

Cravings for a Vacation

Thoughts marching like ants
on the floors of your mind
stomping loudly enough
to rid you of
any semblance of sleep
while your entire frame
tosses along these sheets
in trademark uncertainty
leaving you to crave
for ways to understand this angst.

Broken thoughts lie around
like pieces of piercing glass
in a landscape where
many battles have been fought
with only Heaven being aware
of when the next ceasefire would be
because sometimes hope
just doesn't cut it anymore.

On some hours the railings around the bridge
get really slippery with nothing to hold on to,
and the only direction is downwards,
way below anything tangibly recognizable.
It gets hard to want to live
when you just don't feel at home
around anywhere you set
the front edge of your heels
it feels easier ultimately
to relieve everyone of the drama

and step out of the room for good.

Sneaky Old Friend

The skin of your soul
notices the heavy texture
It is here, like a black cloak
that drapes you
out of absolutely nowhere.
Party is over,
let the darkness in its thick glory
surround you in friendly embrace.
No, don't ask how or why
these shadows show up
since when did you become entitled
to any kind of notice anyways?

The blues are not hindered
by the doors of your mind;
like regular visitors, they saunter in,
altering the program of events in your head,
switching off all the lights,
tuning in to that melody
your mind's ears could do without,
but are all so used to by now.
Giggles from previous hours
feel like a lifetime ago,
and a long night, to be spent dreaming
of ways to process the gloom
beneath cynical stars, beckons gleefully.

Save Your Strength

Curling underneath
this light duvet
ten centimetres away
from your skin,
and yet a convict in solitary confinement
faces a better lot
than the loneliness I feel.
Remnants of your lip gloss
linger just below my moustache
but never has my heart
felt more distant
even in these moments
where my toes can't find home
in the spaces between yours,
and the broad landscape of my chest
shows no enthusiasm for
the air from your nostrils.

A hundred hugs wouldn't make me warm
and the sound of your breathing
fails to drown out the marching of boots
on the floors of my mind.
Your love cannot save me
and the light that your heart radiates
cannot cancel out the pitch black of my soul
Save the overcoat
that your arms try to emulate
for someone who will readily absorb the warmth
because sometimes the thickest fur
is unable to shield from familiar frost.



Jerry Chiememe is an editor, mental health advocate, culture critic and lawyer. His writings and conversations have been published in notable online magazines within and beyond the African continent, including Brittlepaper, Bellanaija, Kenya's Daily Nation, Afireviews and Thoughtful Dog. A lover of finger foods, Jerry's craft can be accessed on his personal website at jerrychiemeke.com. His first book, *The Colours In These Leaves*, is available in electronic format, and is soon to be published in print.



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