



**MAKERERE UNIVERSITY**

**COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
SCHOOL OF LANGUAGES, LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION  
DEPARTMENT OF LITERATURE  
LIT 3208 CREATIVE WRITING PROJECT.**

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**PROJECT TITLE: MPORORO PROTOTYPE**


*A project submitted to the Department of Literature of Literature in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Bachelor's of Arts with Education of Makerere University.*

**June 2023.**

**DECLARATION**

I AINEBYOONA ALEBU, Declare that project "*Mpororo Prototype*" is my original creative work and that any reference to scholarly and other materials has been acknowledged.

Signed:  DATE: 30/06/2023

Endorsed by:  DATE: 30 June 2023

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Writing a poetry project has been a beautiful journey that couldn't have been completed without the help and support of many people. Hence I would like to express my gratitude to all those who have been part of this journey.

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This project has indeed been challenging, but extremely rewarding, and I feel grateful to have had such great support during this time. Once again, thank you to everyone involved for all your indispensable contributions. It is much appreciated.

## **DEDICATION**

I would like to dedicate this poetry project to my parents, who have been my pillars of strength and constant support throughout my life. Your love, guidance, and unwavering belief in me have been the driving force behind the completion of this project.

Mom and Dad, you have always been there with a listening ear, providing me with the practical and emotional support needed to pursue my dreams. Your unconditional love and encouragement have taught me the value of hard work, discipline, and perseverance.

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I love you endlessly

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## PART 1: INTRODUCING THE PROJECT

### 1. INTRODUCTION.

"I think you travel to search and you come back home to find yourself there," Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. Having travelled miles through pages of the remarkable authors and orators as Chinua Achebe, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Ngugi Was Things, Okot P' Bitek, Martin Luther King Jr and J.F Kennedy among other celebrated Literary scholars, Literature has provided me a profound opportunity to find and embrace my identity.

As an African child born and raised from Kigezi and Mpororo land, South Western Uganda, inspired by these childhood memories of friends, I developed a keen interest in the historical data from this land thus I've been able to rethink and recapture them in fiction as a mirror of society thus project "*Mpororo Prototype*"

It is a mixed genre of both poetry and short stories that capture the beauty of the land and ideologies of the people. Nothing is greater than a land that raised you and so feel greatly indebted to the so called *The Switzerland of Africa*. In this collection, you will be able to explore the political, social and cultural beliefs of the beautiful land interwoven in the fiction pieces of the poems and short stories.

I am glad to join me on this exciting adventure.



## **2. BACKGROUND.**

The Kigezi and Mpororo land which currently occupies the district's of Kabale, Ntungamo, Kisoro, Kanungu and Rukungiri, has a rich socio-political history. From its rise as a Kingdom in the 17th century and the migration of the Tutsi from Rwanda that intermarried with the Kids to form Mpororo tribe.

The Great Christian Revival of the 1950's where the church underwent a profound spiritual awakening and transformation marked by forgiveness, reconciliation and proclamation.

The Kibwetere massacre of 17th March 2000 where at least 700 people were burnt by the cult leaders Credonia Meeting and Kibwetere.

As such events which of course I didn't witness but just lived on oral tales and rumours, I believe they have impacted the society. It's through Literature that such can be captured and the duty of fiction to mirror society.

### **3. PROJECT OBJECTIVES**

To promote the Bahororo culture through fiction

To create climate change awareness through fiction

To promote a reading culture in Uganda.

#### **4. JUSTIFICATION OF THIS PROJECT:**

Fiction and Uganda's history should be celebrated much more not only in the world of academia but also availed to the masses through a favorable and cheaper medium. As Achebe quotes " Nobody can teach me who I am. You can describe parts of me, but who I am and what I need is something I have to find out myself" so it's through Literature or fiction that can be able to promote ones culture and have identity.

"In Africa where its history is taught as a niche subjects (Chimamanda Ngozi) It has inadequately played its role in promoting patriotism and self-awareness in the natives.

It's therefore the purpose of such creative writing project that not only spurs the people to search and find their identity but also promote culture through fiction. And also to create environmental responsibility and climate change awareness of our beautiful land that was passed on to us by our fore fathers. It's not just be a song on lips but to be on ground to address the issues.

## **5. STRUCTURE OF THE PROJECT.**

Mpororo Prototype has three parts

### **Part I:**

Introduction of the project.

### **Part ii:**

Part ii is a collection of mixed genre fiction of 20 poems and 3 short stories.

It is sub-divided in the sections of themes as follows:-

- a) Politics
- b) Love
- c) Nature
- d) Philosophy
- e) Social life

Section B of Part II contains short stories namely

- a) The three boys and Nsonzi Fishing
- b) Love EMOJIS
- c) Why Humans and Lions are Sworn enemies.

### **Part III:**

Critical Analysis of the above pieces.

## **PART II: THE PROJECT**

### **SECTION A: POETRY**

#### **SUB SECTION I: POEMS ON POLITICS**

##### **I TOO HAVE A DREAM**

Ladies and gentlemen I too have a dream, it's a dream deeply rooted in the Ugandan dream.

I too have a dream that one day, in this nation I shall take to the streets my discontent of the government policies not in fear of teargas or huge legged tankers but rather guarded by them to fully express my rumbling discomfort to the authorities

I too have a dream that one day in all districts of this nation, All women shall have full autonomy over their bodies protected by law, that even the village expectant mothers shall deliver favored by a healthy health care plan or policy.

I too have a dream that one day in this nation, the scales of justice shall return to balance. That even the parents of yesterday's Kabale girl child that died of gang rape and the perpetrators of this gruesome act shall receive the desired justice.

I too have a dream that one day, all the youths of this nation shall graduate with high hopes of getting jobs and living to see their aspirations shaped by their education come to happen, that even the children of the ministers shall sit on the same table with the children of the peasants.

I too have a dream today

I too have a dream that one day, every fish in the lakes of the nation shall again belong to the citizens, that even the village child shall obtain protein and calcium and stand strong and still to see his future become big.

I too have a dream today

I too have a dream that one day; the crested crane standing on one leg shall fly high in the sky, soaring in the heights with pride that I too can fly high. Whispering to the air and proclaiming to the rest of the black land with pride that I too can fly high.

This is the hope, and this is the faith that I go back to Kabale with as I leave this Makerere hill.

With this faith, we will be able to cover every pot hole in the road to freedom, with this faith we will be able to transform the jangling chords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith we will be able to work together, pray together, to struggle together, to stand for freedom together, knowing we will be free one day

And this will be the day, this will be the day when all Ugandan children will be able to sing with new meaning

*We young women and men of Uganda*

*Are marching along the path of education*

*Singing and dancing with joy*

*Together uniting for a better Uganda.*

From every corner of the nation, let freedom ring

And if Uganda is to be a great nation, this must be true

And so let freedom ring from the mountain tops of Masaba land

Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of Muhavura

Let freedom ring from the snowcapped ranges of Rwenzori

Let freedom hover across Lake Victoria

Let freedom flow like the mighty Nile

But not only that

Let freedom ring from the Parliament house

Let freedom ring from the walls of court rooms

Let freedom ring from the State House

From every corner let freedom ring.

And when this happens, when we let freedom ring from every village, every district, we will be able to speed up the day when all God's children: Red, blue and Yellow, rich and poor, Muslims and Christians will be able to join hands and sing in our victory hymn

Ha ... lle... Lu... Yah

We've overcome, we are free at last.

## **POTHOLES ON KAMPALA ROADS**

These are not craters on moon

These are potholes on the city roads

A sight that makes our spirits raved

An obstacle course we have to tread,

As we journey over the cracks and spread.

The rain comes down like the beat of war,

Pounding away, leaving wounds in the tar.

Each and every hole a unique shape,

A threat to safe travel.

The drivers they, swerve left and right,

Hoping to escape the crashes that might.

The tires get worn down and the car bounces,

A nightmare on the road.

Let us speak out in the name of change,

For a safer journey free from everything strange.

We plead for a smooth journey every mile,

To bring sanity back, let us rebuild with style.



## **FROM FREEDOM SQUARE TO PRISON SQUARE**

The freedom square, now a living cage,

The students' voices rise in defiance and rage,

Hands raised in a plea for their rights to speak,

But the authorities have come, to make them meek.

Police tanks stand proud, in a show of force,

Surrounding the Makerere, with no sign of remorse,

To crush the demonstration, before it can start,

Caging in these young voices, of a beating heart.

The graceful lawn, once a stage for hopes and dreams,

Trampled on, with their screaming and silent screams,

Muted and silenced, behind a wall of blue,

As the students' freedom, is torn apart anew.

Now they stand, locked within this square of doom,

Their dreams and hopes, trapped and unable to bloom,

With nothing left but their spirit and will to fight,

In this prison of bars, till the morning light.

From the freedom square, now a prison square

The students' voices ring out, a clarion bell,  
In defiance they stand, determined to rise,  
For the will of the people, cannot be silenced by lies.

## **THE CITY UNDER ATTACK**

Amidst the buzz of the city's sound,

A slay queen sits and paints her face with ease,

Blithely unaware of the destruction around,

Her mind consumed by selfishness and superficiality.

But outside, chaos reigns supreme,

As the city trembles under the attack's intense scheme,

Traders and passers-by alike scramble for safety,

As the air is filled with the screams of the wounded and the dying.

The streets once vibrant with life and cheer,

Are now drenched in blood and tear,

As the enemy's fire and fury ravage through,

Leaving behind a trail of destruction; oh so true.

Amidst this devastation, one wishes for solace,

For a temporary escape from this nightmare's face,

But alas, the harsh reality sets in,

That nothing would ever be the same again.

The city under attack; a tragic scene,  
A haunting reminder of what humanity can mean,  
But amidst the darkness, a flicker of hope,  
That maybe one day, we can break free from this horrid trope.

## **SUB SECTION II: POEMS ON NATURE**

### **ODE TO COLORS**

Colors:

author of beauty and perfection

see, in the rainbow

you speak splendor

a reflection of diversity.

in the sun,

you glow

an antique with its mystique

even black, the darkest

Sustains the nights

by dressing up the skies

to give the glistening of stars

a recollection of surrealism

Colors:

a paintbrush of nature touch

creating magical landscape

from the green of trees

you give us a canvas that never runs dry

In every town

you grace the walls  
the posters paintings that tower  
calling for our attention to your charm  
turning the mundane into extra ordinary  
And make our lives colorful merry  
In every race,  
you proudly wave  
championing each nation  
turning their obscure into light.  
Colors,  
a tapestry of beauty  
that fills us with love.

## **THE TREES BY THE LAKE SIDE**

At the shore of the lake, two trees stand tall,

Their branches entwined in an eternal thrall.

Like two lovers, they lean in to kiss,

As the calm waters reflect their bliss.

The birds soar above, chirping with glee,

As the branches below sway like the sea.

The sun sets behind, casting hues of gold,

As the lake shimmers, a sight to behold.

The trees, they stand there, through winds and rains,

A testament to love, an unbreakable chain.

As the birds continue to sing their song,

The trees stand united, forever strong.

## **THE PLASTIC NUKES**

I merely know science

I basically profess conscience

The silence voice that cuts through the mountains

And penetrates to the deep ocean

The once fertile farms now frail

The once shining sun now scorching

Man's ever dangerous invention

A weapon:

More than atomic than the nuclear

The polythene and plastic nukes

The fury fumes

For man's selfish interests

Why pose as bystanders

On a crime scene

As our mother nature

Faces assault

Aimlessly bidding farewell

To her with final selfish

Raise



stand, speak for mother nature

History and coming generation

Is the grand jury.

## ODE TO MOSQUITO

So tell me

You double grey eyed little monster

That knows not yet any other times

Than the still and dark nights

Dancing like the midnight witches

Upon the windows of my net

Ready to make your slick maneuvers

So tell me.

How sweet my plasma is

Does it taste like the hard boiled candies?

Or is it my over-ached fibers of my skin

That lay down on my springy bed

that tastes like the summer honeycombs?

Don't you have pity ?

You little winged evil

Of how you staged a bouquet

On widowed Karma's baby

And drunk yourself silly of its blood

Yet she had spent her last penny on panadol

Leaving her in roaming in desperation

Many curse your very name,  
As you fly around, playing your game,  
Day and night, you never rest,  
Your mission, to feed, leaves us quite distressed.

But in you, dear mosquito, I see,  
A source of inspiration that sets me free,  
You're a reminder of life's diversity,  
And a symbol of perseverance and adaptability.

In the heat and cold, in drought and rain,  
You thrive in every possible terrain,  
You're a resilient creature, so small and agile,  
A true survivor, forever useful and versatile.

### **SUB SECTION III: POEMS ON LOVE.**

#### **THE PASTOR'S DAUGHTER**

Her voice, like an angel's wing,  
Soars with the choir as they sing.  
Graceful and elegant, she stands,  
Carrying out God's commands.

The pastor's daughter, pure and sweet,  
A virtuous maiden, a rare treat.  
Her beauty lights up the room,  
My heart races, my mind in a swoon.

But love in secrecy is a heavy burden to bear,  
A flame that must be kept from the glare,  
Of prying eyes and wagging tongues,  
A secret passion that burns like the sun.

Her voice lingers in my heart and mind,  
A melody so sweet and divine.  
But until the time is ripe and right,  
My love for her shall remain out of sight.

## **I MISS YOU MY LOVE**

In the library, I sit alone

Amidst the walls of knowledge, creased books, and old tomes

Bookshelves tower above me, brimming with ancient stories

The spinning wall clock, the only sound, ticks in its glories

Reminding me of our memories

I miss you my love

The air grows still, as the musty scent surrounds

I bury my face in a dusty book, content to drown

In the world of words and pages, as time flies by

The silence, broken only by the occasional sigh

I miss you my love.

The walls are filled with framed portraits of scholars past

Their eyes seem to follow, as I search for the task

They remind of your face hanging on the walls of my heart

The glass windows let in a single beam of light

As the day drags on, fading into the night

I miss you my love.

The clock ticks on as the pages turn  
A book for knowledge, a book to learn  
The atmosphere brings a certain serenity  
One that makes me think of you, my lovely entity

The ancient shelves creak and groan in the hush  
Whispers of the past that remain, lingering and lush  
The library's echo carries the sound of the heart's pace  
As I sit alone, I feel as if I'm in a sacred place  
I miss you my love.

But until the time is ripe and right,  
My love for her shall remain out of sight.

## **THE NUNS WHO PRAYED FOR ME**

In the dimly lit hospital ward engulfed in gloom,  
Lies a fragile child lost in a lethargic cocoon  
Where shadows dance across her eyelids tight  
And the silence fills the stale air of the night.

A cluster of nuns dressed in their pristine white  
Entered her room and whispered words of might.  
Their voices harmony amid a harsh reality  
Offer hope to a suffering soul in pain.

With clasped hands, they kneel beside her bed  
Tenderly they stroke her cool, clammy forehead  
The embodiment of love, their devout prayers ascend  
The miracles of faith- an unbreakable bond is blend.

For hours, they stay and keep a watchful eye  
O'er the one who lay unconscious, hopeless and shy  
Chanting hymns of healing and rekindling light  
Their faith and love- a beacon of purest white.

## **LETTER TO MY MOTHER**

Dear Mother,

As I sit and reminiscence of the past,

I see your face, etched with wrinkles that will forever last,

Like a map of the village where you lived and toiled,

Your face tells a story of the struggles, never recoiled.

In the whole village, where the sun blazed like fire,

You stood under its scorching rays, never to tire,

You worked the fields, through the treacherous terrain,

Through the rain, through the mud, never a sigh or complain.

You were the roots that kept our family tree upright,

With the passage of time, you grew in your might.

Your heart, a fountain, endlessly flowed with love,

Nourishing us through storms, hurricanes, and the waves.

Your hands, worn out from years of work,

Are the hands that tended to us, lights in the dark.

When we were lost, you were the beacon in the night,

Guiding us through life's stormiest fight.



Even in the truest depths of poverty,  
You never let us wallow in betrothy.  
You'd rise up, dust yourself, and set us on our way,  
Inspiring us to be strong, never to stray.

You are the sun, Mother, that never sets,  
The lighthouse beam that never fades nor frets.  
You are the angel that watches us from above,  
Steadfast in your love, never asking for love.

In our village, Mother, you shone like a star,  
You were our world, our moon, our world's tsar.  
And as I write this letter, tears fill my eyes,  
For I'm so proud to be your child, your prize.

Thank you, Mother, for the sacrifices you made,  
For the love you gave, for the dues you paid.  
You are the immovable rock that stands firm,  
In the African village, your legacy will forever burn.

#### **SUB SECTION IV: POEMS ON PHILOSOPHY.**

##### **THE MAD MAN**

Amidst the refuse of a thousand lives

A madman sits, with vacant eyes

His world a sea of garbage and decay

His thoughts adrift, beyond our mortal sway

What drives him to this desolate place?

What secrets hid behind his silent face?

Perhaps he seeks some answers to his pain

Or craves release from sorrow's iron chain

He sifts through piles of broken dreams

Of discarded hopes, of silent screams

Each piece a fragment of a life undone

Disposed of, forgotten, one by one

And yet, in all this chaos and despair

A strange peace fills the madman's air

For in the refuse of man's selfish ways

He finds what others fail to gaze

A deeper truth, a desperate need

In every shattered piece, a story to be freed

A line of hope amidst the world's debris

A ray of light vast sea

And though we may not see the world he does

Through his eyes, we catch a glimpse of what we was

The world a canvas, colored by our dreams

Where even in the rubbish pit, redemption gleams.

## **STRANGERS WALKING IN THE NIGHT**

Two strangers, walking in the night,  
Each bearing a fear that's hard to fight.  
The rustling leaves, the distant hoots,  
All creating an atmosphere that roots.

The road is dark, the night is deep,  
With shadows long and secrets to keep.  
Both know not what lies ahead,  
And fret in their hearts with heavy dread.

They walk in silence, each step a creak,  
Underneath their feet, the road doth speak.  
The darkness chokes their breath away,  
And each shadow makes them sway.

The village sleeps, a peaceful slumber,  
While two strangers walk, in terror they lumber.  
Their thoughts consumed by what's unknown,  
And the wild whispers that they've sown.

Every rustle sends their hearts racing,  
And both dread the darkness they're facing.  
For one shadow seems to mirror the other,  
And each stranger is scared of their forced cover.

Oh, how they wish for the light of day,  
To chase the night-time fear away.  
And to see each other in plain sight,  
Not as shadows that cause such fright.

But for now, they walk in the dark,  
Each bearing a fear that leaves its mark.  
For the terror of the unknown surrounds,  
And their shadows, like two beasts, confound.

## **THE HALVES OF AN ORANGE**

The two halves of an orange,  
lying still on the table,  
So different yet alike,  
One is the mirror image of the other,  
But separated now, to each other they offer.

One half is drenched in vibrant hues of orange,  
The other with a mix of white and orange,  
Like two different personalities,  
They lie so unique,  
Together yet apart, each with their own mystique.

One represents the past, the other the future,  
One filled with memories, the other with adventures.  
One is the yesterdays, the other, tomorrows,  
Connected by a moment, yet each with its own sorrows.

One speaks of beginnings, the other of ends,  
One reminds us of family and close friends.  
The other points the way to travels and discovery,

One is the pathway, the other is the recovery.

Yet together they make a whole,

Each completing the other's role.

Symbolizing the balance that we all seek,

In a world that's sometimes harsh and bleak.

So let us embrace the duality of life,

The joys and the sorrows, the trouble and the strife.

And remember that even when we're torn apart,

We're still a part of the same human heart.

## **SUB SECTION V: POEMS ON SOCIAL LIFE.**

### **ALCOHOLISM**

The bottle promises escape from pain

But brings a far more bitter fate

A curse disguised in liquid grain

That seeps into the soul like hate

It starts with just a drink or two

But soon it takes on life its own

Consuming all that's bright and true

And leaving shattered lives alone

The family crumbles, one by one

As loved ones watch in helpless fear

Their hopes and dreams, now come undone

As alcohol's grip draws near

A father's anger, fueled by booze

A mother's tears, shed every night

A child's innocence, now abused

As darkness muffles out the light



The damage spreads beyond the home

And ripples through society's core

A nation's problems left un-sown

As drunken chaos reigns once more

So let us raise our voices high

And speak out for those caught in thrall

For all those lost beneath the lie

Of alcohol's enticing call.

## **THE PROSTITUTE I BECAME**

I shall have to tell you the prostitute I became

In the night time of my life

How I opened my thighs

In my tight bikini skirts

of ignorance

In my skimpy blouse

of confusion

I shall have to tell you

How I sold my body to every

cheap man

On the streets and slums

of Kampala

How I conned and was conned by every man

Well, the first man that conned me

Was a man called brick making

He took me to the slums dwelling

Deep down in the myaala of Kisangani

Used me in mixing mud

And burning of tannulu

Yet he paid me lunch and sabuni

But I conned him how to speak Luganda.

The second man that used me

Was a man known as Karaoke

Karaoke was so handsome and sexy a man

Because he was never full of mud.

But it was never fun

To sing songs to fans

For customers pelted at me beer bottles

Kareoke still never filled my deep hollow.

I met a third man

That man was called church ministering

He was brilliant and smart

He used a big pamphlet known as a Bible

He also spoke in tongues

Mumbling and fumbling shakalalaala rabababa

Well,he paid me,

For I sang at the alter and people showered me money

But the father of the man, Pastor prophet  
Took the money and just gave me a cup  
Full of tasteless blessings.

But thank luck  
That brought me to the mighty hill  
Drove me straight to the walls  
    of lecture room four  
There I sat divorced,  
    every single man encountered  
There I saw the light and repented fervently  
And like Martha, Mary's sister, I sat at the feet  
Of Literature jesuses  
EN, AK, DK, SK, ITK  
Drunk from their cup of wisdom  
And my brain filled to overflow  
Hot and bold like the crucible  
I came out of the walls refined.

Granted my marriage certificate  
My transcript,

I am now legally married

To my passionate profession

I teach alphabet and accents

Training national assets

I am now born again.

## **ODE TO MALARIA**

Oh malaria, you deadly thief in the night,

Sneaking in silently and stealing the light.

You're an invisible monster, a nefarious foe,

Hiding in the shadows and striking a blow.

You ravage the young, with your chills and your fever,

Leaving them weak and vulnerable to the reaper.

You're a serpent of sickness, a venomous snake,

Biting the innocent and causing them to shake.

Oh malaria, you are a dark cloud of doom,

Looming over the innocent like a specter of gloom.

You're a cruel master, with no mercy or remorse,

Taking lives without a thought or a course.

But we will not be defeated by your cruel hand,

For we will rise up and take a stand.

We will fight you with medicine and prevention,

And stop your wicked ways with intention.

So beware, oh malaria, your reign will end,

And we will leave you behind.

## **HEY GIRL CHILD**

Hey girl child

Do you know who you are

Who you really are

Do you know you can be

What you want to be

If you try to be.

Hey girl child

Do you know where you are going

Where you are really going

Do you know you can learn

What you want to learn

What you can learn

Hey girl child

Do you know you are strong

I mean really strong

Do you know you can do

What you want to do

If you try to do



What you can do.

Hey girl child

Be what you can do

Learn what you must learn

Do what you can do

And tomorrow your nation

Will be what you want it to be.

*(adapted from Useni Eugene's Hey Black Child.)*

## **MIDNIGHT SONG OF THE DIVORCED**

When you left home at dawn

In your grey dirty coat and rugabire sandals

You took nothing but your stick

Told Mingune that you've gone

To untie the goat

Till now you've not returned home.

You stealthily passed behind the kitchen

Left me bending and chocking in furry smoke

Fanning with my bare breath

To make the wet firewood blaze,

With the cooking pot boiling

Our favorite bean soup with kijamba

We served your food

Expecting you to return soon, at your usual hour

Yes, we knew you would return at midnight

Thinking I would hear you from afar

Whistling your favorite love song

Rukundo yakabindirano, with the tune

Piercing through thickness of the night

And I was ready to open for you the door  
Serve you in your rwabya  
But food went cold without you  
Till morning, when I served it to the dog  
It also refused, it wanted to eat from your rwabya  
Claiming superiority.

In the market place  
My fellow women laugh at me  
That, look at a young divorced  
Her husband left her alone in the house  
With their sulky mouths pointed  
And their hands in their waists  
Talking in whispers and giggling in tenor  
With their hands lifted in air  
Asking why would a man leave a young woman  
As supple as me,  
They say I stink my genitals.

Hahaahaha wuuuu.

They laugh in high note

Yet every Thursday evening

I steam myself in eshabiko

Freshly cut from the plain of Nkusi

And sweetly boiled in my rugutsyo

I swear I never stink

Even your ghost visited me last night

In a dream, in the middle of the night

It came cladded in your raffia coat

Pouting it's mouth on mine

And it's hard fingers caressing and lifting my left thigh

Whispering sweet nothings to my ear

That my body is as silky smooth as eshabwe

That how savory and saucy I am

And I suddenly woke up

In a dreaded and wetted bed

You see, your ghost never let go of me.

Sure, my husband, tell me,

Why would you leave a fine young woman like me

Hotter within as eshenda

And get married to Enid Kyomu

And her enjoga/pot of malwa

I hear she serves the best of oruhoro in the whole village,

But what happened to my fine bushera

Obushera obutoko brewed with my fine sorghum

Made with my two hands and rubengo

Stored cool in my pot.

Doesn't she even disgust you?

With her coughing and spitting sputum

She coughs and blasts like the saba saba guns

As if she doesn't know omusisa our local cure

Yet she is old than ages of ancient

She spits everywhere

Who knows? She might be spitting in her pot of enguli before serving

And still use your bishekashekye straws to pull her sputum out enjoying

With your fellow men laughing in clutter

Enchanting words of foolishness

Emboozi za maarwa, you call wisdom.

Her husband died of silimu

That he contracted when he was in the army

Have you forgotten when an how he returned  
As thin as your drinking straws?  
Oh you might have forgotten  
It's when you were dating me, telling me of  
Your sweet stories of your fights with Kanena.  
Can't you even witness her breasts  
Fallen as thin as sacks of sand hang on emikomba  
An you leave my ripened, pointing fresh ones  
Run for a sulky face  
With her cheeks like beaten pulp of emituba tree,  
Oh what charm does she use  
Yes! I heard she has a huge smoking pipe  
With seven heads she bought from Buganda  
She uses it every morning under her jambula tree  
Puffing in air smouldering smokes  
And calling out every single name of her customers  
Puuuffff... Clement.... Puuffff... Mukanga.... Puffff  
I call .. you... With your money... Sell your goat... Come with money  
As sh taps on her private parts  
That's the source yourself is drinking from  
A source of dread

Oh how wicked that woman looks

When she smiles with her gaps in her mouth, ebyasha

And dirty yellow teeth stained with bikanja.

Come back to me my fair husband

Come back we lay in our munyampa bed

Come I prepare you enderema sauce

To make you glow with freshness

And open your sneezes

Come now, my kitiribita is cool

To quench your thirst of

Enid's wicked heat...

## SECTION B: SHORT STORIES

### THE THREE BOYS AND NSONZI FISHING.

It was the only photo that gave me faith that my mother lived. The photo I tenderly kissed after saying my fervent prayers in my bedroom I shared with my dad's car in the garage. I barely knew her face and my boyish imagination of her physical appearance was elicited by the only photo with the beautiful dark woman with a smooth velvet skin and a symmetrical smile that exposed her intact and perfectly placed teeth like fresh corn in a row on its cob. Her black straight perm hair that covered the ears and her wide eyes that that were narrowed by the smile. In the photo the woman tenderly carried a little brown baby in a white shawl on her laps while the elder kid in a nappy standing by side in the brown sofa tugging a white hankie in its mouth. Behind the photo was a scribble in red ink of our two names Roger 2months, Keith 2.5 years. She was referred to as "woman who spoiled you" by dad and every single day reminded that I couldn't do well chores because she was nowhere to teach me.

It was seven years with my elementary math to cipher since the year she disappeared and left us in the harsh arms and care of our dad. These were of course drawn from dad's sketchy and tipsy quarrels.

"I don't blame you, ignomorous boy, you became stupid and dead to me in 1995 when your mother dumped you". He used to say.

These had been rather seven brutal years of intense and laborious works and abuse that left me feeling outgrown in my own skin trying to find a new shell and place I would fit comfortably. My younger brother, Roger who had gained more weight and an average height that threatened to be taller than me sooner had never been polite or kind in his speech towards me. He blamed me almost for all his bad luck "you are the cause of all these problems we have".

Our daily routine was to wake up early morning at rooster before school, collect and sort beans for lunch, fetch water from the borehole, iron dad's clothes, prepare his pestered bread and tea, have the backyard swept to tidiest. Roger added to the burden of the morning chores. Always stubborn to wake from his bed for school. He did this with intention to have me reach school late which was fun for him to watch me being flogged by Mr. Barugahare



"can't you ever let me have enough sleep" he always muttered sitting up with his legs swinging over the edge of the bed crying out his eyes for dad's sympathy to let him sleep more. His cries made me rather sympathetic. They stirred a desire of hugging him tightly and tell him

" don't worry, everything will be fine, I love you " but every time I tried, he shuddered away my arms in haste

"just go away from me, you add nothing but pain by dragging me to school, Is it what is okay?".

This left pangs in my heavy heart and though I wanted to explain to him my innocence of everything, I always felt bitter lumps choking my throat with my heavy tongue and clenched jaw that I hardly spoke but turn away with my teary eyes. It gave me a false imagination of how maybe mother could have shunned me away the day she left us.

School was an extended prison from home. It tensed my nerves to think of Mr. Barugahare's merciless whooping due to my late coming and undone homework. Everyday at the red wooden gate of the school, Mr. Barugahare would be waiting patiently with his bamboo rod swinging in his arms, pacing around restlessly in air with his head high like a goat tethered on a pole. I was his religious customer and my butt was used to his whips. He would smile at our arrival and in his hoarse voice shout :

"lie down for your morning tea" the next would be the terrible whoops on your buttocks that gave a whack whack sound which would be even heard a mile from the gate. This would be followed by a thank you by jumping high with an overhead clap saying "webare uncle". This obviously ruined my day and left me in a stupefied state. My chest sullen and heavy with tension, my stomach full of air that growled all day. My belly was always in an abnormal bulge like images of children with kwashiorkor in my integrated science textbook that even when I tucked in my old faded blue uniform shirt, the buttons would loose easily and it would fold up to give up a space letting my belly out at the waist of my khaki pair of shorts. From this friends like Abache would mischievously pick fun for the rest of the day telling everyone that I fed on katoogo of matooke and salt only.

"You seem to feed on akatoogo ko mwonyo, Keith, huh?,"

Kids with ball bellies as yours are said to be feeding poorly on akatoogo ko mwonyo" He added.

Abache took pride and pleasure in telling his boastful stories with scientific and statistical evidence quoted from newspapers and magazines of how 13.3% of Ugandan children were malnourished due to poor and dirty feeding and would emphatically conclude by quoting "it's from the recent report of UN and UNHCR" he sounded crispy and cool with these. Abache couldn't have figured out how my very own dad the last week had made eat food spilled on the dirty floor of our small dining room. My dad that night due to his staggering and feeble joints from heavy drinking: serving us supper late night, accidentally hit the plate of food that lay by the edge of the table, it tumbled and spilled down food.

"I've always told you of how your bones were bewitched to fiber, you must pick it and eat the exact one, it's your mother's foolishness" raising the serving spoon in attempt to hit it in my face: his misty alcohol smelling breath layered my face.

I bent down uncontrollably with cascading tears all over my face, mucus spilling from my nose to mouth, I gathered the slices of matooke and boiled potatoes to my plate, the frenzy lingala music playing on TV in the living room made a deafening thudding background in my spinning head and I wished mother was around, I wished Roger would tell me sorry, you will be fine but was in vain. Maybe Abache was right I was among the malnourished I thought to myself. I was a specimen of scientific study.

Conrad too would make fun of fingernails which looked horribly rusty and dirtied by the dried banana sup due to over peeling matooke at home.

" Keith, you do girls'stuff, how can a boy peel, cook ? Come on?" Conrad would say in a sanctimonious tone.

But unlike Abache, Conrad was sympathetic to me mostly when I would be sent back home for school fees. He was a selfless and honest seatmate who helped me in solving most of my classwork math problems. He had a habit of overwriting digits and multiple calculations all over the wooden desk, his palms and thighs. It was rare to find his uniform spotless of blue ink. He narrated his home stories of how his mother would wash for him and do almost every chore at home and other scandalous stories of how his mother would be beaten to pulp like wet clay by his drunk father from his trips in Kigali. His father was a taxi driver and returned home every weekend and would mercilessly beat Conrad's mother over speculation of infidelity from the

neighbors. She would pack up her bags and driver her back to her village home in their white minivan by his dad. Later she would return after a week's time and Conrad would hear her telling next-door neighbors that her parents convinced her to return to her family :

"it's the responsibility of the wife to hold together a home, your husband paid a lot of bride price you ought to go and make us proud by enduring every hell since the man is provident"

I would mutter nothing but felt an urge of hugging him and telling him "it will be okay" but feared to be pushed away like my younger brother did and get embarrassed in the class.

Weekends were the only free period at home we had to play since dad run weekend errands and workshops. We would collect the brown sticky mud behind our latrine model and bake car dolls of our dreams. I modeled a saloon car and my younger brother made a Toyota Pajero, we would turn the plastered verandah into a highway driving and overtaking one another, making the hysterical vroom vroom sound, honking peeb peeb from one end of the verandah to another. My brother had a ruthless manner of hitting my car and breaking my side mirror reminding me

"your are nothing" imitating dad's voice

"no wonder you drive ladies' cars". He used to say that his car was like Abaches dad.

Abache was a black and tall healthy and buoyant boy from our school that used to bully me of my bulged belly . I envied him a lot because he had it all and attracted almost every girl at school with his funny stories and sweet chocolates. Despite his mischievous character, Abache would invite us to their home in the evenings with my brother on our back home. Their house large and fenced with conifers, was covered and roofed with brown face bricks and mategula with large French doors and windows that let drapers of cream silky color drop elegantly to their tiled floor. Their sitting room was quite spacious with spongy and springy brown leather jacketed sofas, crystal chandeliers hanging daintily from the polished mahogany ceiling above the rectangular glass table. Their living room gave way in the middle to the dining room with a large mahogany round table and chairs polished with vanish that shone brilliantly like the bald head of my SST teacher at school. Their house had a peculiar smell like that of chocolate compared to ours especially the dining room I was used to with white chalked walls with dirty ply wooden ceiling hanging above one small table and a bench.

Abache used to tell us to feel free in the house and change to any channel we wished on their big box TV. I feared because I didn't know how to use a remote and could just leave it to avoid further embarrassment. Abache would spread news at school how I didn't know how to use a remote. This would add insult to the injury. He served us roasted pieces of chicken and fries rice "pilau" that we seldom ate at home when older cousin Claire would visit at home. As a dessert, he brought sliced cold sugarcane on a plate cut in tiny cylindrical and cubicle shapes that tasted freshly cool succulent and sweeter than the ordinary ones bought from the market. It was my first time tasting sugarcane from a refrigerator and made my mouth water every time I thought about it.

He narrated of his famous trips to various cities like Beijing, Nairobi, Paris the latest being Djibouti. His father was at the rank of Colonel in the military who served in the guerilla war of 1980's and by then was serving as Uganda's Ambassador to Djibouti. His portraits hanged all over the walls in his military uniform shaking hands with President Museveni and others clad in black suit having a toast with "the French president". I too started to wish that my father had served in the guerilla war despite his firm attachment to the NRM party.

Abache also narrated how his mother died of breast cancer when he was still young to reason and left him in the care of his dad who also worked abroad and had left him to the care of the ruthless house mistress Christine who often called him to her bedroom and would force him to hump his body against hers touching her breasts making funny sounds and later threatened him to lock him up in the sewage tanks or mix poison for him to kill him if he dared to tell his father.

Aunt Komuhangi paid us an impromptu visit that long Christmas holiday at home. She was from attending a 5 days Diocesan women conference at St.Lukes Cathedral in town. I could recognize her from her sharp and piercing voice that cut and penetrated up to a distance I was from the living room in the backyard seated on the verandah, sorting beans for lunch while listening to the radio: the presenter announcing the visit of President Museveni in our district the coming Christmas week.

Aunt Komuhangi's voice overpowered the high volume of the radio in the backyard that I could hear her scintillating laughter. No sooner had I turned off the radio to confirm if it was her than Roger came running with the rapid thudding of his feet on the cemented dining floor.

" Aunt Komuhangi has come, she wants to see you if you wish" he said.

I hurriedly dusted off my hands on pair of shorts running to the living room I rarely entered.

Aaaah Aaaah ooh comemy boy, come on and greet your Aunt" as she spread wide her arms. I gently thrust my body into her chest.

" bukeije bukeije buhooro buhooro gye" rhythmically recited the greeting.

She was wrapped in her long kitengi with large pictures of sunflowers and a blur t- shirt written on mother's Union Uganda and the black covered high wedge shoe that slightly added some height to her gigantic stature. I spent quite a time feeling the cordial warmth of her hug though the smell of butter and fresh milk mixed with the fragrance of her pomade and strong spirits that smelled in Lydia's salon nauseated me.

"you seem to have grown into man now Keith" tugging my hollow cheeks.

"Your brother is outgrowing you, oryo otta Shi mwojjo wangye, do you eat food kweli Keith?" The question rather seemed to have turned on the knob of unknown source of tears stirred with gloom and sharp pain like a tide hitting the sand banks of the lake. While tugging on her skirts, I riveted my teary eyes to entrance where her black pack bags stood.

"Douglas, why don't you become man enough?" turning to my daddy in her sentimental tone " Why don't you at least get a maid if you've failed to find a fine woman mwana wa taata?"

" Keith, go and finish up your business" dad shouted at us dismissing my brother and I

He shut the door that led to the dinning room at our back.

"I wish Aunt Komuhangi stays with us but you've spoilt everything with your witty witch the tears Rogers shouted.

"When shall you get senses and stop ruining everything?" He added.

"I wanted her to stay too, Roger in my benevolent voice tone I muttered.

The long silence was later interrupted by dad's voice calling us in. He told us to prepare ourselves and travel with Aunt to the village in Kalangaro. We didn't know how she had convinced dad to let us go. Dad had for a long time told us that all our relatives were disinterested in us " They are all like your mother who left you and has never at a time bothered to check on you. So don't you ever ask me anything concerning Aunt or uncle or granny stuff. This is your home, settle your funny butts here or else find a way out like your mother, I can see you interested her whack brains."

We boarded a white pick-up truck on our journey to Kalangaro. We secured positions like the rest of the passengers in the carrier of the truck. Aunt Komuhangi comfortably sat cushioned on one of the crates of beer that were stacked at the extreme end of the carrier with Roger on her laps. I stood close to the driver's cabin, tightened my grip on the metallic rod for support to have an aerial view of the world below me. I tightened my grip on the metallic rod to groaning of the engine on an inclining the road and loosen it to the gentle sloping of the truck with an ecstasy feeling that I was the driver and in complete control of everything. The smell of kimbo, soap freshly packed sacks of sugar, bread and other merchandise, the clinking of the soda and beer bottles, rattling of the buckets, jerry cans and empty crates, the hearty laughter's and talks of the passengers about Museveni and his failed government, the giggles that faded in air, dancing and swaying to the jolts of the truck over the murrum road gave me a new aura of triumph and escape from the tyranny back home to an unknown place anxious for a wholeness and newness.

At Aunt Komuhangi's home, we were welcomed by Obed, her last born of her six children. He met us at the threshold of the front yard under the jackfruit tree.

" You must be Keith," thrusting his arms around me.

I didn't return the hug; I remained still lifting the two bags in both hands. His smile was as genuine as Aunt's. He ran to Roger and hugged him tightly. I stood anxious fearing that he would push him away as his habit was towards me and every stranger but seemed though unbothered with his scornful look, he didn't reply at all neither returning the hug.

"Mama how was the conference? Did you bring me my perfume and chocolate you promised me?" Leading us into the house.

Obed was of the same height of mine but with a darker complexion and broader shoulders Bryan mine. His muscled arms and legs flexed when he made his bouncing walk on his cracked heels like the Rastafarians that puffed kubber and mijaj behind Byaruhangas garage back at home. He laid the luggage in the living room and led us through the narrow hallway to the backyard and hurried behind the kitchen where the cow had given birth was gently laying under the guava tree. The scent of the blood from its vulva mixed with the smell of the ripening guavas and the calf's new shiny skin with black and white patches aroused a new feeling of freshness and like a moulted snake, i had regained a new skin that perfectly belonged to me that time.

Kalangaro was a parish with many village separated by the two rivers of Rushere and Rubambuga which made a confluence right below Mr. Kaiteras farm. Aunt Komuhangi's home was slightly in a raised ground that gave one a perfect view and scenery of the most parts of the village when standing in the backyard. In the East, there lay a huge Kalangaro Church of Uganda with its shiny corrugated roof that made glints with the touch of the sun rays and a huge cross at its summit. The church was surrounded by the tiny residences of the Archdeacon priest and Church offices with a banana plantation that stretched down to the valley of the river banks. In the West, there was Mr. Ketieras home, one of the richest in the village via large cattle farm. In the North, there were rice farms that gave a beautiful green scenery like perfect lawns squarely divided by black crisscrosses. Below the rice farms were thick green canopies that looked like Swahili braids of Miss Lydia back at home. Most people of Kalangaro were rice and sugarcane farmers. That very Christmas holiday was the perfect season for harvesting, threshing rice. It was also the same season when they guarded their farms against birds and monkeys not to pest the ready rice by putting scare crows in the gardens and yelling at them.

Aunt Komuhangi had her rice farm too across the two hills. Their daily routine was: waking up early morning before they made fire for breakfast. Obed would milk the cows and collect the grass to feed the swine and cows. Aunt would spread the millet and corn over the blue polythene paper for drying, untie the goats and take them to the nearby bush to feed. This is when I would wake up to the smell of the fresh cow dung and the ripening guavas and mangoes mixed with fresh milk and goats skin. After our breakfast, we would accompany Obed to the rice farm and

Auny would go to help her friends on their rice farms as the village custom. On our way. Obed used to tell us stories of how monkeys threw maize cobs at him when he scared them away. He knew almost every type of birds and their habits, the Caspian plovers, the yellow bellied wattle eyed, the papyrus gun deck and the common sand Martin. In the sweltering heat, as we sat in our temporary shade under the murama tree, after we had made rounds of yelling at birds with the beating the empty jerry cans and throwing stones at randomly in the farm using our catapults, Obed would pick dry tobacco from the rags of one of the scare crows, make cigarettes using paper from his school books.

" Smoking is the only thing that comforts me from my sorrows" puffing up clouds of smoke from his mouth and nose.

" My father died, in the Kibwetere massacre" Obed muttered.

He narrated how his mother had told him that she had received the news from the then Archdeacon priest Rev. Muhanga. They had visited the scene and at a distance, the smell like of roasted flesh filled their noses and they watched the smouldering of the smoke from the reminiscences of the fire. " All that for religion and God after he had repented his womanizing and heavy drinking" Aunt Komuhangi told Obed. " His ghost still visits me in my dreams " Obed muttered. If it was for the father, Obed then couldn't picture how my dad back at home had made my life hell. I couldn't narrate my ordeal of how my father once made me spend a night outside the house like a dog sleeping on sack cloth on the verandah because my brother Roger had stolen money from his pocket accusing me of being behind the craft in attempt to raise money for transport to run away from home.

"At school they laugh at me because I am the oldest of the pupils in my class, that I am the grandpa of the class" Obed said. "I have repeated the same class four times and the only response I get on my yearly school report is 'advised to repeat Primary four" Obed added as he laid down the sisal mat.

"I want to become a priest, the Archdeacon promised me that if I remained pure without touching any girl or sipping alcohol like my father once did and successfully finished my primary seven, he would send me to the Theological college in Kabale and I would return to serve in church in the white cassocks"



I wondered if Rev. Kato knew whether Obed smoked tobacco. I at the same time envied him because he had a future and hope. Thinking to myself, back at school Abache had wanted to become a journalist and a writer, Conrad had a dream of becoming an engineer. It was only me who knew nothing about my future. I wondered why even Obed was concerned with the report card and departing the class yet at home dad had never asked me one of my report cards or classwork books or anything concerning school.

Every evening, on our way back home from the rice farm, we stopped by R. Rushere to catch the Nsonzi fish for making sure with g.nuts, out delicacy of dinner. Obed would lay his gauze net in the riverside water and made small water pool traps by stacking up mud in the riverside to hold water that would trap the Nsonzi fish and stood attention waiting for one to be trapped. " Over there" we would scream any chance we could get to see something black in water snake-like even if it was the Nsonzi fish. Sometimes the Nsonzi would be make slick maneuver and run away with the fast flowing water, it was slippery and hard to catch like my brother's or dads love, I thought to myself, maybe they needed the trap too to recognize and love me as their own. We would catch enough Nsonzi for dinner and chop them into sizeable pieces adding onions salt and pepper to them to make the delicious stew that smelled good with boiled cassava and maypole. We played the game at dinner my brother Roger and I that the one who would be first to spot the moon in the evening would take ones piece of fish at dinner. I had never succeeded to Roger's promise even after I was the first to spot the moon. He threatened me to cry and would give up.

During dinner, under the lit moonlight sky and the lantern lamp hanging on the kitchen mud wall. Aunt Komuhangi would cast his pitiful eyes on me and my brother as we ate sitting on the mat " You perfectly fit your mother's looks" She would say " you eat enough your soon getting back to that town life of yours where everything is bought and for money " Dinner would be followed by the lengthy conversation of Aunt and Obed about the mysteries of R. Rushere and Rubambuga that draw their source up from the unseen hills of the Bachwezi and that in the rainy season, the two rivers would swallow three people as a means of appeasing the Bachwezi gods. Aunt cautioned us not to fishing during the rains with the rivers full.

" It's hard to cross the river to go to school when rains are much, I have to miss school all those days" Obed said.

I wondered why they didn't have a bridge and Aunt blamed the selfish MPs who only returned to the village to ask for more votes the next term of office.

The conversation would be extended to our beds. Obed narrating how the mysterious Bachwezi appear in this time of harvest. Footsteps would be heard and voices of herdsmen yelling out at each other late in the night. Conversations about Obed's girlfriend at his school, Julia whom she said she is determined to marry though "I've never kissed her" Obed said

"Rev. Kakuru says it's dirty to kiss before marriage, those things are for the whites only" Obed said.

I would think to myself of Linnet back at my school and every night I craved for her thinking she would be my wife and hold her tightly right in bed and would wish her body on mine and posting her mouth on mine always. Linnet was beautiful and used to put on tight Jean skirts on the weekend and at break time; she would pick the duster and start mimicking Beyonce on stage singing her songs. Her picture danced in my mind's every night I went to sleep but I had not picked any courage to go and tell that I loved her. I feared she would shrug off rejecting me saying "take away your funny belly"

One evening, on our way from the rice farm, we had vowed not to do fishing since we had received the afternoon rains were heavy with thunderstorms. We later inclined to the temptation when Obed said it would be the favorite time the fatty Nsonzi would appear and chances were high of catching much that would see us through the week and never again fish if rains never ceased. Obed set his traps carefully this time and instructed us to keep a distance from the heavy flowing water. He stood patiently with his legs half immersed in water seeking support from the hanging branch of the tree not to slide.

"Look look, over there, Obed it has come" Roger shouted as he pointed to where the black

Nsonzi was swimming by the river side, approaching the riverside and stepped on the huge black slippery stone, up in arms.

he yelled "maama help help am gone"

The river roared and churned with a relentless fury, its frothing waves crashing against the rocky shore. The water was a wild, seething beast, its power beyond measure. Roger fought with all his might to keep his head above the surface, to gasp for air before the next torrent of water smothered him. His arms flailed wildly, hands grasping futilely at the slippery boulders nearby, only for them to rip away as the current carried him along. The water was ice-cold and unrelenting, pulling him, dragging him down with its deadly embrace. As he struggled and kicked, his eyes darted frantically along the riverbank, searching for help, but there was nothing but the sheer cliffs, the rocks, and the swirling water. Panic welled up inside him, each passing moment adding to his terror until he could barely breathe. His chest heaved, lungs straining for air, as he wrestled with the monstrous river. And then, as the current twisted and turned him in every direction, his strength began to ebb away. Desperation flooded through him, and I knew he was running out of time.

I screamed "Obed, he's gone, please help help."

Obed hurriedly left the tree, dove into the water to help him out as he swayed in the churning and frothing waves of the river towards where Roger was no longer seen. I stood still feeling a black dread building inside of them, a cold hand clenching around my heart. With every second that passed, my fear grew more intense, wrapping around me like a suffocating shroud. I was helpless, unable to do anything to help Roger as he fought for his life against the raging river. Every wild twist and turn he made, every terrified gasp for air, felt like a knife twisting in my gut. My eyes, wide with shock and disbelief, never left Roger's struggle. They could feel their heart pounding in my chest, the blood thrumming through their veins in a panicked rhythm. The feeling of powerlessness was overwhelming, and a sharp sense of guilt tainted my dread. Why couldn't I do anything to help him? Why am I standing here, immobile and useless? Each passing second stretching out into an eternity of terror.

The forest was deathly silent, the only sounds the distant roar of the river and the rustling of leaves in the wind. The trees loomed high overhead, their branches stretching out like bony fingers, casting dark shadows on the forest floor.

Hardly had I stood thinking of how I would narrate such ordeal to dad back at home, to bury the only brother I had, the only hope in my life than I heard Obed scream " Keith come on, he's here,

" Roger was stuck in a branch that had fallen off from its tree and loosely hanging. Obed carried him to the bank lifeless he lay there light was dim, the foliage casting the forest floor in a dappled pattern that shifted and danced with the wind. In the distance, the river churned and frothed, the feeling of numbness had overpowered my limbs that I dreaded touch him. I picked up the courage and remembered my science lessons for first aid. I had to do mouth to mouth resuscitation but it yielded nothing. After a period of 2 minutes, Roger sneezed coughing out water through his mouth and nose. I helped his shivering body to sit gasping for breath. I heard Obed sighing a heavily behind me. I knew we had won, another chance. It was the moment that Roger realized the dread he had faced that he ran into my chest crying and thanking me. I cried too, my first time to hug my little brother, another chance to live. " What if I was alone? I would be dead"

We didn't narrate the story to Aunt. From that day, my brother became do close to me. I had at least achieved though it wasn't a trap for his love. I had conquered. One week later to Christmas, we received a letter and Christmas package from mum through the Archdeacon priest Rev Kato.

*"Dear Keith and Roger..*

*Hope this letter finds you well; I have come to know through your Aunt that you are in Kalangaro. I know it's hard to believe but I will be coming soon to check on you. I am writing to you to let you know that am sound health here in Kampala and secured a job as an office attendant at Royal Bakery. I will let you know everything when I come next year in January."*

## LOVE EMOJIS

On the balcony, scrolling on her phone, Naomi was nodding to high life music from the hostel neighbour's room caressing her hair, smacking her red painted lips and raising her painted fingers in rhythmically to the music sound. She was celebrating her win after she had received a package from UK. Naomi had come to her dream half full filled, the jewels, the makeup kit lotions and sweet fragrance all in a rectangular thin glossy box that came wrapped with her name and location. The next step would be an I phone, her dream phone. Her Samsung galaxy she had secured after selling two goats back at her village home irked her because it took poor quality photos and snaps that now didn't fit his virtual class, Instagram, twitter and Snap chat. I phone would solve her problem. She would get more likes, comments, she would rock the world on her screen.

This was however not her first win, just two months ago she had secured a juicy deal with Decpack Restaurant, Bar and Grill as their social media influencer marketing their daily menus and dishes by posting on her social media handles to attract customer. Her glowing and beautiful photo had been used on the restaurant packages and banners across the town. She became their brand ambassador. This was in exchange of a free daily meal and a bonus weekend outing with free drinks and snacks she had to enjoy with any two friends of her wish.

On a video call, Naomi was blushing holding her phone high in position to to make her round face get captured well by the camera." Hello Sean" with her wide smile that exposed her white teeth.

"Hello Naomi, hy doing dear" the man with a British accent replies.

" Guess what, I've received the package hiiii ..oh dear thanks for the care, love you message" Naomi replied excitedly with flying kisses to the white bear bearded face on the phone.

" Oh! It's interesting to hear the news, it's just the beginning babe, I am gonna love you more"

"I am so sorry for having doubted you at first baby, this proves it all, Mr.Right" Naomi replied with in her fake British accent with a more articulated "t" that made her sound like clinking

glasses on a tray. Her love with Sean had just started with just Sean's love emojis commented on her Instagram post I'm her half red dress, gracefully bending her head to the right to let her Afro braids suspend in air.it took less than a week to get each other's contacts and love began its journey between the two distant love birds. Naomi had been tired of breakups and found now comfort in the caring Sean. Her dream had come true with her conversation she regularly had with Sanya her roommate.

" I am tired of dating black broke African men" Naomi said to Sanya

" You know Naomi, everything happens for a reason" Sanya said

" Do you believe love at first sight?" Naomi asked.

I don't believe in those fictional love stories, as a writer those Cinderella stories are unreal and I see it's the same story you want to play but I can assure you, life is quite different from what you watch on screens" Sanya replied.

" Why sound so selfish and scintillating Sanya?" Naomi replied

" Maybe you need to meet Benji and Medi , it will be a grateful opportunity for you I guess" Sanya exclaimed.

" Stop repeating the same old story, who are they? Rolling her round eyes as she tightened her braids in her mirror on dressing table adorned with all types and scents of Vaseline, gel shampoos and lotions and heavy fragrance that filled the room to choking.

Benji(Benjamin) and Medi (Madison) was an incredible duo that had dropped from school after being suspended in their second term of their form six. Benji and Medi had had wires installed from their dormitory ceiling and run an underground path behind the school main kitchen extending to the huge oak tree that stood before the basketball court yard. They managed to hijack into the local radio station's frequency Gaga GM 99.1 fm and overtook their Friday and Saturday night programs of airing Music mixes from the DJ and would be traced within the vicinity of the school and beyond. The acclaimed DJ B and Med would play music with their laptop other equipment they had mandatory secure at a cheaper price from the computer laboratory attendant. They became the sensation of the area with their rapping and disco

jockeying skills that attracted a huge attention including their head teacher and their own parents back at home. During their school holidays, local people would be heard complaint about the Gaga FM management for changing its staff on a regular basis." Where is these boys that played the night Friday and Saturday music mix on the radio" Benji's mother complaining. They had won the locals hearts because they would send their regards on air to get them captivated. It didn't take long when the school administration made an abrupt checking and the duo got caught and was suspended indefinitely by the school board. However their skill had not been suspended at all, they proved their talent and had managed to secure a DJ job at the Decpack Bar and ran an online entertainment blog that dealt in celebrity news around town. It's how they came to get in touch with Sanya the writer, Naomi's roommate. Sanya had taught Naomi the beautiful girl from the humble background of Kagonda in Kigezi that the world would go virtual by scrolling on her phone. Not only that but introduced her to The Benji and Medi duo that later secured her a juicy deal with the Decpack Restaurant Bar and grill company. It as a milestone achieved in Naomi's life the deal that washed all the scathe and filth of poverty from her skin and now beaming and glowing on the screens and billboard posters around the town.

Sanya had realized that she too could win herself a brand ambassador deal as Naomi had since she had a tremendous experience in the virtual world and linked Naomi to one of it . However her mission didn't yield fruit when she was frustrated by her angry stalkers and followers on Instagram after she had posted her first snap bin a bikini that drove her male followers to comment horribly on her body

@cathbert: which bman would date a fellow man like you"

@user783: " tassa egwanga silina kyolagako Mama"

@harunaig: " no boob, no booty what are you tryna showin' babe?"

@brandonP: oh no□□□□□□

From this Sanya had vowed herself to find a beauty doctor to work on her boobs and booty. Breast and hip enlargement project was the name of her saving box she kept under her bed. In attempt to achieve her dream, she had inclines to the temptation of selling nudr pictures on a pornographic website " blackpudedude&gxxxc"

Sanya didn't write just stories in her room but also was fond of secretly positioning her phone camera on top of the wardrobe strategically facing the dressing table and mirror to capture Naomi's body after every other bath as she dressed up. Sanya envied Naomi's supple body and wondered why she would turn down men's proposals to sleep with her yet they looked nice and cool and took her for shopping and drove her back to hostel. Sanya saw it an opportunity that she couldn't miss if such men came to her inbox unsearchable for sex.

Naomi's love for Sean had grown deep roots. Her dream was later achieved, the iPhone from Sean, gorgeous dresses and latest designs of perfumes and fragrances from UK. Her mundane Kigezi life had turned to upbeat. Sean had won her whole heart." There's a person who loves and you feel you should offer the whole to him" Naomi posted on Instagram with her new phone and latest designer dress. Distance didn't matter between the two lovers, love grew strong day by day " I surely know I am with Mr. Right Sanya" Naomi said.

" So when should we prepare party dresses I can hear the wedding bells ring" Sanya replied.

"Oh slow down your horses girl, can you imagine that he's asking to visit him in the UK?" Naomi giving a high five with her strident laughter.

" So another the Cinderella story launching, seems I am going to witness it here!" Sanya replied.

Things came tumbling down when the late night video calls were no longer sweet. Sean had started to demand undivided attention from Naomi. He always wanted to know all her trips and movement, her schedule and required to know which men were besides her. It worsened when Naomi received a treating text " Remember I know the whole babe so stop playing stupid games of yours" Naomi had spent quite a time without talking to Sean she had been busy with tests and exams. It was hard to believe at first, she believed those were red flags of an insecure relationship yet she had disclosed her personal information to Sean and literally been part of her life. However Naomi came to believe on the night she was attacked by a masked stranger in the hallway of her hostel room from the late night clubbing. The stranger clad in black and masked with a broad chest and muscled body jumped on her neck and squeezed her mouth pressing hard her body on the wall " Why do you want to play those stupid games of yours girl?"



Huh, you know I wanted you since the day I sent you my first text, today it'd the final day" Gasping for breath, Naomi threw her hand bag on the tiled floor of hallway and her make up kit banged itself making and clanking noise. The stranger fumbling with her skirts and raising her thighs humping his body on hers against the wall, Naomi was saved by the neighbors roommate abrupt lights that were switched on to give a faint light in the hallway, the stranger ran in fear leaving Naomi roaming desperately in the hallway.

The following weeks, Naomi lost concentration, her grades deteriorated, she couldn't manage attending most of the lectures. On her bed she would spend the whole day and night crying and sobbing holding her pillow tight. She vowed to block all the strangers and Sean on her all social media accounts. The stranger had other maneuvers and made other fake social media and sent more treating messages to her. The worst of the ordeal was when the stranger sent nudes of her in take in her room. Naomi started to believe something was wrong, someone was stalking her everyday. She experienced hallucinations, she no longer applied make up and feared to look herself in a mirror she was afraid of even her own shadows in the room that she couldn't manage sleeping with lights off. She would experience night mares but couldn't help telling Sanya her roommate though she had observed the change. Naomi concluded that Sean was behind all the craft and all his madness the man that had won her heart with his witty words and comments and simple gifts.

Naomi couldn't enjoy her break from social media when she received news about her roommate Sanya who was admitted in the hospital nursing wounds of attempted assault and rape. On the hospital bed Naomi found Sanya lying with her head bandaged and left leg plastered, she was on intravenous injectors. The blue walled room smelled syrups the silence increased tension and dread. Sanya didn't take long when she saw Naomi as she uncontrollably shed tears.

"What has happened to you dia" Naomi asked.

"It's a long story" Sanya replied. She narrated that the two strangers who attacked her accused her of leaking the story of how the lecturer Karim had had his Laptop accidentally project in class during the lesson presentation his photo half naked with the female students coordinator in bedroom.

" I mean this is the same man who always tells us that we spend all of our time on the screens of phones and laptops that's why we perform poorly, and end up selling our bodies" Sanya muttered.

Sanya had not only leaked the news but also the name of the female student and the lecturer and had sold the news and the alleged explicit photo to Benji and Medi that run an entertainment blog.

"Come on Naomi, I need to tell you something" Sanya muttered.

"What is it dear?" Naomi replied.

"We are in this world fleetingly and I don't see any sense in living fake lives on screens trying to look for validation and accreditation from strangers on the screens of our phones, fighting for likes and comments is such a lame idea, all those people that shower us with grace and love are completely ghosts they don't know you and neither do you"

"You must be right Sanya, I've left that for the rest, I ve decided to live my simple lifestyle and leave such stuff that puts my life at peril" Naomi replied.

"I want you to forgive me Naomi. This is all my fault" Sanya replied

"It's not your fault, it's mine Naomi to take such stupid decision" Naomi replied.

"It's me,..... it's...me Naomi.....who .....I mean...it's mean who leaked your nudes....I am do sorry Naomi please forgive me....I am so sorry" bursting into tears.

"I wanted to make money, I wanted one who took me for shopping like you, who would buy me latest designs I wanted to be like you, ease forgive me, .... regret.." Sanya intoned.

Sanya couldn't at first digest what Sanya was saying though it didn't take her long to forgive her and hugged her tight. The money Sanya had saved was used to open a website and an online campaign to teach young girls and boys about the dangers of social media. The company has attracted huge audiences from across the globe. Their mission is to teach self worth and increase awareness cyber security and bullying among teens and how one would thrive in doing and benefiting from online jobs.

## **WHY LIONS AND HUMANS ARE SWORN ENEMIES.**

**Once** upon a time, long before that history can't tell, there lived a woman in a forest with other wild animals. They lived in harmony and peace that no single war had ever broke among them. The woman lived a single and a lonely life in her hut that she desperately longed to have someone to talk and live with.

The woman decided to visit and consult the old witch of the forest Ggunji who knew all the darkest and secret ways and tradition of the forest. Ggunji almost spoke all the languages of the animals, the lionese, the elephantese, the giraffese and the snakeese including the humanese spoken by humans.

Ggunji was an old woman who sat always in her shrine made of ivory shells and fenced with silver shiny tusks. When the woman approached Ggunji, she was asked to sit prostrate with her face downwards. She told Ggunji her sorrow of living alone and how she wanted someone to live with.

Ggunji was not selfish, because she knew all the ways of the forests, she advised her to go and sleep with Lion because he was the king of the jungle. "But how's that possible as you know King lion doesn't entertain visitors at night and he is always unfriendly at night" exclaimed the woman. " Well you will have to wait on Lunar day when there will be an eclipse, that's when King Lion is then half human and kind to entertain visitors and then he can be easily lured" replied Ggunji the witch.

The woman had to wait for the lunar and followed the instructions Ggunji gave her. It's the day when King Lion had arranged a party for the whole jungle animals. He was in utter excitement and drunk heavily that he was easily lured by the woman.

No sooner had the woman reached home after two weeks than she conceived a baby girl in her womb. Time went by and she gave birth to the baby girl. The baby was half human and lion or cub. She would transform into a cub at night and back to human at sunrise. The woman was instructed again by Ggunji that at every sunset she was to take the baby down to the river in a nearby cave, there king Lion would find her and take her to spend the rest of the evening with his cub, learning lionese, how to hunt and have fun.

Later, early at sunrise the cub would be returned to the same place as it transformed into a girl, there her mother would pick her and spend the whole day with her learning humanese and helping her mum. Years went on as the routine repeated and the promise kept while girl grew old. She grew knowing both humanese and lionese.

Sooner, the girl grew older and bigger to be carried by the woman. And the mother felt too a selfish urge of wanting to keep and live with the girl all the time of her life. She too feared that one day King Lion would fail to return her completely. The woman decided not to again carry the girl to the cave for almost six days.

One night the witch visited her in a dream and warned her of a serious result of her unfaithfulness. She told her that she would have to costly pay for this.

The woman did not heed to the warning but instead thought that she would be wise enough to protect her girl from any attack. So one night, King Lion traveled himself to the woman's hut burning with rage and intense anger against the woman. He banged the door and found the woman lying on her mat as the young girl sleeping inside a ring of fire. King Lion made an attempt to attack the woman who in turn rose frightened and picked a calabash of butter that lay beside her and hastily threw it at King Lion. Immediately King Lion smelt the scent of butter he fearfully withdrew and retreated outside. King spent the rest of the night outside cursing in torment "you've betrayed yourself and your daughter, you've turned your back from me you selfish woman, from today I have waged a war against you and your family because humans turn their backs," King Lion went back home at sunrise cursing.

Early in the morning The woman asked the daughter what lion was speaking the previous night for she knew the lionese language. The girl explained to her mother in full detail. The woman started to smear her daughter with butter to prevent her from growing any lionish fur on her body. That's why girls bodies are smooth. The woman vowed to protect her girl from any danger by putting her in a ring of fire during their sleep at night because King Lion feared fire.

From then and on, humans are sworn enemies with the lions, that's why when humans try to turn their backs from lions, they burn with fury and rage to kill them and have their blood and flesh torn.

### **PART III: CRITICAL REFLECTION.**

#### **SYMBOLISM.**

Symbolism in literature refers to the use of symbols, which are objects, characters, figures, or colors used to represent abstract ideas or concepts. Symbolism is a literary device that authors use to add deeper meaning to their writing, allowing readers to interpret the story in different ways. Symbolism can be obvious or subtle, and it can be found in all types of literature such as poetry, prose, and drama. Examples of symbols in the pieces

In the poem Alcoholism, the bottle symbolizes alcohol consumption since alcohol is served in bottles. It also symbolizes the fragility of human life that it can break anytime if handled carelessly. The bottle therefore implies that life should be handled with care. It should be noted that the drunkard uses the bottle to sip wine and hence it can be broken anytime. This too is depicted in the life of his family because of too much alcohol which leaves the family broken.

In the poem From Freedom to Prison square, the freedom square symbolizes the once Freedom of the university students, who used to freely express themselves. The police tanks symbolize the tyranny of the University administration that suffocate the students freedom by scaring them with the superiority of the police. It is ironical for the police tanks to be guarding the freedom square.

In the poem The trees by the lake side, the two trees symbolize the two love birds or people in love. The fact that they are standing with their branches interlocking, they represent intimacy and have survived for a long time beside the lake. They are a symbol of everlasting love.

In the poem, halves of an orange, the two halves symbolize the plurality of humanity and nature. The physical appearance of man and woman but also the difference in ideology. The halves symbolize the different human perception of nature being bad and good that is to say "yin and yang"

In the poem, I too have a dream, in the third last line, colors of red, blue and yellow have been used. These colors symbolize the difference in political ideologies of Uganda. In Uganda different political parties identify with different colors for identity for example, FDC identifies

with blue, NUP identifies with red and NRM identifies with yellow. This is used to show that one day, there shall be unity in Uganda of all these political parties to fight for freedom.

In the short Story The three boys and Nsonzi Fishing, the two rivers of Rushere and Rubambuga symbolize and foreshadow the love that Keith and Roger would attain. The two rivers meet and make a confluence right below Mr. Ketieras farm and so this is foreshadowing the later reconciliation of the two brothers after the river had swallowed Rogers

### **METAPHORS.**

Metaphor is a figure of speech in literature where a word or phrase that ordinarily means one thing is used to refer to something else. Essentially, it is a comparison between two things that are not exactly alike, but have something in common. Writers use metaphor in literature to create images in the reader's mind and to convey deeper meanings and emotions. A metaphor can convey a complex idea or emotion in a simple, powerful way, by making a comparison that is memorable, easy to understand and resonates with the reader. For example,

In the short story, The three boys and Nsonzi Fishing, Keith's quest for love is a metaphorical to the quest for freedom. In the he story Keith and Roger forgive each other and become great friends even when Keith has not used any weapon to change Roger, it is by the forces of nature that bring that help Keith to achieve his dream. This can be also related to the quest for freedom which at the end is inevitability achieved because of the forces of nature and change.

Also the poem, the mad man, is a metaphorical piece that talks about the uncertainty of man's dreams or destiny. In stanza five, the mad man's world lies in debris and he's unable t find hope amidst the vastness of all human nature. This shows how every man has to encounter his life journey and surprises alone.

In the poem I too have a dream, the crested crane standing on one leg is used to show that Uganda is still developing as it is depicted on the Uganda National Flag, whereas also it has been captured flying high in the sky and soaring the heights and this is to show development and esteemed organization in the nation as a dream. More so, in the poem, the scales of Justice have been used in the third stanza to show justice, the scales of justice symbolise Justice in a society

and so the scales returning to balance shows that there is injustice in the country and as a dream, it will be restored.

In the poem, letter to my mother, in the sixth stanza, the mother is compared to the sun that never sets referring to the brilliance and endless love of the mother. Also in the poem the mother is compared to the lighthouse which symbolises hope and refuge in times of troubles. A light house is set on some island or shore of a lake or ocean to with an overseer to rescue the helpless in times of storms or trouble and so the speaker compares the mother to the lighthouse.

In the poem Ode to Malaria, the sickness is compared to a serpent and a venomous snake, this is to create a more vivid picture of the danger of the disease, venomous snakes bite with fangs that live the victim vulnerable to death and so is malaria when it attacks one.

## **IMAGERY.**

Imagery is a literary technique that appeals to the senses, creating vivid mental pictures in the reader's mind. It uses descriptive language and sensory details to create an image or a mental picture. Imagery can involve any of the five senses - sight, sound, touch, taste or smell. Through the use of imagery, one can create a more detailed and immersive experience for the reader. Examples of images used are:-

Sight:

In the short story, The three boys and Nsonzi Fishing, the description of Rogers as being of a darker complexion and a broader chest" give the writer a more vivid picture of what Rogers size is. And also through this description, the reader can be able to determine the age of his hence getting detailed information about the character in the story.

Also in the short story, The three boys and Nsonzi Fishing, Abache's home description is more vivid as their house being large and fenced with conifers, covered and roofed with mategula and brown face bricks with large French windows. This also can be used to tell the social class of Abache's family in the story compared to Keith's home which is described as modest.

Sound:

In the short story, *The three boys and Nsonzi Fishing*, the sound of the forest and the river are described as deathly silent, the only sound was the roaring of the river. This creates a tense mood in the story to give a reader a feeling of tension keeping him or her hooked to the next happening. It is in this part of the story that Roger, had been swallowed by the churning river.

In the poem, *Midnight Song of the Divorced*, the description of Enid, the cough and blasts like the Saba Saba guns. The Saba Saba guns were the heavy guns used by President Museveni in the 1986 guerilla war that would give a thunderous blasting when launching land missiles. Enid's cough is described as those guns to give the reader a more vivid picture of how dangerous Enid can be to the speaker's husband with her acute disease.