

A teal silhouette of a group of people, possibly a family or a community, is centered on a yellow background. The figures are rendered in a simple, blocky style. The text is overlaid on the central part of the silhouette.

NINETEEN
ELEVEN
FIFTY-ONE

(THE CHAPBOOK)

EDITED BY LEONELL ECHA

THEMES

LGBT
SYRIA
HAPPY ENDINGS
FAVOURITE SIN
BAA BAA BLACK SHEEP
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A CUP OF SUNLIGHT
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SHALLOW WATERS
WARM BLANKETS

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THOMAS BOT
VERA BONNY

DEDICATION

...To Writers and Readers...

LGBT

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

2.

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

3.

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

SYRIA

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

2.

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

2.

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

3.

Life sometimes doesn't understand all.

And so do us too.

Regardless of how huge and tall,

We still look up to breakthrough.

To her husband, herself she gave,

Adored and called him Seth.

She worshiped and became his slave,

Loved and cherished him till his last breath.

But his attention, she never got.

Always with friends she never met.

Wakes her up with the clash of spoon and pot.

Lived a life she helped him regret.

Until Christ came with gifts of freedom,

She was in pain, tears and grief's kingdom.

BANGWAN USMAN

4.

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

5.

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

2.

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

3.

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.

Baa, baa, black sheep

Have you any food?

Yes friend, yes friend, three plates full!

One for grand ma,

And one for grand pa,

And one for the little boy

Who lives under the bridge!

Baa, baa, black sheep

Are you really black?

Because From here I can see white spots.

Or are those the scars of your wool?

Never mind, since grand ma, grand pa and the boy under the bridge

fed from your food.

BANGWAN USMAN

DIARY OF PRAYER

1.

Monday through Saturday, the pages stayed blank

Prayer fell off its rank

Sunday, oh Sunday, when did you become an eye service obligation?

Monday please pray and plead for redirection.

Today, Monday and Tuesday in one, I step on life's spike

So I prayed and fasted, but it felt like a hunger strike

When is a better day and time to pray?

Even when my lips pray my thoughts still stray

Dear diary of prayer without the prayers

We may need to set reminders

These visits must be more frequent than not

Today, Sunday again, we make a pact to tie our loose knot

THOMAS BOT

2.

Dear diary,

On your skin my request I rest

With a heavy heart painted with sin

To cuddle and offload my burdens

Awaiting your delivery

To bring my heart to rest

My pain in you I hide

Because in you, joy I find

My request today won't be same tomorrow

Sometimes I see my prayers as phone calls

Some are missed, while others are picked.

But having you, I trust I won't fall.

BANGWAN USMAN

3.

Dear diary,

I cannot tell tears from perspiration

Desperation grows through every utterance

So I return to make an enquiry.

Did God not hear me the last time?

Was my cry not loud enough?

My fears and doubts are no crime

I've just been having it rough.

Solidify my hide, a tough skin

Circumstances have maimed me

Patience as virtue and kin

Has moulded my thoughts anew.

VERA BONNY

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

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

Halogens are dark or at worst dim

Abnormal looks normal, normal is screwed.

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

2.

Dear wrecker.

This is a silent note.

A note of affirmation.

There is so little understanding coming from your side;

Broken threads of communication.

Those deeds that can't be undone are left in form of scars.

Deserving and undeserving.

Lying in every truth you speak.

Dear broken half,

So many shattered pieces of me.

Those zero billion fractured parts should be us.

You and I mending, concreting, building.

But it's only in halves.

Submission of commitment.

Shady and one sided.

Let's unbend the melted steel.

Another thin cracking line between you and the devil.

Not very inspired

So i seat back like I'm retired.

Intuition unproven.

Let's start a process.

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

3.

Like pods in a pea

Like fish to water

Skies to seas

And bread to butter

Inseparable was the chant that crowned our heads

Remember those times

When your kisses swore

Never to grow cold

Those nights

When in epileptic fits I shot

Like stars wishing to die in the abyss of open thighs

But Ex, please sit.

I hated it, your ceaseless jests

Many mornings while you slept

I had wanted to pierce

The knife, just below the rest

Of where your bare chest

And hungry nipples stuck out their eyes

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

Another holds my gaze

She walks me on highways of trust

Feeds me with breast milk of honesty

Her kisses are offerings I can never repay

Beneath a lush of petals

Deep within her gangways

I lay, caressed by miracles

So Ex, please steal away

A thousand lifetimes far away

From this heaven you are not

DAVID ONOTU

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

2.

Triple filtered

A glass of joy in an instance

One gulp, two gulps

Everything is clearer

Or so it seems

The day wanes with the sun

Like a faded favourite shirt

It is most convenient when darkness sets in

So we worship two glass wares

One with barrow throat

The second with a more welcoming opening

Tomorrow has the voice that eloquently tells

The head knows where the shoe pinches

Yesterday was a superficial beauty

Even the sun emits darkness at some point.

THOMAS BOT

DEAR BRIDE

1.

Dear bride,

You will be the cloud on which I'll ride

High upon Everest, when I take your side

Dear bride,

Once we cross into oneness

It'll be absolute bliss with finesse

Dear bride,

I will be your perfect picture

Your dreams will be mine to culture

Dear bride,

In the absence of a priest,

We would take oaths with our deeds

Dear bride,

When our faces love behold

She'll be staring at her clone

Dear bride,

Leave me a rose

Do not leave me alone

Dear bride,

Your fingers would be the reason I moan

Every time you play me a song

Dear bride,

Our hello will tire to wait a goodbye

If forever lasts 5 minutes, may ours be 9

Dear bride,

We've known lovers, we are friends

We will be partners until forever ends

DAMILOLA AGBOOLA

2.

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

3.

No questions. Yes I do!

But I see conspiring clouds gathering ahead

Keep your raincoat handy!

Without doubts, I am your "yes man."

But the wine will someday ferment...

We must squint to swallow

If I have to, I will choose you again

But there's that colleague with curves and a must-want bust under a lingerie

I will run for as far as I don't slip

Without equivocation, you will bear my kids

I will eat only from your restaurant

But should I eat from another, I will wear bibs.

Without second thoughts, yes I do!

Even when I do another,

The I do to you supersedes any other I dos.

THOMAS BOT

THE STATE OF THE NATION

1.

A state in a precarious state

Every beautiful thing is for the bait

Knights lurking in corners of the night

Pawns on blistered knees for the king to see daylight

Empty pockets have robbed stomachs of their content

The old charms are no longer potent

The compass struggling to keep its cardinals

While the points demand their medals

A stick from the broom gets lost each day

With every new sun, a brick falls away.

THOMAS 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

3.

Declining in state,

Reclining down the hill, fast rate.

Hope for a better future,

Future bleak, not for sure.

Tomorrow's leaders,

Today's laggards

Heroes never recognized,

Corruption overly praised,

Land built by my fathers

Now plunged by scavengers

HIJAB GURL

PRISON BARS

1.

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

2.

Freedom fenced with slavery.

Slavery caused by actions.

Actions influenced by wrong thoughts of right acts.

Actions inspired by emotions.

Emotions, the brick layer of freedom's fence.

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

2.

Jumoke, how dare you!

How dare you go out and do

A stranger, a man not your husband

This act is abhorred in our land

You rave that your husband has left

Did you expect he'll welcome your theft?

You say your heart was broken too

Years ago, you forgave him didn't you?

Is it the hurt, safe in clefts of broken hearts

That spins again the wheels of no good carts?

DAVID ONOTU

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

1.

Sometimes mud, sometimes cement Bricks.

Sometimes with a nice fence, sometimes with sticks.

Covering reality's tricks.

Producing kings strictly from pricks.

Tradition dressed in politics.

Queen dancing to beats from chopsticks

If not all her plans will be nix.

Ignoring the word testatrix.

Taking shots at selves with no pix.

Always feeding her to transfix.

BANGWAN USMAN

2.

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.

VERA 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

2.

Some days I'm left to argue with myself.

I see my picture on an old hexed shelf.

My mind, a haunted mansion

Brewing with mighty tension.

I loose time and sleep in pursuit of self.

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 crept 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

2.

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

3.

I met him nonchalant as naked leaves

Dumbstruck, reason was never up his sleeves

I swarm still in who he was

While yearning to call him baas,

Only if his banal words and thoughts could cleave

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

1.

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

2.

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

3.

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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