way to destruction. But hey, once you help him, even without thanking you, he will run as fast as he can again, to yet another poison with just a different name. It is the same with those people who volunteer to have trial medication tested on them. This mostly happens because the money is good. They at those times do not worry so much about the consequences, even when they are pre-warned, and made to sign an agreement.

Ndada could not go with the noise in his head anymore. He decided that a walk would give him some peace, even if it was just a trifle less. It was only after he stepped out of his house, that he realised that something had changed. What he felt was somewhat abnormal.

It was odd to experience the silence that engulfed the town. So he began to think to himself. "This is a peculiar manifestation, is it not? We are used to noisy streets, yet today, road accidents would not make any sense. Today, the county officials get no revenue, and the bosses have no one to fire. If petrol was perishable, the owners would be getting losses. The streets are dry, save for the buildings, and the street lamps of course."

Then came that crazy thought he had been shutting down for some time. He had visualised himself sitting in the middle of the road, and closing his eyes. With this one-time opportunity he decided to give it a try. So in the middle of the road, he sat cross-legged, and soon began his meditation, but his thoughts were jumping like a monkey, from one tree to the next. "Have people finally gone to the countryside, to visit their grandmothers and grandfathers? I did not hear that it was a holiday. Or am I the only one alive, and they are all dead?" He thought.

Because the thoughts are unchained, he follows one that says, "I should get atop the highest skyscraper. I want to shout anything that comes through my mind." So he gets on his feet, and as he begins to walk, he thinks, "It is weird hearing my footsteps, but there is no one to judge me today."

Before he gets into the skyscraper, he hears some voices in the city hall and thinks, "Oh, so the law makers are still alive! Let me go in, and sympathise with them. They have no one to lead, you know. Let us see, if they can truthfully elect one amongst themselves. Would it be free and fair?"

At the entrance, there is a poster. On it is scribbled the

words, 'The Richer We Become, The Lesser We Can Afford'. Again this leads him to think, "Now, these law makers can surely afford anything in the world, right? Other than deciding on how much they are paid, they also set the pay of all the citizens, the basic pay. He then pushes the door open, and to his astonishment, the town residents are the ones here instead.

No one turns to look at Ndada. In their hands are placards, and written on them, are the various things they cannot afford. Looking around, he sees his friend Ndombilo, and waves at him; but just like the rest, he does not respond. Up at the dais Ndombilo's dad speaks; the wealthiest man in town he is. Ndada finds a sitting position not far from the entrance. Meanwhile, his friend's father continues...

*"I am a business man, and perhaps I need no introduction,
You must have heard my name in the streets,
But for the sake of advertising my business, they call me Ntwatwa.
I am a man of different trades.
Probably everything you wear, consume, and use,
Has passed through my industries.*

*When we process the food we eat, we add chemicals to it.
It has to look appealing, you know you guys like clean things,
Like the white sugar, white flour and so on.
The chemicals we put in your food are somehow hazardous,
But your doctors have given us the limits we cannot pass.
If anyone suffers from them, it's the researchers we should blame.*

They say that I pollute the environment,

But we pay the environmental authorities for whatever harm we may cause.

I cannot afford to close my industries just because of pollution.

At this rate nothing would be produced,

And it is you, the people, that would suffer.

If I don't do this anyway, somebody else will do it either way.

You accuse us of not supporting the cotton industries,

Cotton takes a lot of manpower to process,

And this would in turn make it's processing expensive.

To tackle this, we decide to use polyester.

Let us be honest, would you prefer cotton,

Which is expensive, over polyester?

Would you prefer to wear polyester for long,

Or cotton for a short time, before wear and tear comes in?

We cannot afford cotton processing, and neither can you, dear clients.

I cannot afford to lose you to my competitors,

I'd rather please you instead.

So I will please you with the white sugar, the white rice, and white bread.

I will provide you with the nutrient-lacking, but fortified foods.

I will please you with the useless, but accentuated products,

You know them.

And more over, I will advertise my goods because you pay for it.

Yes, when you buy from us, we cater for advertising.

After him, another man with a brisk gait walks to the dais. His

dress code shows that he is not a man of means. Rubbing his hands together he begins to talk.

*My name is Ntwetwe, and I am a street vendor.
You must have seen me walking with my products.
Sometimes I dangle what I have in your kid's faces.
Sometimes I walk in the bus just looking at your faces.
Some of you I pity, because they seem worse than I am.
They look dead already, even those who don't return my look.*

*But some of you accuse me of selling poison,
Yet, all my life I have not seen anyone forming at the mouth,
After buying anyone of my products.
I am not to blame, because I also just buy what I sell.
It is more of your job to know what you are buying.
On my end, I look to sell what I have, and replenish my supplies.
If I threw away my products and decided to beg,
No one here would be willing to help me, not even my brother.*

*And besides, you do not expect me to list down the side effects,
Of each of my products.
If I did that, no one would buy them
But everyone knows that too many sweets lead to tooth cavities,
When you buy biscuits from me,
You should control your craving for sugar.
I cannot afford to be a vendor,
And at the same time, your caretaker, and doctor.*

I will not stop you from purchasing even a hundred sweets if you want.

I am not to control your appetite,

Your body should naturally do that, if you get what I mean.

I cannot afford to be choosy on what I can buy and sell,

Because to me, they are just items to give me some profit.

I cannot afford to pay for my house, so I have to find a way to survive."

A potbellied man walks to the dais as Ntwetwe exits. On his head rests a cap. You would think that his stomach would give him trouble moving, but on the contrary, he seems light at feet. Although the audience is already quiet, and waiting for him, he pauses for a while. He looks at, it seems, beyond the last man on the furthest row, then begins.

"My name is Nzabanga.

I started farming in a small plot, and now I own large plots of land.

I measure them in hectares instead of acres.

So, now I only do large scale farming,

Which as you all know, requires large scale inputs.

You know very well that it is my family that feeds this whole town,

So there is a huge demand on me to deliver.

I cannot afford to grow organic to produce such a large scale output.

This is an investment that requires a lot of resources.

Fertiliser and pesticides are readily available though,

But where would I get compost manure for organic farming?

*Organic crops tend to mature slowly, and who has that time?
Hunger is not going to give me a chance to wait,
And neither will my customers.*

*I cannot even afford to do crop rotation,
Because of the pressure, or demand for maize and wheat.
So, I repeat again, I cannot afford to grow organic.
Farming, or agribusiness is just a business like any other.
I have to make a return on investment.
My children need to go to school.*

*I have seen the health of soil deteriorate.
I have seen the side effects of fertiliser.
But if I stopped farming today, this town would starve.
Again, I cannot afford to grow organic.
So, I chose to buy it from those small scale farmers.
So, in my house, I will use brown flour instead of white.
I will use brown sugar in place of white.
I will only take fresh vegetable to maintain my health.
Again, I cannot fail to produce for this town.
And it is necessary that I eat healthy, to stay productive."*

Nzabanga exits the dais, again, after a long pause. For some time, it seems that members of the public are debating amongst themselves, about who is worthy to take the dais next. At each corner there can be seen some, hurdling into groups. It all looked organised, until a young man stood up unexpectedly. From the look of members hurdled in groups, it seemed as though they did not approve; but now that he

was up and walking to the dais, they could not stop him.

"My name is Ndladla.

When I was young, my grandmother used to sell seeds.

That is how she took care of her children.

At that time, I did not understand why she only planted her seeds.

If she didn't have any, she knew that Nsesi would bring some to the market,

Sadly, none of her children learnt that trade of hers,

And this is true for most homes in the world.

Later as I grew older, I saw the niche in seed business,

And that lead to Ndladla Seed Limited, my seed company,

Having the required botany education,

All I had to do was look for researchers.

I know everybody is wondering what I need researchers for.

We all know that times have changed,

And the world climate has changed too.

The seed that my grandmother planted,

Cannot produce sufficient yield for the ever-growing population.

The rainy seasons are getting shorter,

And the dry seasons on the other hand, are getting longer.

So again, why do I need scientist?

I need them to research which variety of seed if altered biologically,

Can be viable for this changing climate.

Because the farmers also have large markets,

I need to provide seeds that can last longer.

For this ladies and gentlemen, I need scientific intervention.

*I cannot afford to use the indigenous seed,
For it would not be fit for mass production.
I cannot afford to miss out on this opportunity to create,
And patent new varieties of seed to be used,
Even by the future generation.*

*Over the years though,
I have realised that the nutrient quotient,
Of the genetically modified seed,
Is nowhere near the indigenous seed.
Now, the market does not need plants and fruits that taste better,
But they need surplus production instead.
So, I cannot afford to prioritise the quality of taste,
And nutrient composition over quantity.
That my friends, is a luxury that no business can afford to engage
in.*

*But I am only here because I realised that the common man,
Is too lazy to conserve his local seed.
Now farmers buy seed to be used once, that is, for every planting
season.
And this is the only way to get high yield.
And with my seed, I can only promise you,
That the shape, colour, longevity and quantity of the produce,
Will continue to get better.*

God made the seed, but he failed to foresee the demand for changing times,

And this is where we entrepreneurs come in."

Even before Ndladla was done, a lady adorning an official dressing was standing just behind him. Ndada thought she was the one the groups had agreed upon. It reminded him of some episodes, where union officials had the opportunity to show that they had the power to elect, and call for the de-whipping of the leader. Such de-whipping periods often ended in chaos, with the leaders refusing to let go of their comfortable seats. As soon as Ndladla said his last words, she took her position.

"My name is Nzeze, and I am a teacher by profession.

My husband is a nurse, and we have two kids.

So, as you can see, I am a parent as well.

At school, we follow a strict programme.

One provided by the government, and it is called, the curriculum.

After training we are told to take an oath, to act by it no matter what.

So, we call the process of training kids, education.

I receive other people's kids, and pass them through the system.

And the same is done to my kids.

Sad as it may sound, I cannot afford to pass knowledge to my children.

And to compensate for this, I send them to the most expensive school.

*I am always busy during the day, and so is my husband.
When we get home, the kids are exhausted, and so are we.
So we just check if they have done their homework, and that's it.*

*I cannot teach as a parent, again,
Because it would contradict what they are taught in school.
And just look at this situation where we have a nurse in the house,
And yet, we cannot treat our own kids either.
My husband, Ndede, also took an oath,
And for that, his treatment has to be impartial."*

From the front rows, her husband dashed to the dais. He was on cue as if waiting for that exact sentence, and without wasting a second, he began speaking.

*We have to see another doctor, for the sake of conflict of interest.
We cannot afford to treat even the simplest of illnesses in our family.
Nowadays, we do not even trust home births.
In my training I saw the statistics speak against it.*

*So now we cannot even afford to encourage people to give birth at home,
Even in the presence of a trained health practitioner.
And what do you know, we prescribe doses for people,
But not of alternative medicine.*

*We cannot afford to lose customers,
Because we have clinics, pharmacies and laboratories of our own.*

*The government pays a pittance, and our lives have to go on.
Scrimping has been part of our lifestyle,
But we still struggle to keep above the surface."*

As another lady rose from her seat, some murmuring could be heard from one corner. Some of the men were saying, "Let there be gender balance." No one could stop her though, there seemed to be a universal rule, that once one was up on their feet, they could not be stopped. So she walked lazily to the dais, and began speaking.

*"My name is Nzizi.
Eating healthy is so expensive.
We talk about organic farming,
But here in town, we cannot afford to lease land.
The only option is going to the countryside,
But who then will support those at home?*

*So, I cannot afford to eat healthy,
Because I have to scrimp, to support myself and my family.
My mum is suffering from cancer,
And is undergoing chemotherapy.
My dad on the other hand, is suffering from high blood pressure.
If I stop scrimping even for a minute,
I will not afford to medicate them.*

*Not to forget that I also get ill from time to time,
And need medical attention.
Maybe I am not just a foodie,*

*Most times I would just take a plate of chips, and sleep.
Other times I just drink soda.*

*The other day the doctor told me,
That my stool was too compacted together,
Because my sugar consumption was too high.
But I will be fine, I choose death over that vegetarian diet.
The doc is telling me this,
Yet we go for lunch with him, and eat the same thing.*

*I look at him sometimes and wonder.
Does the oath to protect life only work when there is a salary?
Or when it is concerning another person's life,
And not their own personal health?
I laugh inwardly when he tells me to cut on alcohol.
Yet I shared drinks with him just last night.
And isn't that his brother vaping?"*

Finally, the young man who was conversing with Ndombilo throughout the presentation, rose on his feet. On his head could be seen dreadlocks died in brown and black. One could assume that he was one of those reggae lovers who follow the reggae culture to the latter. Anybody who had been watching the duo could have assumed that he had been exchanging ideas with Ndombilo.

But how could Ndombilo talk to him, when he did not act like he was aware of Ndada's presence? This young man with earrings, bangles and necklaces began to speak.

"My name is Ng'uon, and I am a student at NZOLO Uni.

*I take my studies seriously.
My fees are high, and I have a career to chase.
I cannot afford to waste time.
Around the world there are other students just like me,
We all create the competitive edge.
You better come at me with ideas of employment,
I cannot afford to learn all theory and listen to stories.
I need practical my guy, then you hook me up with a gig.*

*Someone telling me to slow down,
Are you even serious? I cannot afford to lose track like that.
If we all worried about what we could, and could not afford,
We would be walking like zombies,
Sparkling on the outside as a result of grooming,
But dead inside to the core.
But some one already came to save us from these worries.
And in other ways he said, the lesser your needs the lesser your
worries."*

Ng'uon kept silent for a bit as if to let what he had just said sink in. Although looking at the crowd, it was difficult to say whether it was for himself, or for them. It was even more difficult to tell, if he understood what he said. It sounded like one messy mixture, and it would take time to separate the wheat from the chaff.

An old man was already slowly making his way to the dais. One or two times, some youths attempted to help him through, but he stubbornly turned down their attempts. It was almost after ten minutes that he managed to stand on the platform. By this time, Ng'uon had long resumed his seat,

and Ndada could see them exchange glances with Ndombilo.

The old man then took another two minutes before he began talking. All the hair on his head, with his facial hair had altogether turned white. He looked at the crowd, who waited impatiently for his assumed words of wisdom. Scanning the last row, his eyes met with Ndada's just for second, and even with the great distance between them, Ndada felt as if he were just in front of him. It then seemed to him that this could be the guest of honour. And as he began talking, Ndada would not talk for the others, but, he could hear the few birds that pecked on the window pane, and they seemed to punctuate his sentences.

"I have heard enough lamentations for a day.

I must say, it will take me a long time to sit, and read the book again.

We, human beings, are used to complaining so much.

We are always complaining to somebody,

Or to ourselves about what someone else has done.

Rarely do we pause,

And ask what our individual roles have been in particular outcomes.

And how long would it take to own up,

Take a portion of the blame and say, yes I am to blame too.

I did not take care of my space, and now it is dirty.

I was not a good example to my kids,

And now, they have turned out just like me.

How often do we say that we have not shown ourselves,

*And other people love?
And that this is why,
We are not getting any of it from those around us?
How often do we agree,
That we are the ones who have become lazy at thought?
And the result is that,
We do not know how to take care of ourselves anymore.
We are afraid of disease, afraid of death, afraid of getting bored,
Afraid of pregnancies, and even of what we do not know about.*

*Now here we are,
Complaining about what we cannot afford to do anymore.
And look at your young faces!
I thought it is the younger generation that has always had the energy,
To come up with solutions to the problems facing mankind.
But I think I know where the challenge lies.
You know, it was said a long time ago,
That a problem cannot be solved with the same mind-set that created it.
It has been clear to me for a long time now,
That we create our own problems.*

*Yes, we, the children of the Most High.
We are the creators of the devices that are now called,
Instruments of destruction.
It seems to me, that everything we create,
Has no good intention attached to it.*

Most probably because we are always seeking monetary compensation,

And fame from our creations.

Certainly, that is all we can ever get from them.

Oh, poor creatures!

Sometimes they say that wisdom comes with age.

Tell me, if you have not been observing,

The creations of our Father from a young age,

Are you going to be any wiser in old age? I doubt it.

What we have been doing is living in an endless unconscious pattern.

We seem not to be asking to know,

We ask because it is a mode of conversing, that is all there is to it.

We do not seek to know, in order to understand,

We seek to know so that we can then explain it to the next person.

So that we can be seen as intelligent, and all-knowing.

Who among you has observed the life cycle of a flower or a tree?

You will not be able to answer any accurate questions on plants,

If you haven't been consciously watching them.

You could do a lot of reading; you could even trade in plants.

But if you do not consciously make the decision to understand,

You will never know anything about plants.

This can be applied to everything that the Father desired for His sons,

And daughters to know.

*Sometimes I am almost driven to tears,
When I hear one saying to others,
Take your power, and do this, and that.
I ask myself then, where is this power,
And where is it being taken to?
What exactly do we need this power for?*

We all know that an unjust judge will certainly give unjust rulings.

*Power in the hands of those who do not know an inch,
About its conception, and essence is a waste.
What then happens when justice is given to the unjust?
Or better yet, what would it be like to have a generous thief?*

*Do we not know that if our air is not worth breathing,
It is us we have to blame, and not the factory,
Less even, the factory owner?*

*This factory owner does business,
Because there is a need for him to operate.
And is he not a father, a brother, a son?
Does he not bleed when cut?
And does he not breathe the same air you breathe?
So someone asked for metal, and he produced it.
Someone else asked for sugar, and it was processed.
And who is this asking for machinery, and oil?*

It is you who now hold placards before my eyes.

*You know, my brothers and sisters,
It is good that it is us who are here,
Instead of our political representatives.
Do we not complain that they are only mindful of themselves?
But to prove that they are just a reflection of us,
We find ourselves in the same situation as they,
Bombarded with the many problems of everyday life,
And with dangerously little time to consciously think for themselves.
Those we call elected representatives are our sons,
Daughters, wives, and husbands.*

*They are our blood.
They have been born, and raised here among us.
I for one have seen many even pass on before me.
Save for the few who have been raised abroad,
But come back seeking their roots.
Either way, there is something in them,
That is characteristic of what we truly are.
And they have the same disease that we have.
And this disease is, destructive thought.
Most of us will not agree with me now,
But I am used to disagreements.
I am aware of the freedom we are all accorded as Man.*

*Those elected representatives,
Are in the positions we have created for them to hold.
In a sense, we have also necessitated their existence.*

*And that will apply to all the systems that we have put in place.
We call them, industry, education, law, medicine and so on.
At the moment, we have a situation where,
Each system is fighting to survive,
And that is why each tries to come out as superior.
But to be fair, we have to give the system a face,
And what we then have, is a face that resembles mine and yours
too.*

*If it is the traditional culture that has died because of modernism,
Then it is you who is responsible for that.
Perhaps one could blame destructive thought,
But then again, you bring the thought to action.
It is you who have abased yourself to its power.
You who now thinks that you are powerless.
It is certainly you who is willing,
To fight your neighbour for some meaningless possession.
You who are willing to jail your brother,
For selling poisoned food.
Yet at the same time, you are not doing anything,
To be responsible for the production of your own food.*

*It is you who accept that this is a lost generation,
And yet at the same time, contribute to its destruction.
Are you not the producers of artificial seeds?
Are you not the producers of genetically modified organisms?
Are you not the inventors of grafting?
Are you not the producers, and directors of pornographic material?*

*Are you not the drafters of the constitution,
And the school rules, the work rules, and all rules of engagement?*

*Try as much to exclude yourself from any of these activities,
But you will not be successful.
The fact will always remain, you are me, and I am you.
Your failure is mine, and likewise, my success is yours.
Ladies and gentlemen, if you blame me for a particular evil,
Just know that you were involved in it somehow.
And if you celebrate my success,
Then your involvement was present, however invisible.
Walk out of this place only after you have contemplated this."*

The birds pecked at the window pane longer this time, somehow with the knowledge that their interlocutor was done. The old man started to walk back to his seat. In the middle of the hall, he hesitated a bit, and then continued walking past his old sitting position. Everyone followed his movement as if he was their point of connection. Instead of getting seated again, he went straight to the door. At the door, he stopped again, and looked at Ndada. They stared at each other for a long time, and Ndada began to see some familiar resemblance in his face. No, it was not the face of the system that he had talked about, there was something else.

Before Ndada could process the information coming to his mind, he opened the door, and the brightness of the sun set the whole room ablaze. After he walked out, people remained

seated as though they were led to deep contemplation. Because no one other than the old man had noticed Ndada's presence, he decided to leave too. Things were just as they were earlier—silent. Only, one thing was bothering Ndada, as he walked along the street, obviously peering from one direction to the other, he could not see the old man.

Surely, slow as he had been, it could not be that he had outrun Ndada. Some part of him was really wishing to see, and even get to talk with the old man. A few minutes later, he was at the last turn that led to his house. He had to let go of the thought of meeting the old man ever again. He got into the house, and a mellow languor took over his body almost immediately. This feeling of inertia had never taken over his body like this, and as he lay in bed to rest, he helplessly began dozing off. The last thing Ndada thought about, was that the old man was the only one who had not introduced himself on the dais. Could it be that everyone knew his name, except him?

The Drunk

Conceived on the 29th of January 2023

I walk side by side, hand in hand with my beloved. It is more of a sprint, because we are moving faster along the stream. The water is so clear that I can see the fish. They swim freely, perhaps because they are sure to reach maturity, and give birth to their offspring, without the disturbance of being cut from the Universe prematurely.

We stop at a mound, and I stare at my beloved, admiring her facial features. My hands rest on her shoulders. Suddenly a wave of emotion rushes through me, and I begin to sing, and she joins the verses as if we practised this duet; but no, it is from my mind. This experience I relish, and I want it to last for as long as it could. Here she is sitting on the mound, and I am kneeling on the sand in front of her.

The wind blows, and some of her hair covers her face. With my left hand, I take the strands one by one, and put them back with the rest. I cannot resist the temptation to touch the contours of her face. Her beauty is beyond measure, and even if I were given a thousand years to live, I still would not find the words to describe it. She breaks into a smile as I tell her that I love everything in her face except one. "And what could that be?" Watching her intently to catch her expression, I say, "You should have been darker, at least that way, there would not be a sharper contrast between you and I."

She pushes my head slightly to the left with her index finger, with minimal effort, but I feign weakness, and leave my whole body to start falling. She has no option but to catch my fall. Having succeeded in tricking her, I start laughing as I get up abruptly, and break into a sprint. Now like young kids, she begins to chase after me, saying, "Come back here you treacherous dark-skinned man." I must have laughed so hard

that I became short of breath. I am then left with no option but to stop running. I can feel her coming for me full throttle, but I do not know what she would do next...

Suddenly, I am awoken from my fantasy by a hot slap. My awareness comes back to me, and I find myself kneeling; and lo, I am yanking at the bar attender's dress! I catch the smile fading from my face, and feel my eyes moist with tears—from the observer's point of view, it would be surmised that the cause of the tears was the painful slap, but they really are tears of joy; and besides, the intensity of the slap could not compare to what I felt, in what now seemed, an imagination. All around me, the whole lot of drunkards burst out in peals of laughter. Their vicious look is upon me, so sharp, I feel it peering into my consciousness. Well, that is me, I am the drunk. The one who slapped me is the bar attender's husband. This is due to the strict hands-off policy at this brew joint.

In my days as a drunk, I have never snoozed in the bar, and if whatever I had was a dream, it was the first one. My judgement is always fuzzy though, so sometimes it is hard to confidently say what my reality is. That said, it is not something that worries me. All is well as long as I am breathing. I was breathing in that dream, and now I can feel my breath. There must be some connection between that dream, and this one, the one we call real life, but what is the difference? My senses were working, just as they are now. I could feel the intensity of the sun, just as I do on any sunny day. I know that I did not need to be dead to cross the bridge between the two realities, it is like a marriage. A union between two partners. I take a gulp from my bottle, just to confirm if my sense of taste is still working right. Maybe as I came back from that rare dream, something about me had changed. A few seconds later, I get the feedback; the drink tastes the same.

In this reality, some may say that I am single, but to others

I am married to the bottle. Maybe there is no physical sign that we are, like rings, but marriage is just marriage. Whether done in secret, or out in the open for all to see. And what is the difference between this, and any other marriage anyway? I invest every day in this marriage, just like any married couple does. We communicate every day, and I am faithful, or loyal, whichever word works for you. Bear in mind, that other couples offer each other the silent treatment when things go sour. And there is no question of abuse here, that is not in our realm. You can make your own conclusions as to which marriage is a better choice.

Talking about marriages, we have them in different kinds. Some claim that they are married to Christ. They wear rings in their hands, and sometimes, matching necklaces and earrings, that are adorned with the symbol of the cross. Of course the Christ is still crucified on them. Now, if you ask me, while the wearers seem to have a choice on who to marry, the Christ seems to be devoid of choice, owing to the fact that he is crucified, still. He has no freedom at his disposal. And just how many people can be married to the Christ? Men too have not fallen short of falling behind this wagon.

Others are said to be married to their jobs. They have less time for their family, and even themselves. For them, their creations seem like orphans. And yet everyone claims to be sane! We need to rethink the definition, and thin line between sanity, and insanity. Those mental facilities could be occupied by the wrong kind indeed. See how sometimes it is hard to know who is sober, and who is drunk. With all the resources spent on researching mental conditions, it is embarrassing that we still cannot differentiate a sound mind, from an unsound one. Perhaps, those doing the research should first make sure that they are of sound mind. Otherwise, as a matter of fact, their research is determined, first, by their state of mind.

Finally, there are those who would give anything, to be involved in anything that would fit between the brackets of an engagement. They would not mind being engaged in an argument, meaningless talk, or anything to satisfy their feeling of belonging. They have probably been wondering why everybody else is either married, or engaged yet they are not. I wonder if the preaching about faith, and patience would assuage their worrisome condition. They fear holding the status, 'single'. Some of them would easily hide under the 'married to Jesus' camp, but deep down, they are jealous of their friends' engagements. I on the other hand, am loyal to my companion.

This beautiful long neck could never nag at me about how much time I spend away. How so, when I spend more time with her. Did someone not just sing the other day that they were drunk in love, and everybody sang along happily? Yet, drunks are looked down upon in society. I cannot even begin to connect the dots right now. Perhaps we need a philosopher's point of view, and a sober one at that.

What a jolt back to reality that was. I guess as I trembled in my vision, I wet my pants, but it is not noticeable. That dream must be powerful, but it is not as powerful as the spirit that brought it fore. My partner, the long neck, I massage her delicate curves after taking a gulp down my throat. See, they say that after sipping this concoction, then one becomes as brave as a lion. I was brave in my dreams, yes, but now all I am is a lion rained on. If I cannot stand on my wobbling feet consistently for five minutes, how can I give my prey a chase?

And they say that my spirit belongs to the Lord. Perhaps the concentration of spirit in this bottle is just higher, because I cannot feel the former. I cannot smell it, and neither can I touch it. But right here is a true manifestation. Whereabouts of 40% concentration, now that is something. Perhaps my spirit belongs to God still. Maybe that is why I do not even

scantly feel it. But I wonder, all the same, why God would be holding on to what is mine. Yet, they preach that there is a loving God!

I would be a drunk to heed those pastors' teaching. Just yesterday, some patriarchs were arguing amongst themselves, whether this spirit is ours or God's. Someone said that when we die, we have to give it back to God. Sounds more like a hired, or borrowed coat to me. What does this God gain from hiring out a soul to us anyway? If you think about it, we are almost seven billion bodies on this planet. If God were to reap the benefits from hiring out His souls, then He must be smiling all the way to the bank. Just a conniving entrepreneur like the rest!

No wonder His soldiers on the ground, all these spiritual teachers and what not, are a true representation of Him. Always hiring out blessings to the ones who can cough something more. They are the real swindlers, and they do not even pay taxes for their harvest. On top of that, there is this thing they call ten percent that is required from their sheep. Now look at me sitting here, yet I know the language of these serpents. Their hissing sounds are all too familiar. How do those sheep, in worship centres, not see the wolf in sheep's skin standing in front of them?

In the crusade next to my shelter the other week, I heard them say that a drunk will burn in the fires of hell. But I wonder whether this hell really exists. A fire that never burns itself out has never been seen with the naked eye. So are the hissing sounds trying to say that God will burn his soul? Now that is not a good business decision, considering that he will need to hire it out to a new born somewhere. Is this not eating the goose with its golden eggs and all? And of course, the decaying body minus the soul is devoid of feelings. It will not feel pain at all. Perhaps they need to specify which one, between the soul and the decaying body, will be thrown in the

everlasting fires.

Heaven is even so non-existent, because they said that there are actually three heavens. 'The heavenly bodies, scientifically, that is, the heaven which is well known to those that are saved and ...' I was too drunk to hear it all. It is interesting though that as high as I was, I still was not experiencing a single version of their heavens.

Here at the booze joint we pay for what we drink, with what we sweat for. Even those who drink the cheapest drinks get to pay for them. We are an honest enterprise, and we overtly boast about it. By far, this is not a pyramid scheme. Yes, sometimes we get discounts, but it is only well deserved.

See, drunks are honest. Has everybody not come across those con men who call themselves entrepreneurs. They tell you magical stories of how they were able to get rich in a jiffy. They keep posting pictures of their random flight experiences, and the greasy meals they have in posh restaurants. The good life huh! Now, this is a good trap for this microwave generation. They always want to make money, and fast!

A chameleon of a person approaches you dressed in a suit, that in worldly standards, is too expensive. They tell you that you should invest a few of your thousands with them. Grinning, they say that in no time you will be a millionaire. And before you ask, they say that the only catch is to bring in new members on board; and before you know it, your money will be working for you, as you go for those splashy holidays.

An interesting question could be put to you. For instance, what is your dream car? And you, with the toll that life has had on you, you still manage to say, "A range rover." In your innocence, you do not figure that the question was well thought in advance, it could be two weeks, or even ten years, depending on how long the chameleon has mastered his skills; or to put it straight, how many people they have conned.

So he gives you the calculation, "The price of a range rover right now is ten million Kenyan shillings. If you were to do casual jobs paying ten thousand shillings monthly, it would take you eighty- three years just to get your dream car. But let's get practical, in eighty-three years, you would be over one hundred years. Who drives when they are at a hundred, would you even have eyes to see straight? So practically, your dream is unachievable.

"On the other hand, if you were to take this opportunity, that guarantees you one million monthly, it would only take you one year to get your dream car". And what is the catch? You have to first invest your one hundred thousand, then get two of your friends to invest their a hundred thousand. Your friends will then find their friends to invest a hundred thousand. This story, again, could be told differently, depending on who the masters of the con man are; but eventually, the story must end with you investing as a show of faith. You must sow to reap; don't you agree?

All this will happen in broad day light, but if you happen to catch the chameleon at night, you will understand the meaning of a hired gun. You will remember how you almost felt sorry for yourself, in the presence of the lad clad in a suit. And perhaps the saying, "Not all that glitters is gold," might ring a bell. It would suddenly dawn on you that he was just a chamillionaire. Then you bitterly remember that, nowadays thieves and liars work day shifts, and sleep at night, just like every normal person does. Those who burn the midnight oil, waiting for them to come, will have wasted their sleep for no reason. And while you are getting conned of your money, a drunk in all his honesty, is just enjoying himself in high spir-its.

Now, I may have pulled the hem of the bar attender's dress, but we have a business relationship. This one cannot be broken. I wonder how my other romantic relationships,

have not been able to hold water though. See I am not dishonest, as I do not cheat. So, I cannot stay away from the bottle for a day too. She who loves me, has to come to terms with this fact, and fall in love with that part of my life too. I will not forcibly pour it down their throat. They just have to recognise that I am a lover of the drink.

Glancing at my wrist, I know my time to leave is nigh. This, even though I have no wrist watch. What is the need for all these clocks and watches, in the wake of instinct, and intuition? Does one not feel the call of nature reach out to them, and they do pay respect, and respond? Just a glance and a nod to my friends is enough to send a signal, that we will meet the next day.

The bar attender returns my gaze too. Of course, she had to, I am one of her most consistent customers. In fact, one of the pioneers. For that reason, nobody takes my spot, even when I am gone. She does not take this as a bad business decision, because, she has chosen to put her faith in the devil she knows. She has had experiences with passers-by who talk too much, promising to change station, but they in the end prove to be unreliable, as their words. I step out of the noises, and into yet a different type of noise. In the bar, only my sense of smell and taste had to be active; but in here, or out there, all my senses have to be active at once. Now how difficult can life be out there?

I walk so fast in the busy street and get to my shelter. There is a television on the wall, but I rarely switch it on. If it were conscious, it would ask loudly how I sing and dance in the bar, but offer it silent treatment, not even touching it. The radio on the table seems to have caught dust. A close look will reveal cobwebs all around it. What is the point of turning these on, when I get my news from the bar? I do not even have to pay the slightest attention to the deliverer of the news, or how it is being delivered. And most interesting, is that

every caster will come with varying versions. Now tell me what this is, if not television channels, and radio stations.

With all the mugging, people burning themselves together with their family in houses, because they can no longer fend for them, floods carrying household property, and depositing them in faraway lands; who in their right mind, would want a second dose of news? It is in newsrooms where one story is cut into small portions, like episodes cut from a film, and each portion is discussed thoroughly, trying to cover the story from different angles. All this is in a bid to show the esteemed viewer, and listener, that all is lost, and there is no hope at all. But sometimes, I imagine it looking like a mother chewing food, and then putting it in the baby's mouth, thereby negating the need for chewing, so they just swallow. What an easy way, to consume what has already been packaged for you!

In the end, the positive feeling of one good news, is negated by two or three bad news, more like a debate; and that is what makes news at the end of the day, that there is nothing good for now. And even if the owner of the television, was to sit with the remote for a hundred years, switching from one channel to the other, there would be nothing new that he has never heard of before.

As I remove my shoes, I remember how I walked into an electronics shop, one day after receiving my salary. It was one of those days, that I had lied to myself for a long time, that I needed to be up to date with current affairs. I was excited for having the ability to purchase a television, and a radio. The fact that I could easily connect with, or be at one with other people in different parts of the world, thrilled me. Everything else felt right on that day, until I took the gadgets home, and went out to my booze joint.

Thinking of my actions later, it seemed weird to me, that I wanted to know what happened to other people. People scattered all over the world, basically strangers. The thing that

did not make sense here was that, after knowing what was happening, there was nothing I could do to change their situation—for the better. And worse was the fact that, I had people I called relatives, but we rarely had time even for banalities.

None of those I called relatives, wanted to know what was happening in my life, and neither did I bother to ask what was happening in theirs. But news always has a way of reaching us. One way or another, you would always get wind of a funeral, a wedding, or a new born in the family. All these would be heard without a struggle. Therefore, I would not need the television, or the radio, for the purpose I thought of before. It dawned on me that I had made that mistake, only because I was sober at the time of purchase. I mean, I make sense of things when I am drunk, more than when I am not.

I spent the whole evening looking at the long neck, I have no patience left for the television, least of all, the radio. The money I used, would have returned tremendous interest, had I invested it elsewhere. Too tired for everything in this world, except for the bed, I head for the bedroom. As I close my eyes, the vision I had in the bar still lingers in my head. Strange vision it is; now, who is going to slap me out of this one. I am too tired to fight it anyway, so I let it trifle itself...

My beloved stops beside me, surprisingly breathing normally, as if she did not just chase after me a few seconds ago. After my breath returns to normal, she grabs my hands and puts them on her tummy. Meanwhile, she is looking into my eyes, expecting me to guess the meaning of her actions. As though she senses some kind of cluelessness in me, she says, "My love, within me is our creation, mine and yours."

The news has caught me by surprise, and my heart beats faster to confirm it. Now looking at her tummy, as if it is new to her too, she lays both hands on mine and asks, "Do you feel it?" I am not sure if I give an audible reply, but a ripple of

joy runs through my body. It is hard to tell if it was from me, or her, specifically her tummy. I do not get the privilege to analyse, because in my head are born new thoughts.

I am already having visions of the new born. For some reason, the new born appears to me as a boy, probably because that is what I had hoped for. I had always had it in me, that I would first have a boy, then later, a daughter, when my son had been a bit older.

In my head, I had always been confident with my plan. I had envisioned how everything would fall into place; my small happy family in a beautiful garden of our own. But what I was feeling right then, reminded me that I had not imagined everything to detail. Perhaps I had underestimated the emotional energy, of the moment I would learn of my child's conception.

So it was all coming to pass, this beautiful goddess and I were going to start a family! So, it is true, I am going to be responsible for someone, other than my beloved. How fun would it be, when he opens his eyes, and sees the beauty of mother nature? What would he do then, when he sees us, his parents? That very first time when he would call me father, and her, mother. I had always wanted to create a new generation, and this is now it. It is done. The lineage of my fore fathers would continue through my son. Here comes a continuation of the Father's creation. One who would see some flaw in his parents' lifestyle, and seek to live better. Then we would do nothing, because of the freedom bestowed on him by the Father.

This young one would have his eyes open, just observing, and secretly making his own conclusions. He would look at us, his parents, ticking and crossing what he desired, and what he did not, respectively. Though in the end, he would not say it straight to our faces, but it would be seen in his actions. I had always thought of giving my child the freedom to

learn unconventionally, and unhindered. All I planned was to ask him questions, and get his opinion on the things he had observed. It would be good to learn the knowledge he had come with, from wherever forces that had formed him.

What purpose had the Father thought of for this son of his? It was hard to believe, that one day when he was all grown, he would look me in the eye, and say that he needed to pursue his purpose. One that the Father had shown him, and all this, without the Father speaking loudly to him. That one day, he would come home, and tell me that he had found the one he would spend life with... I did not realise I was lost in thought, until I felt my beloved's hands in my face. She wiped the tears flowing from my eyes. and said, "My love, everything we dreamed of will come to pass, all in its exact form and order. We, together, can make anything come alive. We can bring back to life those forms whose energy is dissipating. We are creators, and so is our creation, having composed of our energy, and those of the Universe." To those words I could not add anything. I just pulled her closer and hugged her...until I woke up to find myself hugging my pillow.

I sat up on the bed wondering what madness had gotten into me lately. I had never in my life contemplated having children. The reason is quite simple. I have always looked at the world as a failing project of the Creator. I bet Himself He was unable to fathom its filthy state. I could never imagine bringing an offspring of mine in this wretched place. A place where everything was falling apart. A world where plantation was dying, the air getting dirtier, and water being polluted. If I was having a hard time surviving, would my child even survive for a minute in this environment?

Would he not get sick just by breathing in? I am sure his lungs would flush out the oxygen from his system immediately. And what is a living creature that does not breathe if not dead? If I took the water that I bathe in, and tried to wash

his body with, he would surely be ridden with diseases. His skin would reject it, probably because of the contamination. Would his stomach accept the artificially grown and processed food? The most probable result, is that his gut would flush it all out. I do not foresee a different outcome for drinking water.

From the moment of its birth, my offspring would break into a cry. A heart breaking cry that would be a communication to me, that he would not like to continue living in this poisoned space. But the nurses' eyes would be beaming in excitement, celebrating yet another successful delivery. Now, what is the real definition of madness? Maybe we should really ask why those we call mad men, do not contemplate giving birth.

My awareness registers that today my body feels unusually warm, then I realise that I have been clutching on to my pillow the whole time. I slowly put it back on the bed, but it feels like my hands are not glad to let it go. I have to get ready to face another challenge ahead. It is a new day, and I have to go out, and get sun burned to get a pay, even if it is a pittance. Before I head for the shower, I stop to look at myself in the mirror. What is this dream implying that there could be a different reality than this? That I could spend some time, in a little corner of paradise, without having the urge to crave the bottle. A reality suggesting, that I was only drinking to lie to myself that everything in the world was dying, and the situation could not be saved.

Now that dream is the only thing that had to be left to die. That was the only lie, and I did not need spectacles to see it clearly. Tricking me into believing that my assumption of this reality—my reality, was erroneous. That there was an alternate reality where I could be happy. I could not deny that in my dream I was happy, and so was my beloved. I was certain that my child would be happy too. I touched my forehead to

check if I was coming down with a fever. When I did not feel it, I checked my neck. I was obviously not feeling well, and I hoped that at least there was a symptom of an illness, whatever it was.

It would be better if I knew what was going to put me down. Illnesses are accidental; the only reason why I did not see this coming. But what illness is this without symptoms? I have been thinking about mental illness, and maybe it has started manifesting in me. Do they not say that what we think about manifest? Then it would be my fault if this illness spread any further. But how can I treat what I do not know. Perhaps I have been sick all along, and a cure has been presented to me in my dream. My God, how troubling it is to think that I have been healthy, when the opposite is true?

All these thoughts are surely going to set me into digging my own grave. So that is where I leave the matter, and I head for the shower. I hope the cold water will rid me of these predicaments beginning to develop in me. But a brilliant idea strikes my mind. It would be best if I double my intake of alcohol, so that I do not feel anything from either of the realities. It would be analogous to numbing all my senses, genius!

Sermon on the Fountain

Conceived on the 31st of January.2022

Talk too much, and you say that you walk the talk.
I wonder why your feet are not swollen already

If you put your money where your mouth is,
You'd be cautious not to run your mouth,
Lest you risk losing your money

If you run your business like you run your mouth,
You would have made tremendous financial success by now.

If you don't know how to take care of this body,
Then you won't know how to take care of anybody,
There is no other way around it.

If true wealth is in heaven, and heaven is within,
Then why am I seeking?

If I know who I am, and I don't need to prove it,
Then why am I tweeting?

If my body is the kingdom of God,
Then I won't get tired of sweeping.

If I said that I love you, with all I am,
Does it sound like I'm preaching?

You say you mind your own business,
But you keep looking at the neighbours',
Tell me, why are you peeping.

If you love me unconditionally, as you say,
Then why am I pleading?
This love is really fleeting.

If you claim that you are authentic,
And that you are true to yourself,
Then why are you so focused on pleasing?

If I have to be rich to make you happy,
Then we are already poor,
And the relationship is just hanging on a thread,
Next breath we're done for.

If I have to justify what I am doing,
Then I'm not living for myself,
And I'd rather stop and do nothing at all.

If I have to buy my way into your heart,
Then I would rather let my heart negotiate,
'Cause if not, I wouldn't afford the price.

If I have to lie to be accepted and respected,
I'd rather stay silent and forever hold my peace,

Lest it comes back to haunt me.

I don't know myself,
In the sense that my name is only an identifier,
To be used as a point of reference.

I don't know myself,
In the sense that I know everything,
Except those that I don't know.

I don't know myself,
In the sense that quenching my desires,
Does not mean that I have conquered my cravings.