

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Yetunde Morenikeji: Two Poems

Yetunde Morenikeji · Tuesday, May 14th, 2019

PSALM (Verses on our tongue)

Ayanmo, play me an inexorable tune from the flute stationed at the tips of your fingers

I want to weave an elegy of broken voices and blinded visions

I want to saunter my feet and waist along to it; I have come to present a sacrifice to my creator.

We begin this rite by taking a step backward to the beginning of my end—

I died first when I was 15; plucked the blood off my labia and stuffed it into the walls of a white cloth.

Two white stones, three strands of hair and seven drops of tears, were all i needed to pay the last respect to my lost innocence / I buried them along with the bloodied cloth, cackling, chanting—'I am my own covenant'

We continue this rite by dancing forward with our head bowed—

I died again when my father left & I was left to count each sand that fell from his echoing footsteps / I woke the day i stalked god and found him inside of me / only to die again because god had left here / i died each time i wake to see the morning sun.

a step here—death

a step there—death

how many more deaths shall i die?

We stand for a minute, in respect for every dead soul-

of Course bodies were emptied at New places last week / my sisters still cringe at the mention of
masked men in Borno / thousands of my ancestors lay in the sandy beds of the Atlantic ocean /
they call your name each time these acts are carried out / and we are left wondering who to believe
in anymore; a god who wants us killed?

We dance to the holy altar, presenting our bloodied sacrifices—

These are the blood of every soul lost in account of your name / these are the tears of our
mothers—the ones who have turned pawns of your unending feud / pretend to not see this / and
then forgive us for we know not what we do...

I am tired! Tired of dancing in sync to a falling kingdom

my feet have grown weary / my skin is fast dissolving into drops of tears&blood

how hard can it be to dispose a vessel which refuses to hold water?

Ayanmo, keep on playing, do not stop

until the moon mirrors my sorrow to the maker of all. Selah

*

To The Lost Boys

... Arrival

A boy is born; delivered from the shackles binding

his survival to the body of another.

Or so he thought, until he

finds himself thirsting after the twin fountains on the chest of his mother.

Blue-eyed, almond haired

boy grows into the open pages of a plain canvas

waiting to be highlighted by the tremendous tip of life's brush

But instead, boy is seen submerged into scary shades of violence;

_Bloody red

_Deep purple

_Swollen black

Boy becomes a stale tune running into the

b. r. o. k. e. n

strings of an old guitar.

Boy finds solace on the shoulders of the boy next door.

each night the demons came calling-

boy escapes into the oblivion of his friend's embrace.

Then one night, boy tastes sunlight on the lips of his friend;

boy explodes into the flavour of many colors;

_Radiant yellow

_Mild lavender

_Fluffy white

Boy learns to hold in his palm; flying dusts scattered in the golden ray of the morning Sun

Boy learnt to hope, to dream, to capture in his heart; flying butters of Happiness.

Departure...

Last spring, boy was caught spelling letters of pleasure on the body of his friend.

Boy was shamed, bruised, condemned...

He slept each night dreaming of dark tunnels and falling nightmares.

Boy was told to pray: but pray was all he did even as he watched his mother die slowly at the mercy of his father's fist.

So Boy embraced the rope and kicked the bucket.

Boy is now another shapeless soul lying in the embrace of the Reaper.

This is part of Nigerian Voices Today, a 7-week series featuring young Nigerian poets, curated by Babatunde Babafemi. Check out [Week 1](#).

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