

POETRY

Black Piper

Johanna Ataman

Shiny white strands on an old black piper,
a mirror of sharp contrast,
with eyes as gloomy as the deep night sky,
and pipe in a mouth that knows no smile.

A strange sound discharges from the pipe,
one of despair,
and fear of the inevitable:
death!

The quintessence of life,
that steals the hearts of the ones loved most,
and seizes their souls,
below the heights ever reached:
six feet!

The piper sways his body,
to the desolate sound of his pipe,
longing to put an end to life's opponent,
his infinitesimal legs dance around the assembled stones,
in a ritualistic manner,
to bring back the long gone,
buried in the pit of death.

Sorrowful is he,
when realization strikes him like a bolt of lightning,
that death is but the heart of life,
one cannot be without the other.
His eyes descend to a downturned crescent,
and feet collapse to the dusty ground,
as the memory of his misfortune floods back,
and once again with pipe in mouth,
the piper sways his body,
to the desolate sound of his pipe.

Author's Note



Johanna Ataman is a writer and poetess, who hails from Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria. Through her writing journey, she has acquired a Certificate of Participation in the African Human Rights Short Story Competition, 2022, and a Certificate of Publication in the Amazing Young Writers' Challenge, 2023. She has also been published in Issue 1 of the Writeadelic Magazine and emerged the 1st Runner Up with a Certificate of Award in the 2nd African Teen Writers Award for Poetry, 2023. As a human rights activist and passionate writer, Johanna's writing hopes to speak for the voiceless people of society and relate to the troubling issues of life. She dreams of a world inspired and bettered by her bleeding out on paper the feelings that so often are not spoken.