



PERAMBULATIONS
IN ABYSS

MARTINS IYOBOYI WRITINGS
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Cover art image of a boat on the water at Puget Sound August 12th 2006.
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| The Promise | 6 |
| Beloved | 8 |
| There Are No Foes | 9 |
| Hopes Harmattan Day | 10 |
| That Fallen Brick | 11 |
| Rainmind | 12 |
| Death in Empyrean | 13 |
| Beach Worshippers | 14 |
| A Shadow in the Flow | 15 |
| The Valley Bottomless | 16 |
| New Hopes Come To Man | 17 |
| Neither Safe Nor Saving | 18 |
| A Sojourner by the Sea | 19 |
| The Landscape | 20 |
| Pathfinder | 22 |
| Come Away | 23 |
| Common Road | 24 |
| A Nigerian Soldier in Sierra-Leone | 25 |
| Agony, Agony, Agony | 26 |
| The Soul Awhispering | 27 |
| Silent Stirs | 28 |
| The Twilight Lament | 29 |
| The Tree | 30 |
| Parting Shots at a Cab Station | 31 |

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INTRODUCTION

The obvious choice of title for this collection is “Perambulation in Abyss.” The poet’s experience of events in his native country Nigeria informs such a choice. Monumental decay in nearly all facets of the society over the years has bred in the new generation of men and women a sense of loss, of hopelessness, of hate for officialdom, of desperation to leave the shores for better prospects in other lands and of an increasing deceleration in patriotism.

The essence of the collection is aptly captured in:

There are no foes but the leaders
who have assailed us with their bitter hate,
there is no poverty but the stolen wealth where
the nation bleeds to enrich foreign lands.
The leaders have tasted many a vice
and like vermin destroy the tissues of the land.

However, there exist some antidotes, ironical as some may be to the sense of despondency, “for happy worshippers praise with joy” and there is the exhortation that:

...We must not throw out the light,
Brief though it may seem,
For old blurs shall efface
And proffer the mind purer hopes.

...And when the proboscis perceives sweet
Paths of crowns, creative impulses
Look on the eye of the sky, smile
At close applause of perusing dawn,
When night is drugged away by day.

In the midst of rage against contemporary state of things, there is the tendency of the people to rise against the common enemy, for “though the times teem with tiring thoughts, this parting pact will prove one heart to build, not to break or bend.”

THE PROMISE

These are my underlined agenda,
No doubt, I dare outline, about its potency.
Those before me cannot be said to be proud,
Much less the brains which computed, refined
These carefully considered opinions! –
Your opinion, I would say, pertaining the
Low nation-state, even the filth in it.
Now, just for convictions, those men,
Names word-wasting, even rabble-rousers,
Possessing the wand of thorough insight,
Advancement, not absent, even vision!
Now, pause a moment, come down to these things;
Shelter, even mendicants could be choosers!
Ridiculous, you might express, but I
Wholeheartedly, my mind's bosom portray,
No more dead speeches, from disguised aspirants,
Just your concord and the people bloom!
Mark the word, more houses; I repeat, excuse
Me, beggars, when I finally sit, shall
Even, without fear (which shook in the past)
Come out and justice demands, you know,
Human right I'll provide, in fuller scale!
Even in dreams, I see the convicts free,
No more shall those shackles bind them in jail.
Wonderful promises, no doubt, bear these
In your mind, I would tell my wise men which,
Provided you mind in satisfying colours; I
Say many (this key sector people look forward to)
Their fears I abolish, for how there
Holds costly learning in our own country!

Much folly this is, even decree this to
Tertiary sense. But, you know, a price
Is all I demand. You know this, your verdict.
Now on June 12, the people play their one role.
O.K, here (this is the dove), our symbol.
Only stuff the in-scripted box with wads.
Our ticket only depends on your performance.
I present here four thousand naira, just
Minute, but manage this, a token of
Things ahead. Greater things shall duly come;
Light, water, free medical care, name it!
No more praise singing which leads to nothing.
Take my word and give me your heart, no more
No doubt, my victory shines even now,
Remember: dead talk yields vain promises!

BELOVED

Mother educated us to beware,
Of brimming tawdry enlightenment
Against antique satisfaction
Vortexes of gay brightness,
Across oceanic assets,
To ebullient shores,
Replete with boundless bounties
Took unawares yearning animation
To our demerits.
Those killing intrusions
Moonshine, without peace
Into moot jinx,
You are yet the beloved
Still in green optimism
Vim of dispirits ancestral –
Countenances speaking amalgamation
Bruised by new white fangs.

THERE ARE NO FOES

There are no foes but the leaders
who have assailed us with their bitter hate,
there is no poverty but the stolen wealth where
the nation bleeds to enrich foreign lands.
The leaders have tasted many a vice
and like vermin destroy the tissues of the land.

HOPES HARMATTAN DAY

Yesterday, aliments defaced the earth,
Twigs derided, unsung of green
Nostalgia keeps beneath hope of afflatus
And cursory gazes become rancid
Hopes harmattan day
Succulent, demanding,
Inanimate flowers galvanized
By nimble caresses.

And fruits burst in binds
Truth leading the target
As onlookers, the mass, the applause
Cast, leading the encomiums
Pregnant glances raise the banner
Of union and progress.

THAT FALLEN BRICK

Let that 'disaster' consume
Yet inter deep the thing undressed
Lest ages oppress sharp disintegration
Beside the falling walls.

Where personable countenance asleep
Dreamt of victorious minds to come

I will gulp in careful gulping
Lost erudition, departed,
Now in the slivers of broken banks.

Catching phrases of wizened souls
And the pluck of forgotten falls.
Consume them, posterity
If a hothead portent hound
That put in the bleak-home of oblivion
These fertile means of my father.

RAINMIND

Rainmind twisting
Falling drops from gloomy rudiments
Into mental blasted abyss.

It is the elevated domicile
Gluing dusk-to-dawn spurts
The agonized spirits going merry
On a raw-made errand
From among castrated schemes
Down the tunnel of selfish potholes.

I sing these, laconic –
To the subtle beauty of intellect
In the gathering midst of sanity
On the outward face of long patience.

Salve raindrops cooling
Into myriad bends
Where jointed bloods
Mingle with ingathering ambience.

In island-moments of acrimony
Double-created woes alternating
The intricate sieve discerns
All nexus, proffered
To the deafness of sappy-hearts.

DEATH IN EMPYREAN

First excoriation inundated
Fulminating strength of his voice
His furore, not opprobrious
Engenders funk in mind's effect
They that are diffident
Cannot excoriate fizzled consequences.

O, the strength was uppermost
In extinguishing guile and haughtiness
Minds brimmed with parochial notions
Engulf the verandas of ruling voices.

The lonely quake, parry,
Deficient in the dialogue's magnitude –

There is silence in the world.

BEACH WORSHIPPERS

Angelic wings rend the air,
hands supplicating the heavens,
beyond, crests fall to shore
knitting soul and body bond.
Heavy laden with remorse,
hearts opposite house of apparel,
the children of sins,
by the beach come to worship.
While rams are let loose,
giving way to the messenger's blood,
and evil eye gazes at redeeming doors,
this morn, this dawn of hope,
happy worshippers praise with joy.

A SHADOW IN THE FLOW

The last tufts wither in the gloomy horizon;
All parameters fall in the blue deep,
While the day slowly hosts the dusk.
Tomorrow, the hours shall indeed arrive
Welcoming the dying visitors
Famished of personable wit.
The day is gray with bountiful businesses
At the silver-flowing waters of my mind.
The moment has come by the junction,
Sitting beside the spacious marsh
Feeding on the micro world,
And beholding the neon signs of
The resplendent liquid,
See the inner life of mortals.
The stiff outgrowths by the manure,
Eating the evergreen feeds,
Do invoke an identity from a close watcher.
The blooming buds, themselves doubled,
Tripled and quadrupled by the oppression
Of the water by the incessant waves,
Educate the mind of the duality of nature.
The birds are replete with weariness
Singing the darkest rhymes of their existence.
Yet, beside this teething bank,
At the education-centre of the heart
Righteous-ridden and comforting
The wretched keeper of supernal decrees
The most penurious of mortals;
A thinking fellow among men
Sits all daylong, in nimble temper
Watching his ways on the river surface.

THE VALLEY BOTTOMLESS

Each time I look
I see a void.

I dream of a suspense
And creatures tussling

I see a new world
Furnished from ruins

World transforms
The wise are foolish

Truth flees
While we chase

This is the way he said
The united house is weak

I am left without consolation
And see a ray in the martyrs'

Each time I look
I see a void
I dream of a suspense
Which only heaven can fill.

NEW HOPES COME TO MAN

New hopes come to man
After gloomy tide is done
Leaving the bleak spirits
The service of future thoughts.
The spot is seismic,
Falling while I stand to stare;
The darkening rays of the clouds
Running, gathering moving despairs
Soon go down the tranquil deep
And drink the glints of sanity.
We must not throw out the light,
Brief though it may seem,
For old blurs shall efface
And proffer the mind purer hopes.

NEITHER SAFE NOR SAVING

Our leaders are neither safe nor saving
and they have incurred the wrath of the land,
They are safe neither here nor abroad
nor is the hour of their punishment far,
For there is in the land
men and women of wasted days
who have had their collective heritage destroyed
And only wait for a song
to lead the way for expected hopes.
We neither shall be consoled by their imprisonment
nor by the angry words of both the young and old,
But must see to their end
which will not be long in coming
When as they have treated the commoners of the land,
They shall be publicly put to the sword
And all their acolytes and sycophants with them.

A SOJOURNER BY THE SEA

The waves bear heavy
Yoke, inviting,

To sojourning spirit earth-bound –

Beyond, faces mingle in delirium,
Pleading return to incessant lights;

Quenchless brilliance lurks –

Before the lords of judgment,
Yearning soul, Life-Book perusing –

Yields to cascading earth-waves.

And earth's master, undying tutor,

Clasps the child of God to seek anew
The trying paths of glorious homes.

THE LANDSCAPE

Now stands upstanding tussock,
Fading far away,
Now rises hapless sorts
Everyday by day.

Eastern glow in the eyes mount
Enchantments of illusion,
Ruse-like memorials of time
When nothing has been won.

Today's morrow's transaction,
Facer in studies of time,
Till doom's endless mission
In their portraits and signs;

Proximity defeats hopes,
Augmenting rays of better world,
While now, I, near the throes
In the guerdon of the crust.

Why ebullience of mortal hue
Dire ambition, study of stars,
Firm destiny while it rules
Till the season of the dark?

Perchance, glossy rays of the distance
Imbibe endless symphonies,
Sure elixir of soothing radiance
In blissful age of melodies.

Sleeping shadow, nigh their shades,
Enscoced in time's resolved rule
We are that specie of each day
In stark vanities to build;

You moot of distant echoes,
Munch poesy cheese of the mind,
If you are close to our road,
Cheer melancholy of the time;

The landscape sung in arts, valiant,
Fettles in woes of horizons,
Now seem murk in the world of minds,
By season's infinite cauldron.

O inuring blindness do
Alter chances of near-firmness,
Guest in halls of the good,
That virtue labours to send.

Killing obsession is done,
Moonshine retired in swift strides,
The virtue in earth is won,
Like a rare blameless bride!

Carouse nimbly not in blunt casts,
Divine worth that crave the heart,
Then you may be the last,
In wooing vanity's pow'r.

Now yet stands upstanding tussock,
Fading far away,
Now rises helpless sorts,
Everyday to day.

PATHFINDER

Proboscis probes vacant night
Wind, hope-pregnant to cheer
Happy rays, piercing through rejecting
Clouds of dawn; canopied forests
Throw rich shades on struggling shrubs,
Leaning on girths, seeking overhead sun.

Daily nights enclose rosy sepals,
Thin-necked, seeking ventilation,
And dimmed moon, behind lowering clouds,
Grow luminous when fresh zeal,
Opens ray-paths through umbrella tops.

The hope of Lot, when feverish dream
Petrified hard-nosed ears, and distant wreath,
Hovers about misty skies of discomfort,
Through narrow alleys, goblins lurk,
Viewing distance muffle with Lot's temptation,

And when the proboscis perceives sweet
Paths of crowns, creative impulses
Look on the eye of the sky, smile
At close applause of perusing dawn,
When night is drugged away by day.

COME AWAY

Come away, sweet Rose
From among the wild;
There times' ills and woes
Sting a lover's eye.

Let us play our songs
Among the quiet fields
In the new-born sun
Afresh from the east.

Moan no more the hour
Soured by politics
When resentments soar
To fast fading dreams.

Nor think of what wound
Sick minds on us breed
That lay waste our boom
And noblest wishes.

But in poetry move
Thy sweet soul to sing
Where no ills abuse
Nor mutinies sting.

Come away, my Rose
Leave the hoary wild
Let us act and mock
Men uncivilized.

COMMON ROAD

A viper's fang, two-pronged,
Fueling death's fearful prospects –

News of careless ends,
When ambitious seekers bend their course,
Protesting a nation's madness –

Blood pools, crescents of ceaseless sights,
And thick jams, of angry citizens,

Kept in sprees of halted hours –

And soon, another death, stillness –
When uniformed pawns come
Seeking bribes for their shame.

A NIGERIAN SOLDIER IN SIERRA-LEONE

Armed to fight another's cause,
Home front in burning spree –

Widowed semblance of my mother's,
Makes nerveless triggering fingers:
Children, the colour of misery –

Lean with death-throes hanging,
Against answerless heaven.

Rainfalls drop leisurely, on
Petals of roots long dead,
Fiery shots at night jarring the skies,

Foes at Freetown's gates,
Comrades, bent with hope,

Wait the zero hour, to end wastes
When greater shame await me back home.

AGONY, AGONY, AGONY

The first of the mortal pangs
Innocent cry of the raw –
The world unknowing faultless –

Till nature impregnates
This juvenile sensation –

And growing, grows into a maze
In stark unbelief –

With schemes, future maps
Of territories to conquer –

But ere the crowns of adventure
Labyrinths, in legions come –

Bearing the fruit from the stalk
And caution for gathered fruits –

Doze from the wrinkled month
Of sageful mind –

THE SOUL AWHISPERING

The soul awispers,
'A treasure is lost,'

Valued vessels, across had sailed
An age is doomed.

The soul awispers,
'There a glory was,'

Treed-varieties friendly
Hand in hand in love –

Now restructuring eludes –
Peace arunning.

SILENT STIRS

The earth, the outlook transformed
A god in an envelope of wool
The mermaid in view

Gay festivals of the heavenly orb
Earth in merry tears;

Throbs within the beating stuff
Radiate contents futuristic,

A genie of constant prompting
Lights the murk of every damp
Love in concealment,

Opens visions to wide horizons
Desires become gods of themselves

As slaves of men are issued
When silent stirs rear their passions.

THE TWILIGHT LAMENT

A jinx of meditation of the dark,
The fad of most,
That feed journeying age of man,
You are the gawky harbinger of woe
By this ebullient solitude.
Last night, we heard dire strutting,
A killing jollity in a faceless tree
Whereon, in carousing a noise is trumpeted,
In the shadows of the innocent age.
What tawdry spectacle of darkness,
A precursor of a deficiency,
Can interpret the actuality of the seed?
Perchance, your lament of yester dusk,
Was among the influence a vendetta,
But no, a resolved blend of hearts,
To the perdition of today.
We are that casual fright in a jiffy,
In readiness of the blatant note,
Whose nocturnal echoes,
Speak of a lovely death of the day.

THE TREE

Stately leviathan in force
Snappy against moony advent
Glossy phases replete of brightness
Perpetually buffeted.

He simulates, deafening order
Possessing a twang, sensuous
That antiquated countenance stooped
Soulless beings of ill-bred reason,

A fleck did enlighten,
Seeking adventurers on mirror-flow
Flaming ambition caressing

What dynamic resources
Augmented conviction to explore
The pith of that conference,

Dividing blood from blood,
Ideas from reality,

Blackman from Blackman.

PARTING SHOTS AT A CAB STATION

The cab to catch will soonest come
while we hold hands and talk the time awhile
in songs and sighs of lovers lured.
why must moaning move our minds
knowing that through the time
love's luscious labor will do
to leave a long lasting locus
upon a path paved with petals?
though the times teem with tiring thoughts
this parting pact will prove
one heart to build, not to break or bend.

PERAMBULATIONS IN ABYSS



MARTINS IYOBOYI

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