

POETRY

The Portrait of Grief

Psalmuel Benjamin Oluwasheun

Water is a miracle. It smothers thirst. I once was hugged by this water and I couldn't smell water in the aftermath ...because it was odorless and colorless, pure and simple like my mother's face, these were the days when she danced in her lucid dreams. When we used to dissolve into the last line of our solved equation until grief, today, proves that he's not a variable but a silent constant and things begin to go wrong again.

Back to who I was. The boy with the
issue of wounds. It's been a while since
I bled like a fresh fish after an encounter
with wicked objects.

Objects here are stones that are running errands
for the palms of ladies and each of them
has a placard of success after planting bitter kisses,
like Judas, on my Jesus' glassy heart.

I'm a VIP in this Gethsemane. Hear how my
heart rains its pieces on my soul. In case
you fail to see my damped inner man, who
now is no more transparent than the body
of a peaceful river, wandering on this
lonely street, take this erosion on my face
as a testament. A witness.

Objects here are knives, cutting the curtain to my holy
of holies like a two-edged sword, dividing
asunder man and every syllable of miracle.

Objects here are the verbs of life that
subject one to the intonation of angst,
amplifying the volume of sorrow
when the arms are ready to magnify the
smiles of God.

In this poem, today, I approach God
as a Being of an abandoned well
without a bowl of well-being.

Like Moses, I'm hiding my mortal body
behind the rock of this poem. To chat with divinity
"Eloi, Eloi... lama sabachthani?" *
What about the rivers of living waters?
If grief is a prerequisite to miracles, then I plead with
you to accelerate this drip in my veins.

Father! All I want to bleed is miracle-like waters. For grief is a complex figure. I want to flood ecstasy into my mother's eroded face like Pishon,** scuttling from the toes of the Most High.

I want to be a vessel of beautiful chemicals,
Soluble to grief.

* "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"
From Psalm 22 in the Old Testament and
Matthew 27:47 in the New Testament

** The Pishon River was one of the four rivers in the Garden of Eden

Author's Note



Psalmuel Benjamin Oluwasheun is a young poet, writer, and spoken word minister from Ewekoro in Ogun State, Nigeria. He is the author of REUNION and has been included in JOURNEYS, an anthology on displacement and migration by the Nobel Laureate Wole Soyinka, a project of Providus Bank. He has had poetry and prose published in several collections: Parousia, Christian Courier, Lumiere Review, Agape Review, Arts Lounge, EskimoPie magazine, Lion and Lilac, Allegro, Shuf Poetry, Communicators' League, MixedMag, Nanty Greens, Kalahari Review, My Woven Words, and Fieryscribe Review. There is a revealing interview with Psalmuel in The Literary Stripes Magazine.

In addition to writing, his other interests are preaching, drama, drawing, painting, and video editing.

"I wrote this poem in one of my darkest days as a writer. Grief is a dominant theme in life. There are days when you are depressed and the only place to find comfort is on your desk with your papyrus. I am a person who believes that writing can be therapeutic."

Connect with him on [Whatsapp](#): 08169265723
[Facebook](#): Psalmuel Benjamin Oluwasheun
[Insta](#): Spokespsalmuel