

THEMES

LGBT

SYRIA

HAPPY ENDINGS

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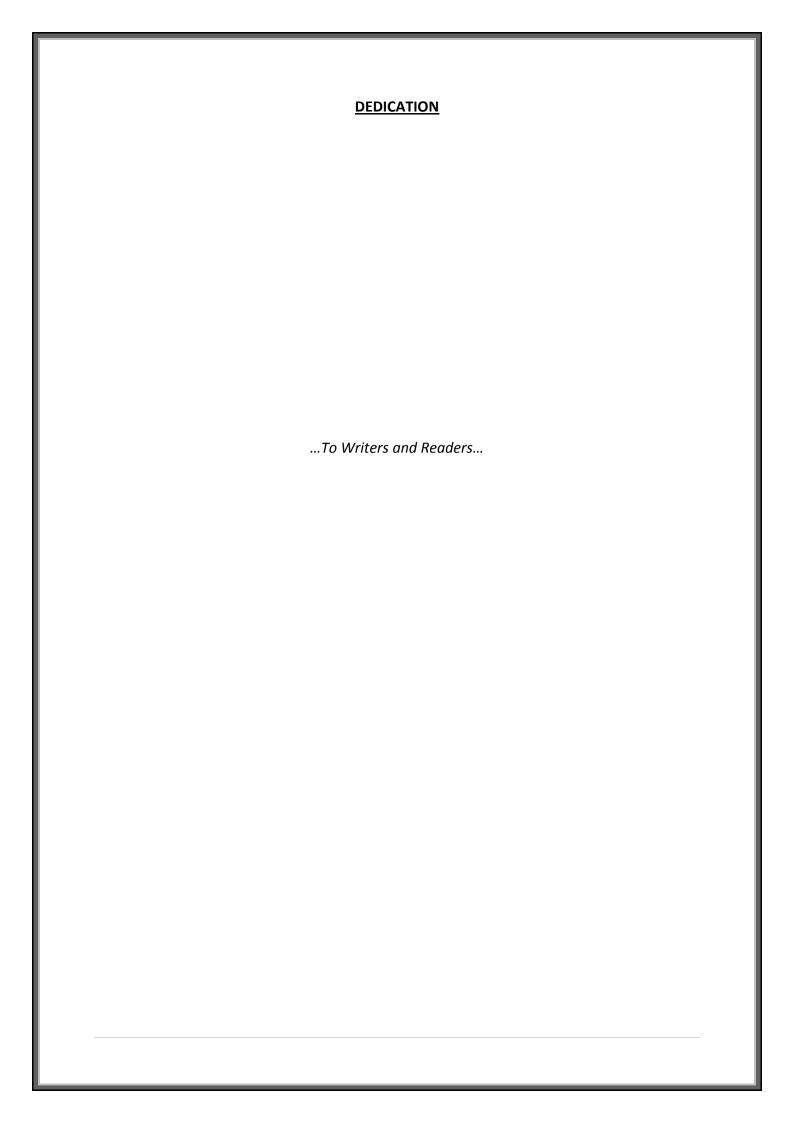
OMOLOLA ONIGBINDE

PAULINE DAFEI

RACHEL CHARLES

THOMAS BOT

VERA BONNY



1.

Trans.

Sativa mixed up strong in decisions.

A reproach too wild for a transgression.

Learning to relieve that which is unloved.

Relive the unloved and somehow evolve.

She's making him, he's trying to break her.

Bi.

Craving another same, like child to breast.

Fearless and selfish choices seem selfless.

Equal satisfaction still on these sheets.

A two-way dealing in a one-way street.

Gay.

Claws shredding the veins of another.

Desire sprouting without being watered.

Germinating the seed that's not planted.

Firm belief held tight with a strong grip.

Wins and losses, still loving same gender.

Lez.

Leticia sensually desiring Aisha.

Soft lips locking on dry cracked lips,

Conversant with the road leading to this.

Gasping, hands coupled this breast. Nina.

A female to another female, loved.

PAULINE DAFEI

In the beginning was desire

Wrapped in a fine cloak but tagged unnatural.

As expected, a vein too strong for cover

Let the blood from a slit desire flowed.

This began the walk of seeking meaning

Honeyed, comb too sweet, too sour for one soul
Dashed to sidelines walked by the downtrodden.
This community is for all misfits
All types of stereotypes branded the same
The poor, forgotten, broken, saboteurs.

Like melted wax too cold for use is this love

Not burning out or emptying its core

Forbidden fruits being sweetened on earth's crust

Set for tasting to give credence to flesh

So we change party clothes to act the part

Someone told the tree he was not welcomed
Just because her leaves wore a different shade
Before now, all we were was a garden
When will we return to being trees, leaves, fruits;
Littering the world with colours of love?

JENNIFER DAFWAT

When we met, I knew nothing of this craving.

But as time passed and my virtue with it,

As your fingers locked mine as did your eyes;

Your touch was all that mattered, twin sister.

Your hair, curves, whispers and secret escape.

They were young and shy, but not anymore

This is the part they chose, they need not lie

We can rave, from North to South, who really cares?

It was his kiss that kept him through the night

Sin or not, seen or not, he deserves him.

Bola told me she could take you and me.

She does not care what it might make of her

Kola broke her heart and fled with her mind

She said she would come; a threesome tonight.

And every night henceforth, her mind is cast.

Hate me, love me, I am more than I seem!

A bit of him, a piece of her, that's me!

My body parts are testaments of wonders

Not born of earth, miracles beyond man!

Call me transgender, I am beautiful!

DAVID ONOTU

1.

Syria, the land of serial wars.

I asked Syria why she goes to war,

Someone in the North echoed, "To protect!"

A southern fried body hinted, "Respect!"

Like the waste that lay in wait in the West,

The East sings a sorrowful, heartfelt dirge.

The bodies, dreams, hopes and aspirations

Of young promising children and women,

Experiencing such limitations,

Taking all to war in hundreds of men.

Syria wore peace, once upon a time.

They blame the Americans for their nakedness.

A people known for stepping out of line.

Taking over potentially rich stalls.

War masks Syrian traditions and culture

While being feasted upon by a vulture.

Pray for Syria, we hear. America?

It's a replica of Hiroshima.

Syria, stay fighting! One day you'll win!

One day you'll kill and it won't be a sin!

DAMILOLA AGBOOLA

On top the plains of troubled waters

Exists utmost fertility.

A desert full with the richness of crude

Whose kids wear kinky hair and shiny beard

As gods and goddesses of nature's beauty.

Damascus, your favourite son is sick.

From the sickness your forefathers begot,

Dining with greed on the table of lust.

They care less of you and the next to come.

For dialogue, they slay with swords of power.

Politics come with guns. Don't ask me why.

Your blessings brought their curse. You gave in. Why?

Ba'athist coup, Civil wars, Bomb blasts kill. Why?

Your wealth is weighed on scales of bullets. Why?

I guess my questions are rhetorical.

Gifts of life are a curse in the land of yours.

Your flag waves to freedom in chains of death.

The dead litter your streets like litter of leaves.

As far as the sky, your offspring will flee

Until you kneel to peace, faced down on both knees.

BAMVY JAURO.

HAPPY ENDINGS

1.

Driving through the thick fog of widowhood,
Her sun seemed without plans of rising.
Days are puzzles not to be understood.
High as she forges, she finds herself diving

She had tears because she had her fears

In her garden, weed and wheat are the same

But time's like a gardener with shears

He knows what to trim to precise aim

Toiling to rig holes through the heart of time

She must write on the palm of its gold scroll

Her axe is too blunt to break through the lime

Tomorrow is almost here for its toll

The ride was rough as the road was tough

She found her heaven, for she rode on love

THOMAS BOT

It will be embedded in my choices

I swear a glorious man will fix it

Chubby dimpled children with quiet noises

They will tug at my heart and flaws a bit

Uproars of past, my crooked beginnings

Will drown in family and choking love

I will forget shame and hatred's winnings

Serenity will mark me like a dove.

Give me family and i will forgive

Wrongs that trailed my start, chocking good in me

Release healing, possess me to relive

I will be roots of my own very tree

No glorious men in my dreamy realms

Only choice happy endings and strong helms...

OMOLOLA ONIGBINDE

BANGWAN USMAN

Body to body!
Hands running in and out of edges!
Breath in a choke hold; bloody!
Tongues tracing lines on bellies!
Voiceless activities!
A mouthful conversation,
Passionate anonymity
Heaving concentration.
Silence, comfortable silence
Melting into sizzling vibration.
Shadow dancing in gentle vehemence;
Argumentative eruption.
Everyone is happy and
That's the end.
DAMILOLA AGBOOLA

4.

The sun is certain at dusk of dawn

I lack that faith, for I'm made of flesh

Beaten by doubts, my heart is drawn

Weakened by fears, trapped in a mesh.

Songs of joy speak lyrics of pain

With rhythm and rhymes from a sad note.

I think of loss and less of gain,

Of what good are ropes if not for throats?

Suicide is all I see the walls breathe

My end is, here fate gave a nod.

For life is to pass, nearer is death,

"Bye and bye" I wrote beside a rod.

But belief is the gift I just received.

Life I have, once sadness, happiness relieved.

BAMVY JAURO

FAVOURITE SIN

1.
My palms crave for curves
My lips scout for full lips
A craving for what only sin solves
My eyes gladly drown into hips
I drink from dirty glasses
But this one comes with a special feel
I see clearer in dark places
The shelf of same ware, there's no better deal
I choose from many devils,
All lots lead to the same terminal.
Like seeking clean beans in bags of weevils,
The paths that end at the same cardinal.
Sin is a big bag of scorpions.
Why dig deep, it's a bag of no options.
THOMAS BOT

This oxymoron makes heads turn

Playing with nails pricked my laws

A sin with flames that will burn

Favorite sin and awesome flaws

My lies can soothe the dead

It says the grave is a five star Hall

Buy your goods and get a bed

Sleep in it, wake with a fall

A Fleeting pleasure

Bereft of glad tidings

Gold and ashes measure

A few findings

Now I dine with stones

The sick bed acquired bones

RACHEL CHARLES

Favourite means my best obsession.
A sin would be your worst decision.
How is there a best of your worst?
You lovingly address a 'distort'
Flip the coin and you can say;
It's your demons coming out to play.
Reminds me of good and evil,
Like how love is 'evol'.
My favourite worst choice?
You! My screeching voice
Unrepentantly basking
In activities demeaning.
Smack, retreat.
Pause, receive
DAMILOLA AGBOOLA

BAA BAA BLACK SHEEP!

1.
Blaa Blaa black man
Will you ever rise
above racism and thought slavery?
Aaya! Aaya! Yes I will
Above tribal wars
And disunity
And far above the tyranny of vanity!
Blaa blaa black child
Have you learnt to pray
that God should say aye to all our pleas?
Yes ma, yes ah, three times a day!
Once at the birth of man,
and once when he dies;
and once when he comes again to God's good earth.
DAVID ONOTU

2.

DIARY OF PRAYER

2.	
Dea	r diary,
On y	our skin my request I crest
With	n a heavy heart painted with sin
То с	uddle and offload my burdens
Awa	iting your delivery
To b	oring my heart to rest
Мур	pain in you I hide
Beca	ause in you, joy I find
My r	request today won't be same tomorrow
Som	netimes I see my prayers as phone calls
Som	e are missed, while others are picked.
But	having you, I trust I won't fall.
BAN	GWAN USMAN

TO HEAL A HEART

1.
I see the tears that you are hiding,
So I can tell your little heart is burning.
Here's a chance to heal by and by
If you'll listen to my lullaby.
I can sing your favourite dance
If only you'll give me the chance
I can dance your favourite song
Though I may get some steps wrong
I can see the queen behind these rags that you're wearing
And I know a throne that is befitting
I know the place to find a perfect rose
And I know a place where the seed of broken heart grows.
THOMAS BOT

2.
I can right that wrong lullaby
A dose each day to get by.
You can strum your heart's strings.
I hope each note sings
I promise to listen
To the silence in between.
Let the tears glisten
Like diamonds on a queen.
Let me help you find a place,
A haven for release,
Out of reach and far in space,
Filling every crevice with peace.
VERA BONNY

ANOMALY

1
Random was a circle in a square.
Aligning these two is never fair.
Some of us don't belong anywhere.
We try too hard but we just wear.
I am at ease with odd colours;
In a choir but singing solos.
Some hands come with six fingers.
Freedom resides where the shadow lingers.
VERA BONNY
2
2 Everyone and everything is tilted to the right,
Everyone and everything is tilted to the right,
Everyone and everything is tilted to the right, But I am just not quite.
Everyone and everything is tilted to the right, But I am just not quite. Courage calls for flight.
Everyone and everything is tilted to the right, But I am just not quite. Courage calls for flight.
Everyone and everything is tilted to the right, But I am just not quite. Courage calls for flight. Joy causes some kind of plight
Everyone and everything is tilted to the right, But I am just not quite. Courage calls for flight. Joy causes some kind of plight I walk where they swim
Everyone and everything is tilted to the right, But I am just not quite. Courage calls for flight. Joy causes some kind of plight I walk where they swim My vision and orientation are skewed

THOMAS BOT

EX, PLEASE SIT (EXPLICIT)

1.

So many letters to write,

But I would single this out and read to your single heart.

Ex, please sit.

You gave yourself a solid space. There you have it! Listen to what I have to say.

I wouldn't say you threw a gem away. You made a gem with your hands and flung it to the bin. At the brink of having a gold offering, you went back to square one to dine with pigs again. I marvel at your simple craze. What went wrong?

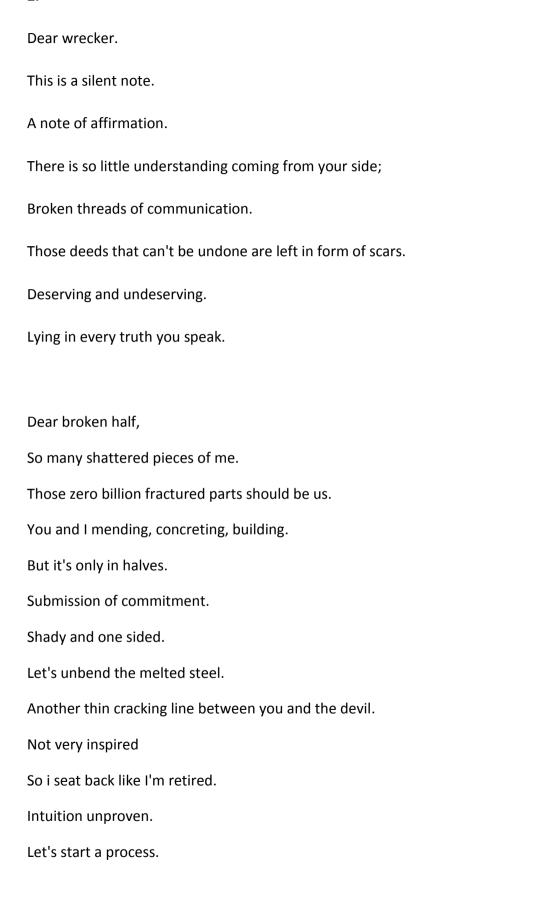
Ex, please Stand.

The position you are in right now determines a lot. For me or against me? You have no words to say because you sold them like a slave for peanuts and gay. I never saw this side of your humble dirt. I washed it even in snow, but your low life couldn't make you white. I thought I was the awe of you. I saw the wedding bells. Maybe it was just my view. Every dime went to dine. We kissed with fine wine. I promised to stay in thorns not the slay Queen who knew how to run when the cents were low.

Ex, please sit

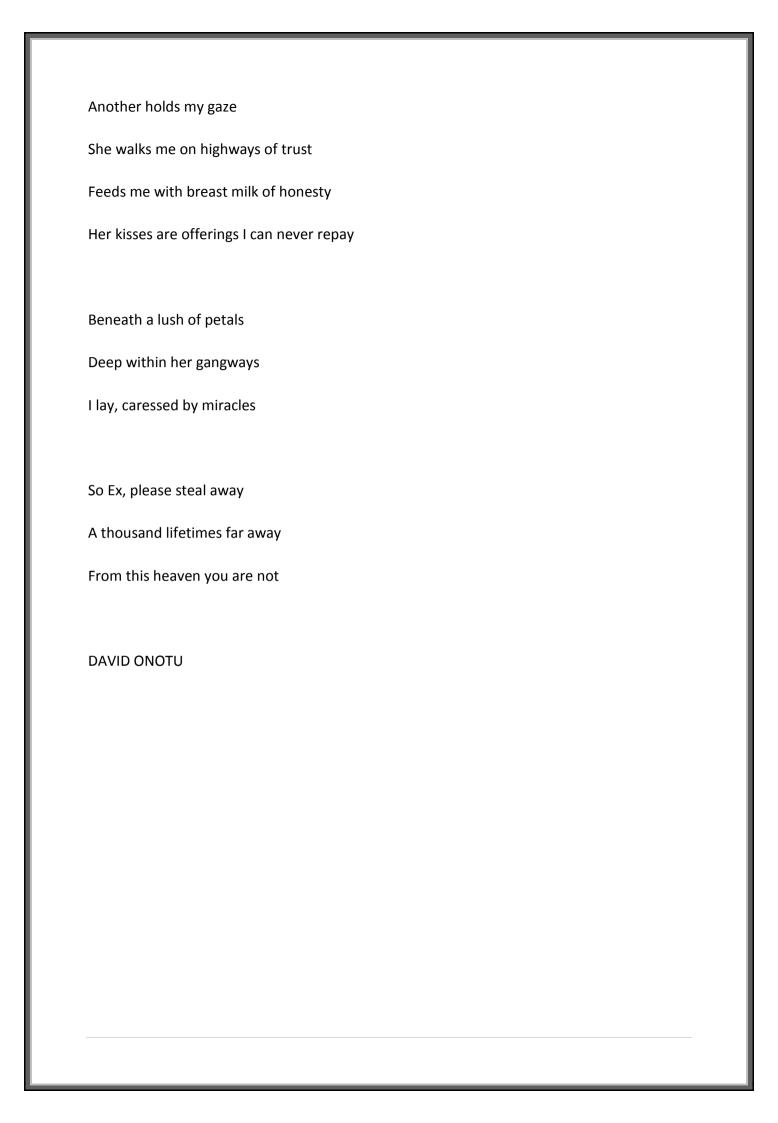
I need you to confess your very deed. Chant your mistakes like hymns, and sing like a canary. Oh! Broken wings to a warrior! The victory is not complete till you are almost done for. So speak let me hear your excuses. I brought a few bags so I can keep them there in...

RACHEL CHARLES



Dear ex, please sit. In those uncanny, derivative thoughts you have, what goes through them? A basic algebra is 1+1. I can't add you up to make a two. Camera in your hands yet you can't picture this. I'm a topic, a subject of interest. You can't give a definition. In theory you are X, i am Y. Yet departed like A to Z. Numbers and alphabets divided us and fixed us broken apart. **PAULINE DAFEI**

God! I hated it! The chains with which your presence Trapped my free spirited feet This hate, I many times satiate In the thunder-like thrusts I imagined were bolts of lightning To strike out your desire like sunlight at evenings How I wish my tongue was a poisoned dart You'd never have survived the kisses that I start So Ex, please leave Your nightly nagging wore me out Jealousy like molten magma Selfishness like narcissus sold out Betrayal and lies is all I can remember Ex please flee! Never again will you stand up to me With lips tainted with the tears of crocodiles



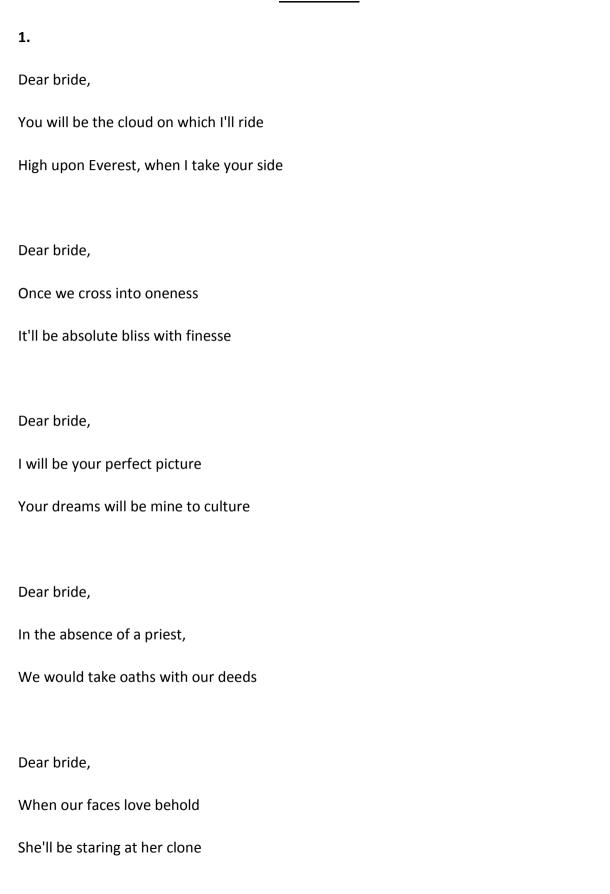
A CUP OF SUNLIGHT

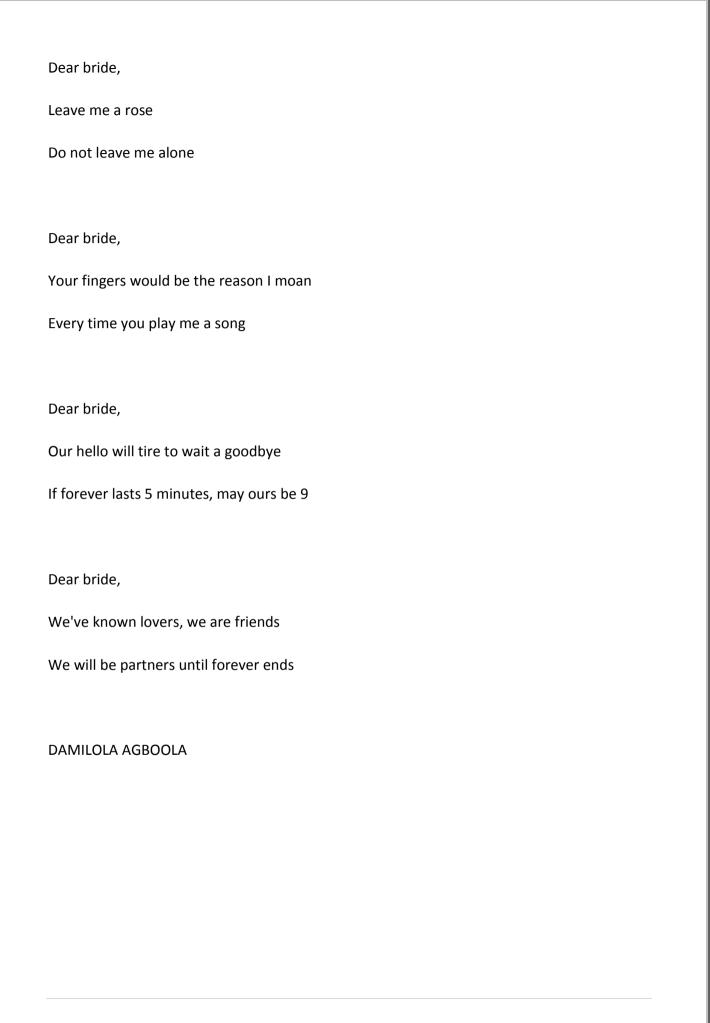
1.
Flowers are my favourite
Pink roses make me bright
A cup of glow makes beauty
Fine wench dine in splendour
Hail the queen of light
Living large like Leonardo
Anita Baker is my Lilly
I bask in her hairy euphoria
A green light tickles my fancy
I am happily fulfilling destinies
As I drink from the river of purpose
Let the sun guide my path
Let my words be my guard.

RACHEL CHARLES

THOMAS BOT

DEAR BRIDE





Bride dear,

I know the name will sound awkward

But just listen carefully to these alphabets

They will come in words, with a voice of sentence.

The voice might not return again.

But your intimacy with it will relieve your pain.

Bride dear,

Sometimes to your ears it will sound disgusting.

Sometimes it will disgust the same sound.

In your ability to accommodate it, your joy may be found.

Sometimes it'd come silently, sometimes, loud.

All I need you to do is just listen.

Bride dear,

Don't ask if the voice will wear same makeup with your hubby.

Because voices may not be related, but could wear same faces.

Swallow that down the throat of your skull,

And just listen, attentively.

Because marriage is a soft foam with a frame of stones.

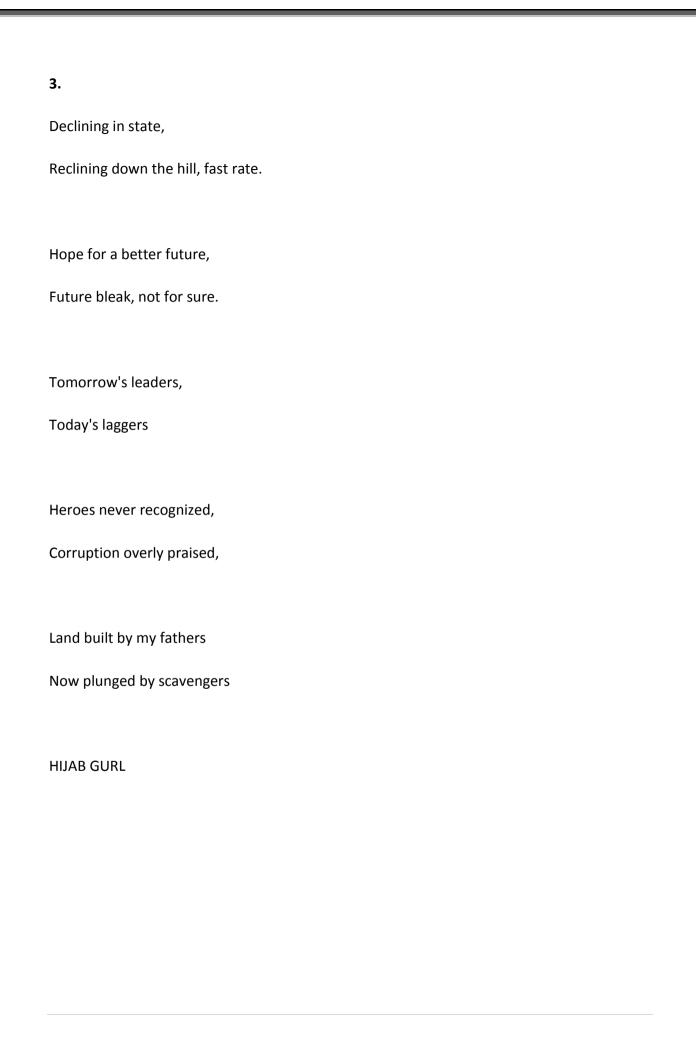
BANGWAN USMAN

THOMAS BOT

The I do to you supersedes any other I dos.

1.	•
A	state in a precarious state
E۱	very beautiful thing is for the bait
V.	nights lurking in corners of the night
	nights lurking in corners of the night
Pa	awns on blistered knees for the king to see daylight
Eı	mpty pockets have robbed stomachs of their content
	he old charms are no longer potent
•	ne old charms are no longer potent
ΤI	he compass struggling to keep its cardinals
W	hile the points demand their medals
Α	stick from the broom gets lost each day
W	/ith every new sun, a brick falls away.
T 1	UOMAS DOT
11	HOMAS BOT

2.
Their folded arms
Beg for denied alms
Lack has coated every lad
Streets are blooming with bad
Thieves have turned gods
Their arms are magnetic rods
Pulling a worm's feast
Bearing the charms of the beast
Our songs are laced with our woes
For we are our own foes
OMOLOLA ONIGBINDE



PRISON BARS

Behind these curtains I begged to see my freedom

Staring at me in my eyes with utmost pleasure

Should I go for fame and bury my name?

I refuse your deal, so you beat my feelings and lock up some dreams.

So I chant my words in this cage

Like I am paid the freedom wage

The tears formed chains around my wrist, but that's the reason why I live.

To stand tall and preach spoken word to the sick

Mandela bought a decade here which took him to the palace

Joseph had the slave robe but he (king of slaves) became 'king of Egypt'

So I see a royal land I will step in

My garment of elegance waiting

The throne is empty because it's my crown

I am behind these curtains kindling a happy frown

RACHEL CHARLES

A room with a boring atmosphere

Surrounded by sounds of metal doors.

Loud voices of armed men, instructing

Animals in human forms.

A room you can't decide who to be your neighbor.

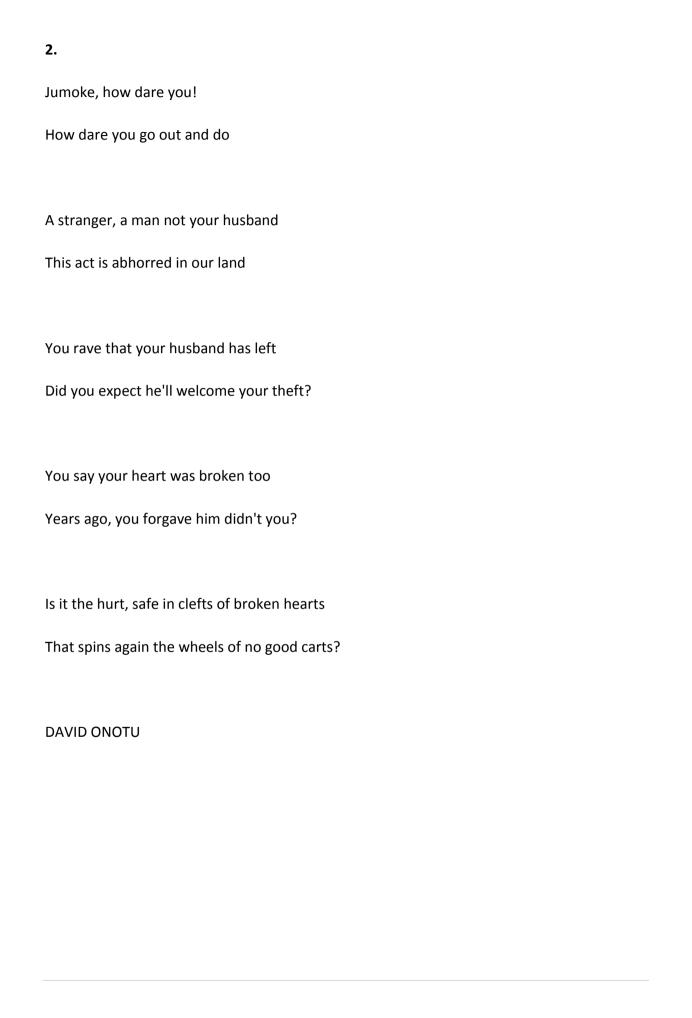
A room occupied by hard labor.

A room you can't step in, without the judge's permission.

BANGWAN USMAN

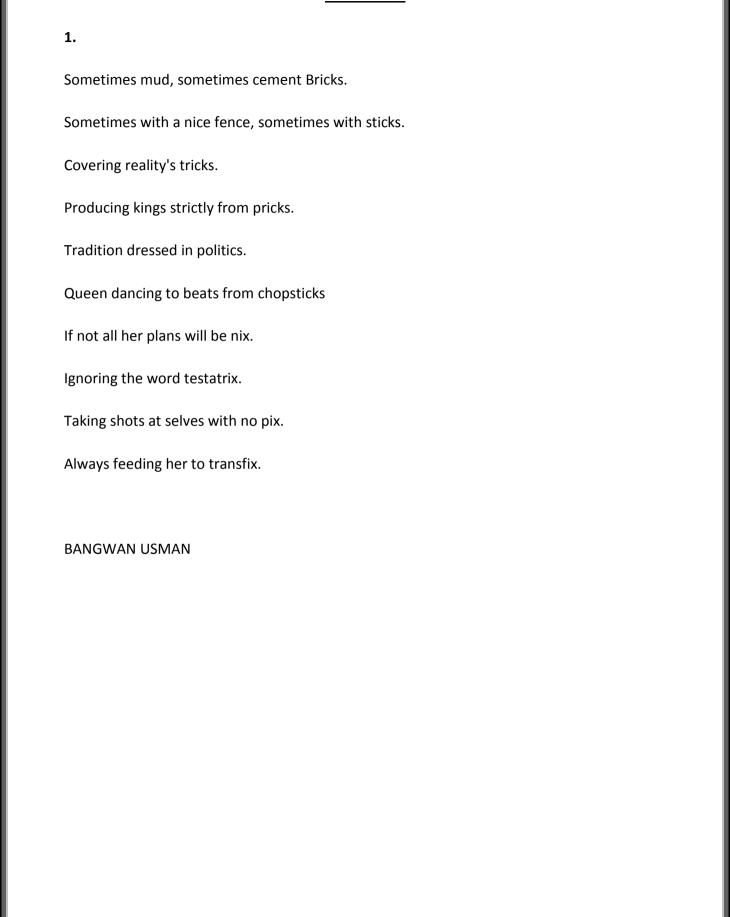
HEARTBREAK

1.
Torn apart by the words you say
Can I die like I never heard you pray?
When knees bent down to wish for a union
Can I pretend I never ate your onion?
Now this heart is torn apart by a single trip
Why did we make it work if we would trip?
Tears flow into the water I drink
Regret is my favorite pink
If the grave buries our memories
We would hold on to dust to form babies
RACHEL CHARLES



3.	
Two halves, we met and became whole	
Words and actions bore holes through our souls	
Those moments of bliss now hurt more	
Now hurt counters the moments from before	
Just one glass, now I know how toxic words can be	
Hurt is now a mirror reflecting me	
I tore our pictures but the memories stayed intact	
My heart's head collided, there's no telling the impact	
I have healed from the hurt of a broken bone	
But all the clouds of healing from this hurt are gone	
THOMAS BOT	

THE PALACE



A room filled with kings and a slave

Bent over and switched crowns in a grave

Light pleasures bought immoral cave

Casting flirts and dirt, a priestly rave

A curse can't elevate, neither can it save

Cuddled taboos, see what it gave

Lower standards pranks from King Dave

No heart constitution will save

No laws of the cursed land will pave

Slave is the beggar but the fave

RACHEL CHARLES

3.
A stunning beauty in the kraal
A king with a crown, standing tall
A splash of red gleams on one wall
Distant sirens, a futile call
Stairs curved in, spiraling a fall
Each door way had a porcelain doll
Those creaking floors have seen it all
Crystal's name rang in every hall.
VFRA BONNY

FACING MY DEMONS

1.
It's time to pack your unpacked pack and go
Deciding this point has been long and slow
This time, you've stepped out of line
To this farewell, I'll drink wine
I've seen all you have, nothing's left to show
I have had to run away for too long
All the directions I went turned out wrong
Will against your tiny wand;
Fist for a fist, now I stand.
Strum the strings of dawn, I've got a new song
THOMAS BOT

Give reasons why humanity fails.

Ban voices, forgetting how crazy sails.

Just pretend for a minute

Damning what wisdom would eat.

I cut one tail and out grows many tails.

VERA BONNY

SOUR WINE

1. They creeped into her soul

Through doors and spaces of pleasure

She was wine served to bigwigs

A dumpster for seeds that will never sprout

Their lustful souls devoured her charm

When her wine hole held little wonder

Her sweetness fermented to vinegar

They drank its sharp and rancid taste

She preserved their fantasies

Yet her soul staled sour

OMOLOLA ONIGBINDE

2. His words were felt in open sours.

Each alphabet carefully selected to hurt.

Unpalatable like a sour wine

Stale from nights of merriment,

He sat in mud and played with swine.

His sons drank from the same gorge.

Gave him a taste of his own bile.

He cursed their lot and called them vile.

They only sought to serve him right.

A drunk he was, but couldn't swallow this vine.

VERA BONNY

SHALLOW WATERS

1.	
If love is a heavy burden that kills	
Take my soul along with potion and pills	
Nail my sad thoughts to the cross	
Get another, a win or loss	
Blisters and blue joy walked me down the hills	
Like shallow waters, I don't mean a thing	
One sided lover and one sided wing	
Outward beauty with little joy	
Thick garment on a used toy	
Imagine shadows wearing a gold bling	
RACHEL CHARLES	

Not every pool is worth diving into

The superficial is hardly what you are

Lipstick does conceal split lips

Suits don't mean the man's for keeps

Both wets, there's a line between rain and dew

Unless you know the true depth, do not dive

Four can only try, but cannot be five

Bright face doesn't mean a bright brain

But all plants sprout from a grain

A thousand roaming bees don't make a hive

THOMAS BOT

I prepared for deep unending waters,

To consume, drown me in raging waters

His depth was length of my legs

I want out of these weak dregs

My depth can't drown in his shallow waters.

OMOLOLA ONIGBINDE

WARM BLANKETS

4	ı	
	ı	

The hands of silence are too cold

This distance is getting too old

Bring back the laughter that lit up this home

Give me that shoulder that made me bold

Yours are the only hands I want to hold

This nostalgia is suffocating

This little room is growing while I'm shrinking

Warmth lived here before you left

Now I'm lonely in a house full of people

Like unkempt clothes, my thoughts are rumpled

THOMAS BOT

I shudder under my skin in remembrance.

In the tinge of moments, two souls united.

How odds outnumbered the cause!

This frail body stood the test.

Surrounded by glaciers and moulds of ice,

The bridge of love broken by trust,

You emerged a lining at the end of the cloud.

Bespoke the words that melted the dunes.

You warmed your way and cast a glow.

Water made way for blood to flow.

VERA BONNY

Your paths will give you shivers

You'll take a bend and be sorry

Jealousy will create an army of hatred

Dragging you to mediocre pits

You'll need a fluffy heart

Warming your essence

You will return from the world

Some days trodden with woes

May family be warm blankets

When the world is raging cold

OMOLOLA ONIGBINDE

WORDS SHOULDN'T EVER LITTER, THEY SHOULD BE CAREFULLY LAID. FOR THOSE WORDS THAT HIT YOU AND TASTE BITTER, WE PRAY THEIR STINGS DO QUICKLY FADE. LET THE SCAR BE SOMETHING TO HEAL YOU. WASH IN HER RIVER AND EMERGE NEW-









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