
Africa Speaks – a continents agony in
poetic form

AFRICA

Speaks

----*A continents' agency in poetic form*----

A collection of poems by Toris Okotie

Other poems included

Africa Speaks

Africa Speaks – a continents' agony in poetic form

By Toris Okotie

© 2003

Online edition is available for this title at
www.africaspeak.com

Lulu Enterprises. Inc

All right reserved. No part of this publication can be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publishers and/or author.

Dedicated to my grandmother (Jaje) who passed
away not too long ago

Goodbye Grandma

She laid straight on the linen bed
With her eyes wild open
Fighting to take a breath,
Her mouth silently closed
Whereas, she always had a word to say

With every breath she took
The clock ticks
For then we knew
Her time has come

So many tears dropped
Wishing, hoping she never leaves
All we ever wanted
Was a miracle, to keep her alive

When I touch her (once) soft cheeks
Her face was cold
And kept getting colder
Until the clock struck twelve

At the end of the clock's count
Her last breath was gone.
A sword pierce through my heart
Living only the memories of her
I held her by my hands
and whispered these words;
"Goodbye grandma, goodbye"

*“Africa, my Africa,
Africa of proud warriors
Of ancestral savannahs,
Forests and Rivers.”*

TABLE OF CONTENT

----- Foreword	12
----- Preface	14
----- Acknowledgement	15
----- Introduction	17
----- The Voices of Africa	19

PART 1

----- Africa my Africa	23
----- My African Child	24
----- The Children of Africa	25
----- Why am I Black?	27
----- Black legend	30
----- Unwritten History	31
----- Africa my Fatherland	32
----- Mother Africa	34
----- The Voices of Africa	35

----- The Crying Slave	37
----- I Dreamt of A Continent	39
----- When will you come home?	41
----- The African Palm Tree	42
----- A Day In Africa	43
----- The Last Warriors	44
----- My Westside Story	45
----- Africa Speaks	46

PART 2

----- Introduction	51
--------------------	----

-----	Deeply In Love	53
-----	Diamonds Are Forever	54
-----	An Artist Of Love	56
-----	Words of Love	57
-----	Your Beauty	58
-----	Love by Sight	59
-----	Love in The Moon	60
-----	Love Greatness	61
-----	A Song of Love	62
-----	Love From A Distance	65
-----	Your Sparkling Eyes	66
-----	The Color of Love	67
-----	Love Conquers	68

Letters of Love

-----	Loving you	71
-----	Remembering Our Love	72
-----	My Lady Of Love	73
-----	Missing You	74
-----	The Distance Of Love	75
-----	Always Love You	76
-----	Eternal Love	77

The Art Of Loneliness

-----	In Search Of Love	80
-----	Searching For Love	81
-----	Loneliness	83
-----	Too Young To Love	85
-----	Friendship to Love	86
-----	Her Dowry	87
-----	To Love or not To Love	88
-----	Unspoken Love	89

----- Wishing You Were Here 90

The End

----- Special Thanks
----- Authors Biography

Foreword

Awoken by the dazzling breeze of the ocean, flushing through my unlock windows; the waves claps as the early morning surfers beat their way through it. The sun once again sets at a thirty-degree angle to my ocean view. I, a poet, seating on my writing chair, ready to inscribe the beauty of nature, picks up my pen, accompanied with the sweet aroma of coffee. Today I write, praising the mysterious creatures of nature far beyond our comprehension, jotting down each move made by the leaves, caused from the whispering breeze. So much to be writing, only few to write, just one pen to be used. The pen, it tells what the mouth is afraid to speak, in bravery, it writes to condemn the master and praise the slave, it preserves history for generations to come.

By God's given ink, our freedom to write we express. In war or trouble times, we speak not by spoken words, for in then, our freedoms are compromised. With the fullness' of our ink and the readiness of our pen, we the writer's, unknown or known, in secret or open, under the unity of one pen, inscribes to the fullest, the recorded history of our time.

The Pen, sharper than a two-edge sword, although with only one edge, cuts threw our speechless mouths. A poet or a novelist, fiction or fact, these written words are preserved not only to accredit the authors but to also give geographical fact of the period we lived or living in. With the short length of the pen, it writes words longer than the length of the fallen rain, all on one given day.

Africa Speaks

For centuries, the writer's pen continues to write, in theories and faith, from the creation of the universe to the ideology of evolution. Through these years, many writers came and gone, famous and forgotten, but through it all, the preservation, and the keeper of our unspoken words: **The Writer's Pen**. It continues to be passed on from one writer to another and on this day, as I sit in my writing chair, I hold the writers pen, ready to fulfill its mission; preserve history.

Preface

Many books have been written and today, they sit at a lonely shelf waiting for someone to pick and dust them off, it is therefore my deepest desire that this book “Africa Speaks” will not only be of benefit to the readers but to their offspring’s and more to come. So long as their exist a continent known as Africa, it is the peoples’ right to know about this continent and about her people, and so long as their exist this book “Africa Speaks”, it’s this book rights’ to tell others about Africa and her people in poetic form...this, is what this book was written for.

Acknowledgement

Throughout the completion of this book, I have been blessed with an editor, friend and a mother: Mrs. Emily Sisan Okotie. Her experience has always given me confidence in asking any questions and thoughts that helped me in writing this book. From the deepest part of my heart, I sincerely appreciate all your help and support, Thanks. Love, your son...

The woman who always said
My baby don't cry
She took me by her hands
And nourished me with love

She's the only one who understands me
When I cry for help
She looks into my little eyes
And sings the whispered words
Of motherly love

When in my big games
She waves her hand to me
Letting me know
She's always by my side

In a crowd of thousands
I see her smiling face
In times of sorrow
She gave me her warm embrace

A friend
She is to me,
Caring, sharing, and loving her baby
That they all do

Africa Speaks

INTRODUCTION

Much as been written and said about Africa within Europe and the Americas, from the outright outrageous to the downright obnoxious, for a thorough cultural grasp of Africa, “Africa speaks”, in poetic style, tells a story of a continent not only known for her dramatic history but also a place filled with diverse culture. It explores the way of the African people as well as her geographical status, establishing a mental picture of Africa.

Among the poems showcased in this book, “Africa my Africa” opens the floor by reminding readers about the great nations of Africa involved in the slave trade. “The Children of Africa” dwell on the life style of African children as carried forward to this day. “The African Palm Tree” brings to mind, not only the geographical beauty of the continent but also the economic value of their natural resources; while “Africa Speaks” cries with the voice of the African people in joy and sorrow, reminding all of the once great continent, calling for support from her lost children to make Africa great again.

Reading this book gives you a historic, geographical, cultural, religious and psychological tour of Africa.

-----Toris and Emily Okotie

THE VOICES OF AFRICA

"We must face the tragic fact that the Negro is still not free. One hundred years later, the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination... the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity.

But there is something that I must say to my people who stand on the warm threshold, which leads into the palace of justice. In the process of gaining our rightful place we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred.

I say to you today, my friends, that in spite of the difficulties and frustrations of the moment,

I still have a dream.

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together

I have a dream today."

----- Martin Luther King, Jr.

PART 1

*Freedom is just across the valley
In its pursuit, our God given rights we
secure*

Africa My Africa

Africa my Africa
Africa my motherland
Mother or Fatherland
Childless you went almost
But he that intervened
The God of all nations

Africa my Africa
Mother of nations great
Nigeria in the west
Ethiopia in the east remains
With labor pangs
You brought them forth

Africa my Africa
Father of Egypt
To the north, be so planted
And Zimbabwe, the south remains
And for Africa that mothered them all

Africa my Africa
Your discovery had brought you pains
Children and grandchildren
To the great sea you lost
Continents with them were fed

Africa my Africa
In Vain labor no more
Loose a child, but to no one
Your great nations do protect
For he shall intervene
When you cry for help

Africa Speaks

My African Child

So young in heart
He cried for milk
So poor and helpless
Mama weeps in pain

His eyes so red
A week he cried
A month ago,
To the world he came

Mama so young
Papa has run
Under the bridge
They lay their heads

In storm and rain
They search for food
Through man and sex
Mama fed him well

The days went by
Mama health decreased
Just five months old
Mama said goodbye

In rain and cold
He cried so loud
In sun and heat
He wept and wept

Three days gone by
Since mama left
And now he sleeps
To meet with mama

Africa Speaks

The Children Of Africa

The sun arise
A new day sets
Bells echo, they came;
The children of Africa

With bowls so deep
A cue they form
In haste they eat
For more they ask

In tens they bathe
With clay as soap
In water so dark
Some fishes would die

To sell they left
Ten miles they walk
In sun and rain
They never would frown

To school some go
To learn to read
And write they could
To speak so well

At night they meet
For tales they tell
Both learned or not
The moon so full

Young boys and girls
Together they sit
Around the fire
The flames so huge

Africa Speaks

The crickets would scream
The birds would sing
The rhymes so sweet
That dose them off

The night too old
Their eyes would crack
To bed they go
Good night, good night

Till sun would set
This culture maintain
Like gold to treasure
The children of Africa

Why Am I Black

Why am I black?

Tell me,
Ten hours of hard labor,
Under the blazing sun,
Picking cotton,
No food,
Less water,
And these bruises on my back,
From the lashes of my master,
Blisters on my hands and feet,
Toiling, sweating, in the heat,
No rest for my weary soul,
And you ask me,
Why am I black?

Why am I black?
Is it the darkness of my skin?
The strength of my bones,
or, the history of my heritage

Years ago,
The colonial ship landed;
Close to the equator
they met us,
by the radiating sun of Africa
Oh! I could hear voices,
Voices of children crying,
for their mother,
their father has been taken into slavery.

Once we were known as Africans,
They came and called us Blacks.

Africa Speaks

Why am I black?

I'm black,
Because history made me black,
Slavery made me black,
The weather made me black:
My heritage made me black.

I'm black,
because black is who I am.

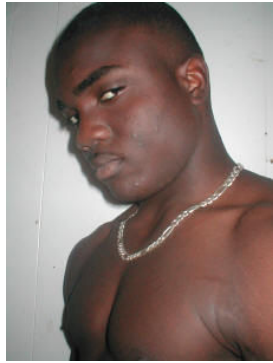
Special Thanks

Numerous numbers of people and organizations has also helped and inspired me not just by words but by deeds as well, and with their help, this book is published. In recognition of these people, I would like to acknowledge their tireless effort and never ending support for me in writing this book.

Special thanks to Mr. Costa, my English teacher who made me understand and appreciate poetry and to Jitte Najomo who always has been my inspiration. To these following people I owe my gratitude, Juliet Asemota, Kupe Okoromadu, Emily Wong, Helen Keyamo, Larry Diamond, Oreva Odubu, Chester Johnson, Eseoghene Ufuyah, Alex Renau, Vanessa Molina, Chikodi Emerinene and a list of others who's name was not mention, Thanks.

Also would like to thank the Francis Lewis Boys and Girls Soccer team for all their help and contribution, the Queens Borough Public Library for offering a place for research, the people at authors den, lulu and to Francis Lewis High School, for offering a valuable education which as educated me in able to write this book, to all those mention and unmentioned, Thanks.

About the Author



Born in 1985 into a busy African community known as the city of Warri, raised in an economically viable mobile family of ten; the poet had his pre-high school education in not less than 3 African schools and his high school education in more than 4 schools including Francis Lewis High School in NY. Inspired by the diverse experiences from socializing with people of deferent Educational, Social and Cultural background; and reading several poetry books especially Shakespearean writings, author took delight in poetic writing: To inscribe such experiences in an indelible manner and style and to share such experiences with others.

Achievements

Receive the "2002 Famous Poet of The Year" title by the famous poet Society. Works have been publish in many antilogy by poetry.com, The American Poet Society, Famous Poet Society, Poetry America, The Poetry Institute of Africa, Nobles and many other local and international publishers including numerous online publishers and Newsgroup. Poet has also won numerous awards from poetry.com, Famous Poet Society and other poetry organizations.