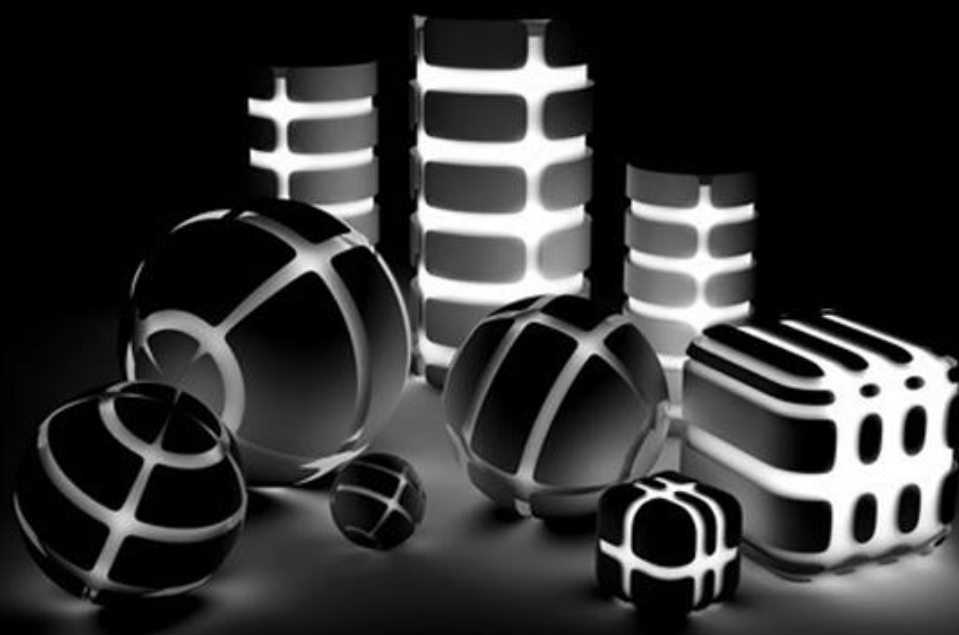


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YOUTH SHADES



OCTOBER, 2016



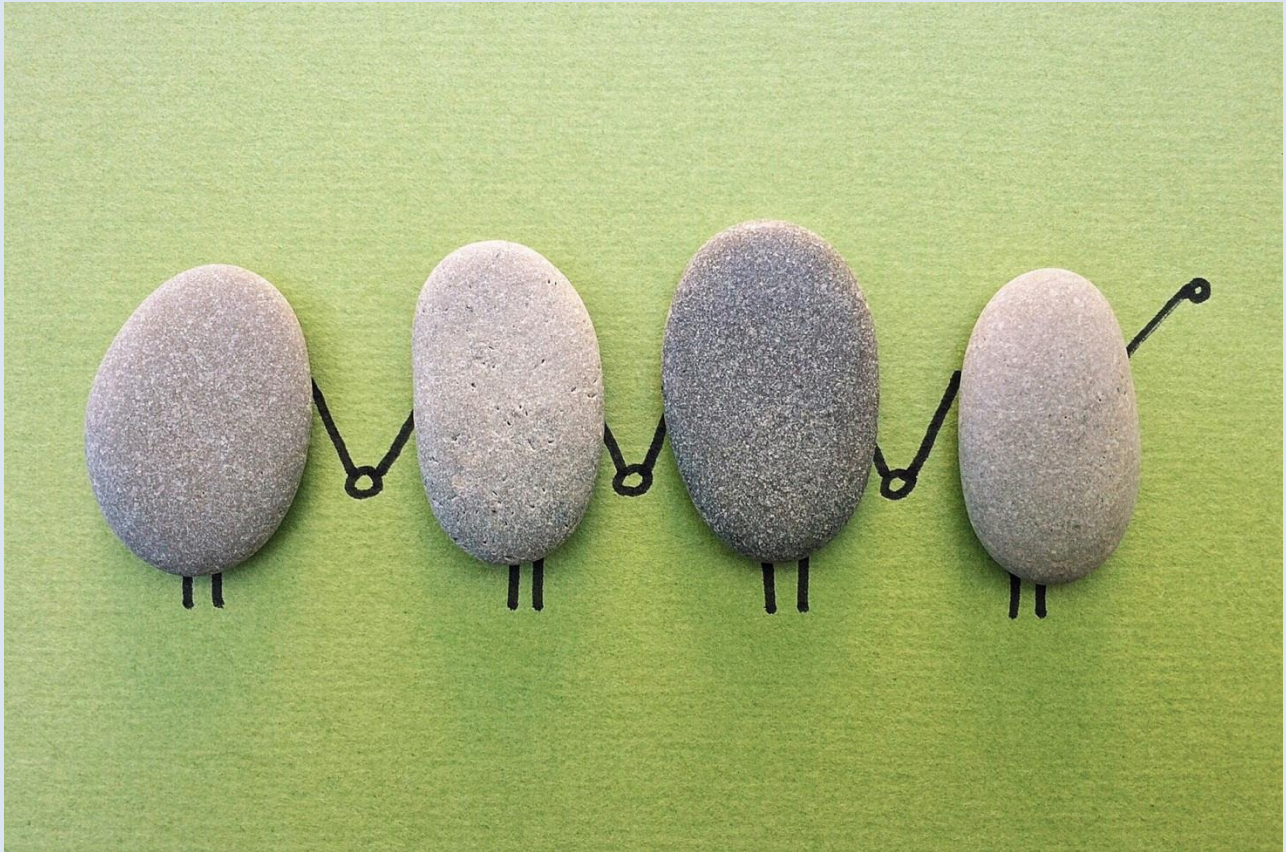
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Call for Submission

EDITORIAL



No Saviour On The Cliff

Many years ago, Amane Planet was an oh-God-I-want-to-be-there-place.

It was where all the goody-goody occurred. Any creature born of a woman or a god screamed 'Eureka!' upon arrival at Amane Planet. Boldly inscribed on the walls of the gate were the

words, "*Woe betide Amane Planet if evil is ever plotted here*". It was believed that a powerful deity breathed those inscribed words with a blazing fire from its nostrils. Due to this belief, people were afraid to act in ways which did not conform to the decree. As a result, everyone lived happily there and

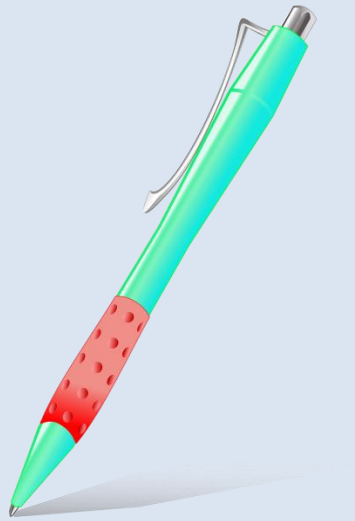
then. Decades later, there arrived beings from another planet led by Duga, an ultimate sadist. Duga found the floods of happiness in Amane Planet far beyond the norm (for him, that was). He could not stand the streams of bliss which flowed in the veins of Amanians. On a chilly evening when Duga went for his usual rounds of walks, he stood before the Great Gate where the ordinance was showcased in blood and fire. “Ha”! he exclaimed. “The sons and daughters of Amane Planet live on such ignoble command. I have lived here for years, and I might die if I watch this insanity continue for a moment longer than now”. Enraged, he spat and walked away. Duga hid his evil with its cloak of darkness. Not only did he rape virgins, but he kidnaped children and disunited families. No height of atrocities did Amane Planet not witness by the hands of Duga. In the face of

all these, the supposed powerful deity did nothing. Amanians cried for help, but no one came to their rescue. Duga reigned and triumphed with nothing other than his shenanigans. Look around you, what is happening in the world today? Amane Planet is our planet, Duga is a representative of ‘the powers that be’ (who believe they can do with us as they please), Amanians are us and the supposed powerful deity is well, you-know-who. This is not an era where you hang your hopes on other people, thinking they will always come to your aid. At Youth Shades, we do it for ourselves. At Youth Shades, we fight the good fight. At Youth Shades, we do not fold our hands and wait for manna to fall from above. As a reader of Youth Shades, you should be no different. This is who we are – ***Youth Shades, Righting Wry Things.***

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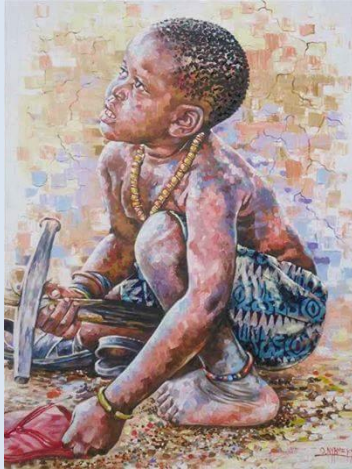


POETRY



**Claudia Piccinno – Italy
at the biro**

Ode to you	catharsis of lost souls!
eaten biro,	Ode to you
ode to you	that bleeds gall
voice of the timid	as if
and mizzen of love.	a betrayed woman
Ode to you	writes for you.
forerunner of cartridges and toner.	I will praise you forever
Ode to you	oh flowing ink,
that puts away from the window	because obstinately
the nib and the inkwell.	you shy away
Ode to your coloured transparencies	the ticking
metallic moods.	of the keyboard.
Ode to you	



**Artist: Odei
Nyamekye, Ghana**

**Akinlabi Ololade –
Nigeria**
**awaiting the
Change**

We keep digging from
nothing
Awaiting the arrival of
something
This is just the
beginning of the end

Pains embraces our
bones and spirit
Our hands dictated our
fates via votes.
We mimed to the tune
of change amidst
starvation
Hoping tomorrow will
be better
Hey! From their end...
They could only water
our pains as it grows
faster.
Do you remember that
change?
Those folk tales that
swallowed manifestos
Have you forgotten
that change?
Camouflages in angelic
attires
Our memories are in
standstill

Beyond today,
tomorrow is blind
Prior today, we can't
recall.
Change, in your script
Forwardness was your
mission
Backwardness is what
we could see in action
Greatness was your
vision...
Failure crawled into
your passion
Agony runs through
our emotion.
Our patience is
curious...
Nothing is working
We crawl, assuming
we are walking.



Brian Crandall – U.S.A

let the children come

There are children fleeing foreign lands,
Parents are desperate for child's survival,
Tragedy far away is hard to understand,
How do we react upon their arrival?
Children tired, beaten down and hungry,
They're only looking for salvation,
Some people shout expressions, angry!
Saying they're not welcome in our nation.

Lady Liberty says:

"Give me your tired, your poor, hired,
huddled masses, yearning to breathe free.
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore,
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

What would Jesus Do

If he were here with me and you?
Would he send these kids away?
What if this is a test to prove your morals true?
Will you show compassion today?
Would you take a child in to nurture,
Or send him back to a land of war?
Would you take away a child's future?
Is that what the Founding Fathers fought for?

Lady Liberty says:

"Give me your tired, your poor, hired,
huddled masses, yearning to breathe free.
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore,
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

Rosy Roses – South Africa

who am I ?

I'm an African child,

I'm an African blood,

I rise in the morning to
the African sun.

When I wear my
African prints,

Those who ain't
African

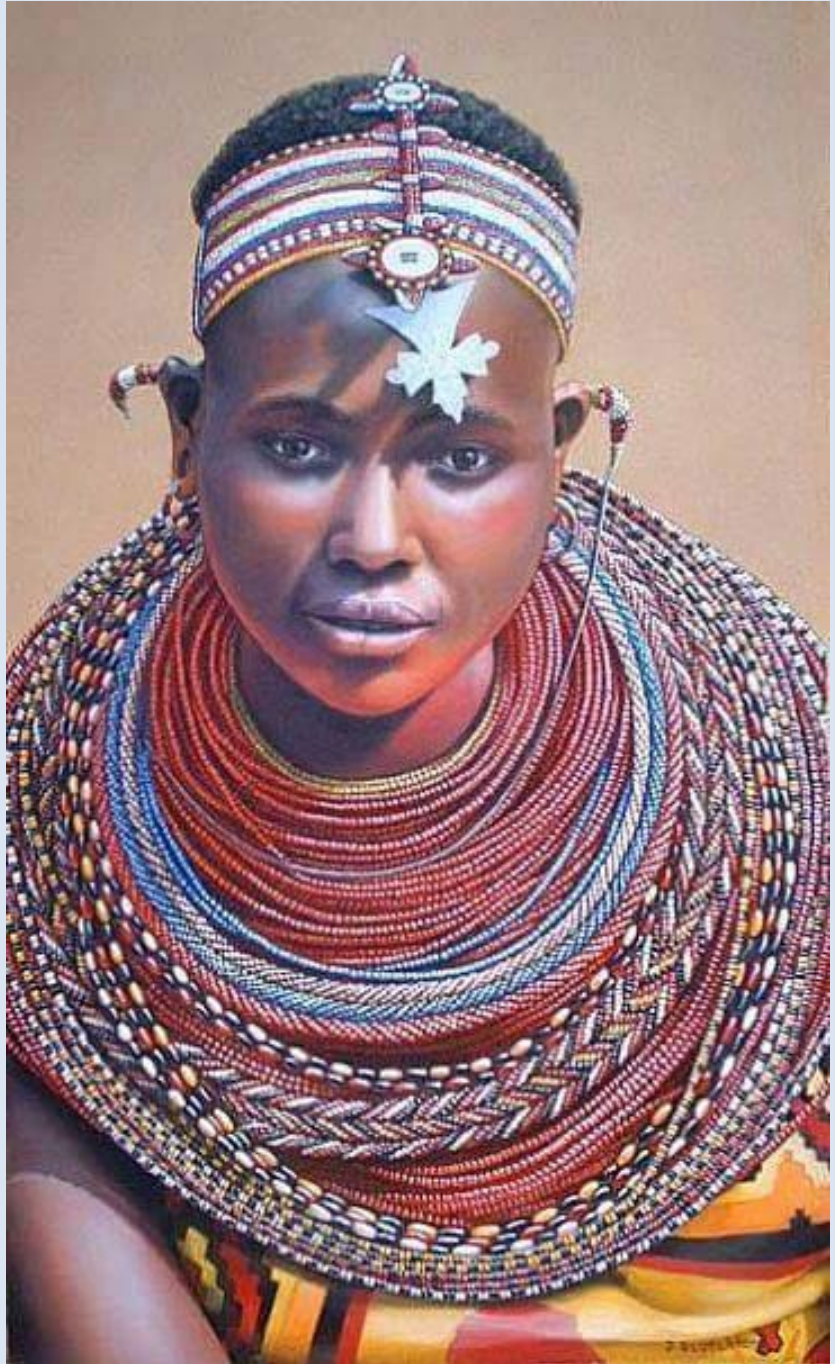
stare and bow to the
African Queen.

My ancestors are my
guardians;

I ask them for
blessings.

I am an African child.

Who are you?



Artist: Odei Nyamekye, Ghana



Zimba Isaac - Zambia

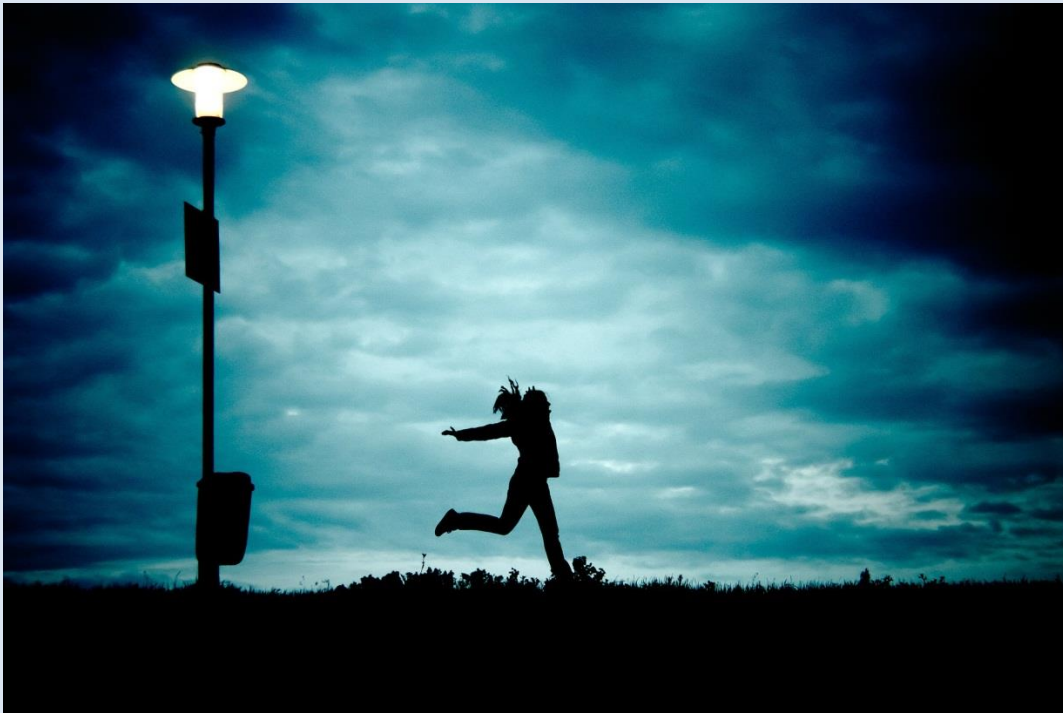
there is no other earth

Maybe Another Earth	A place with no gangs
With a fresh breath	Free from guns
A place full of dreams	Where is that Earth?
Where in peace people swim	
	With no tears
Just another Earth	And no fear
A place full of love	With respect for our mothers
Where we share all we have	Where we live like brothers

Where no child dies
Because of our ego and lies

Will I ever see that place
Where you will look at my face
Cover me with your embrace
And Love me not for my race?

There's no other Earth
This is all we have
Let's treat each other fair
And show a little more care
Today, tomorrow and always.



Karen King – U.K

freedom

It costs us nothing, it means everything.
Freedom of speech and freedom to be ourselves.

Not always easy!

Pressure from family, friends, lovers and bosses.

The way we are expected to behave.

The way we are supposed to dress.

We should be free to be ourselves,

But still loved, not judged and accepted by all

Regardless of our differences!

de thinker - Nigeria

what it means to be in love

You know that feeling
Which comes with a kind of healing,
Surpassing human telling,
That tingling feeling;

With none else as guide
As doubts and confusion betide,
Then in a brain slide,
You let your heart decide;

Such sight makes you speechless,

The voice makes you thoughtless,
Everything else, you use less,
And all you desire is oneness;



Your heart tears apart,
At thought of break apart.
Same heart pisses and freezes
When showered with kisses;

It proceeds from above,
And descends like a dove,

Nothing else it can't move?
The very feeling of Love.



Artist: Ithali Khoza, South Africa

Ition Tsai – China
Psalms in soldier's
arm

Prints of hurried feet,
How many stampede?
My comrades lay in a
pool of blood.

Sounds of killing,
rumbling,
Offensive shouting,
Winces under sharp
knives.

Look to the other side
of the enemies,

Seemed so far away.

Come to a mind, life
and death, only.

Suddenly thrust,

Looking back the
antecedents behind.

Why here?

Forgotten all about
already.

The only war that can
be found,

The inner struggles
against

the comes out of the
intentions of poems in
arm.

Patrick Amaefule - Nigeria

by the act of man



Artist: Mario Dohr, U.S.A

By the act of men, the earth is lame.

If nature droops, man takes the
blame.

Anxious bloke moves with prance;

Unconscious mind stays in trance;

let a wastrel follow his divers ways;

Take forty winks before the sun drops
its rays;

at dawn, watch him tempt serious
trouble;

expect a grand burst of his bubble;

when strut along with lust;

his delighted scheme bites the dust.



**Monsif Beroual -
Morocco**

who you are

Who you are is who I
am.

you are me and I am
you,

we are humans.
With black or white
skin,
we are still humans.

Like sky full of stars,
like the sea full of
fishes,
we are together
humans.

though different,
still you and I
are humans.

Both you and I
come from Adam and
Eve.

We are humans,
the same humans,
you and I, one race.

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STORIES

Artist: Ithali Khoza, South Africa

Rose Akpabio – Nigeria

golden veil – Part 2



The women chanted songs as they led the young girls out of the hut, towards the town square where everyone gathered. Umaima took a deep breath; now, she wondered if she was doing the right thing. She spotted her mother in the crowd smiling at her, a smile of hope. The girls were asked to sit in a circle as the drummers increased their velocity. Hamra, the first girl, plunged herself forward, following the rhythm of the drum; when she

stopped, the crowd cheered loudly. The second girl did same, but her performance wasn't as good as the first.

While Umy was still assessing the dance skills, she was called to take the dance floor. She walked slowly, ignoring the wild rhythms of the night. As she inhaled the fires and looked into the starry sky, she

whispered 'for you, Ruka'. She twisted and curled, danced and jumped. When she finished, the women rushed and lifted her up. She was the best obviously, and the best suitor was hers to take. She smiled as

a young man walked to her and handed her a little bracelet; she hesitated and stared at him. Finally, she accepted his proposal, and the crowd broke into their own dance. As she looked up, she saw Mamatu who didn't smile, but nodded, and walked away to prepare for the rituals.

After the bride choosing, the girls were led by a group of ten women; Umaima spotted her grandmother who was the leader. According to the Dasra, they would return back to town after all the girls were purified. They walked for about one hour, till they reached the entrance of a forest. Mamatu broke the eerie silence, 'As you all enter this forest, you enter as young girls, but you come out as women. Whatever you see here, must be kept between us because our vow of womanhood is our ability to keep secrets'. The group followed her steps as she entered the forest. Luckily the moon was in sight, so they

had to put off the lanterns for later. They settled in an already cleared area; a big mat was laid and all the girls jumped in due to fatigue. The small, nearby hut was where the sanctification would take place.

The night was quiet and still like dark waters, till a hand tapped her and she awoke with a jolt. One of the women had woken her, 'It is time, and your grandmother said you should be first'. Umaima wiped her eyes and followed the woman. The hut was small and poorly lit, as she entered she spotted her grandmother; 'Take of your clothes', she ordered, Umaima did as she was told. The other women gently placed her down and spread her legs, wiped inbetween her legs with a damp cloth. As she turned, she saw Mamatu with a sharp knife and two needles; she suddenly became afraid, what was going on? 'Mamatu, what will you do with that'? The woman

did not answer but snapped her fingers and immediately, a white piece of cloth was tied on her mouth – this was to prevent the other girls from knowing what went on.

Mamatu placed the knife over the naked flame and wiped it clean. She bent to inspect her granddaughter, and thankfully, she was still a virgin. She gently unfolded what she needed to cut, pinched the pea-sized organ and it rose up. ‘Sin’ the old woman spat; this was the part which made women to cheat and yearn for pleasure. She pinched it again and it grew bigger, she pulled it up, and began the Dasra. She cut it eagerly at first, but slowed down and focused to cut properly; some girls usually bled more than others, she had to be careful.

Umaima had passed out twice, wishing the pain would go away. She was filled with sorrow, her legs and

feet were bound and her muffled screams meant nothing as the night had swallowed all forms of sound. She pleaded with her grandmother inaudibly, what crime had she committed? Then, she understood why Ruka had abandoned them. The pain was beginning to subside but it still hurt deeply, she felt her warm blood trickling down her thighs. ‘Bring the needle Basma’, the woman handed her the needle. She inserted the thread and was ready to sow the lips of the organ together, when the other woman stopped her, ‘Mamatu the bleeding has increased, I think we should sew her later.’ Mamatu agreed and they laid the weak Umaima in a corner. ‘Bring the next one,’ she thundered.

Dawn slowly crept in, as the women gathered themselves. Each woman was assigned to carry a young girl till they reached the entrance of the forest where their husbands awaited

them. Most of the girls were too weak to comprehend what went on around them, but Umaima was getting colder. 'Mama what happened? Umy is getting pale, what would we do?' Aishat asked looking afraid. She panicked, as she couldn't lose another child again. Umy lay on the mat pale, hardly spoke a word and was still bleeding. 'Be calm and strong', was all Mamatu said and departed to rest after such a long night; she had accomplished so much.

The bleeding didn't stop; it increased and soaked the pieces of fabrics that were placed between the young girl's thighs. Blood flowed freely, and she became colder as she cried out her sister's name, whom she had just seen in her non lucid state. Ruka had crossed the river without her and as she tried to follow, she fell into the river and its wetness enveloped her permanently.

'Umaima!' her mother screamed as she shook the little girl. 'Umy, Umy', the neighbours had heard the shout and came rushing in. When they saw the tragedy before them, they tried to comfort the woman, but she began to yell an abomination - it sounded that way to their ears. How could one say that? It was their heritage, their culture; women were to be purified before marriage. Maybe the woman was so traumatized because she kept on screaming 'Dasra must be killed.'

Ruka sent her letter months after this incident, but she got no reply. Little did she know that her sister had gone far away and never to return. She heaved a sigh of relief and smiled; she had just gotten a job and soon she would bring Umy to stay with her. However, she was in oblivion. She was alone now like the tree that stood lonely in autumn shedding its own leaves.



Photographer: Henry Victor, Canada

Mercy Solomon – Nigeria

the unborn –Part 2

MEG:

I have to wait for the crowd in the bathroom to lessen before hitting the shower stalls. I am scared those over-zealous medical students may take

note of the changes in my body. As I was having my bath, I replayed last night's conversation with Toby in my head for the umpteenth time; I held back sobs. My life

was perfect, it was lonely, a little, but I wasn't complaining. I unconsciously rubbed my hands over my belly frequently these days. How long will I keep this a secret? I

dried my body with my towel and proceed to make my way to my room. As I begin getting dressed, my nosy, yet friendly roommate came into my corner and plunged herself on my bed; staring at me mischievously.

"Udy, good morning o," I managed to say with an awkward smile.

"Your belle don dey big", was her exact response.

"Jesus!" I immediately exclaim and sat on my bed. "How did you know? Is it that obvious?" I whispered.

"Relax. I know, because I was in your shoes last session."

"What did you do?"

"Haba, babe, have you seen me with any baby? I did what I had to do," she answered.

"You murdered your child! How do you live with that?" I asked.

"I chose my education and I prefer it that way. You're on scholarship Meg, don't jeopardize your future. Children will come again, they will. Leave that thing. Anyway, how long gone are you?"

"10 weeks."

"Okay. You get luck say your belle flat. See ehn, there's this doctor friend that helped me with mine. He'll help you too. Just sleep on..."

"...Udy, come and give me your boiler biko", another roommate of mine interrupted.

"Just sleep on the matter, you hear? Let me know in the morning," She concluded.

Hmm. Sleep, she said. How was one to sleep at a time like this? I wish I had a sister I could confide in at this time. Humorous how Toby has not tried to

reach out to me ever since the day of our first fight. I dialled his number absentmindedly for the fourth time today and as always, he still didn't pick up.

"I chose my education", were the exact words Udy said.

No, I can't do that. How would I live with the guilt? Moreover, this life in me, I love with all my heart and willpower. I've seen ladies complete their education despite pregnancy. However, how would I face the society, my parents? Toby would probably

not even look twice at me. I have watched young, single ladies who got pregnant get stigmatized and taunted by lecturers and fellow colleagues too and it wasn't a pretty sight.

On the other hand, there was my school and scholarship for goodness sake. God, what do I do? I love education. I don't want to suffer a set back because of this. I checked my time; it was 4:19am. I need to get an hour of rest, at least. I pulled the blanket over my body and shut my eyes. My mind was made up.

HER:

Tiny fingers are beginning to take form on my hands, funny how small they are. It won't be long; these little hands will gather flowers for my daddy.

MEG:

I am in the doctor's office, looking pale and distorted. I am having second thoughts about this. On impulse, I pick up my phone and call my mom.

"Meg" She sounds vibrant and pleased.

"Good morning, Ma."

"How are you doing nah?" she inquires. "So, it is now you have remembered me abi, after all these years?"

I laugh a little.

"I'm fine ma." I can't help the tears that have made their way to my chin. "We'll talk later. I have a lecture; I just wanted to hear your voice."

"No problem my love, take care of yourself; make sure you eat well o."

"Okay ma." I giggle.

My mom has always been particular about my eating habits. I hang up just as the

doctor comes in with Udy. Udy says she'll be with me throughout the entire process. I nod my head in appreciation. I say a silent prayer because right now, it seems the only meaningful thing to do. I tell God to please forgive me as this will happen only once. I tell Him I'm only doing this because I'm out of choices. I tell Him not to let this one mistake ruin my chances of having babies in the near future. Then, I take a deep breath and wait for the doctor to begin.

HER:

Something is happening. I feel strange. It seems like I'm being pulled by an unknown force. No, wait! I don't want to leave this place, this place has come to be my home. Mother, do something, please, anything. I don't want to go into this darkness. Mother, are you there?

MEG:

It was over before I knew it. I cried till I could cry no more.

"Babe, you did the right thing. Don't worry, you will get over it. See, exams go soon start o, stop all this your ajebo abeg. Get some rest, you'll be fine." Udy kept

saying over and over again.

Did I do the right thing? Will I get over it? If my baby could speak, what would he or she say? How would

he or she regard me?

HER:

(silence)

ARTS &
SKILLS



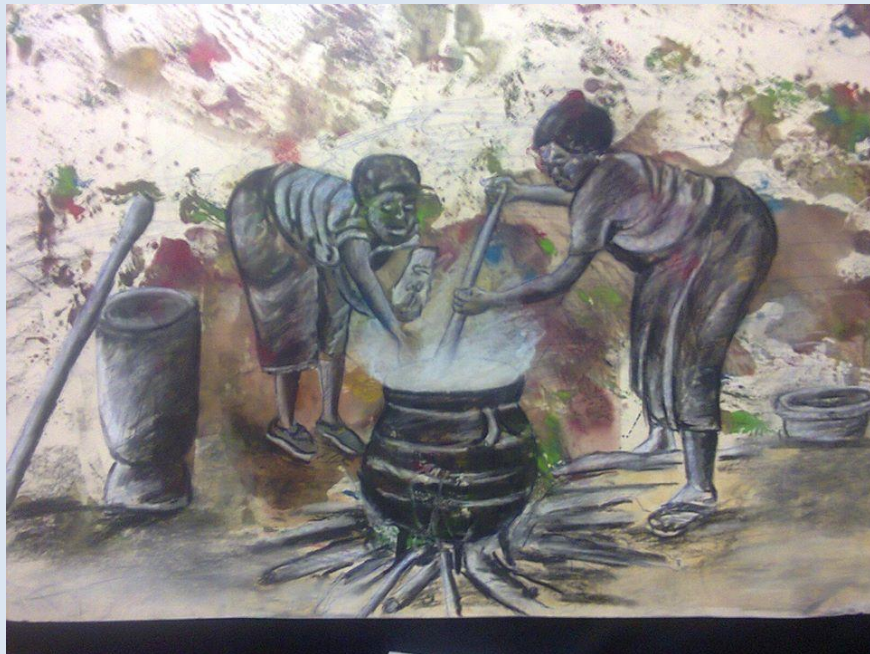
Photographer: Victor Etekamba, Nigeria



Artist: Mario Dohr, U.S.A



Photographer: Victor Etekamba, Nigeria



Artist: Ithali Khoza, South Africa



Photographer: Henry Victor, Canada





Beaded Jewelries



ARTICLES

Versatility, a weapon to flourish



www.inspirationwithhannah.com

In my 3rd year in the University studying a degree in International Relations, one of my childhood friends was on holiday after her 3rd year at the College of Medicine. She had to spend a few months at home before proceeding to start her Clinicals. I asked her what she was doing in the mean time because I could recollect that my brother helped out in the hospital the previous year when he was on a long vacation. 'I am learning to sew' she replied. She mentioned the name of the tailor she was training with. And I thought to myself, 'learning to sew?' Why on earth would an aspiring Doctor be doing that?

But what do I know?

I attended a boarding School for my Secondary education and I learnt how to make hair. I didn't go down the professional route to give myself a solid footing. I kept on learning the job, YouTube and online generally. If I were to turn back the hands of time, I would have done that differently.

Still, what do I know?

My first trip to the United Kingdom gave me the opportunity to use my talent of making hair and earn a bit of money. I was so overwhelmed with the demand. I remember the week I was travelling back

home, my parents advised I spend that week enjoying myself, but the demand was so much that I couldn't even have fun. A night before I left, I had to make a client's hair. I even received calls from other customers who wanted me to make their hair but I had to politely decline, because the style they wanted was quite complicated and I didn't think I could do a good enough job for them.

There were some people who called me but I had to decline because the type of style they wanted to do was too complicated, I was not good enough to do them. Other customers of mine had to go to the salon to make some styles that I did not know how to make. On my few holiday trips, I had more customers, had hair styles I still couldn't make, yet I didn't bother to train to become

a professional hairdresser. To me, it was all about my degree.



Hey! What do I know?

I went back to the UK once again, this time for my masters' degree. Whilst studying, I was making hair for clients by the side and it was good money. I resolved to learn from YouTube and I was doing pretty well. After my masters, I got a job but was still making hair part-time. Years later, I had to move to a French-speaking country with my husband. This meant that I could not work unless I got a job with an International Organization or English speaking Organization. I went back to advertising myself as a hairdresser. I found out that there were still some

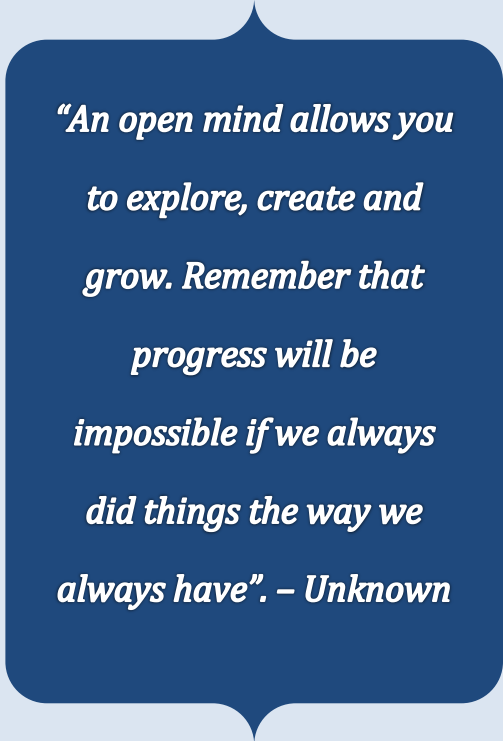
complicated styles I was not able to do. This made me lose some clients as I was limited in my knowledge of this particular business.

As at now, this is all I have to do. I am in School learning to speak and write French but at the same time making hair as a business by the side. Then I remembered my Doctor friend who was so smart enough to learn how to sew years back so that she can have something to fall back on, or a profession that can bring about having another source of income in this unpredictable economy we find ourselves in all over the world.

I want to let you know that life is not all about school education or your first degree but also about the skills that you acquire and equip yourself with. Yes, basic education is very paramount but also you have to look at what exactly you like to do and go for it. If you think you are creative

and will be better off being a fashion designer, yes go to school and please look for a good fashion school to learn from and become a professional. Do not forfeit your passion for education, but educate yourself and

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“An open mind allows you to explore, create and grow. Remember that progress will be impossible if we always did things the way we always have”. – Unknown

As a matter of fact, I met with a young man who is an IT Engineer in the UK. He loves painting and did train for a while to become excellent at it. When he found himself out of a job, he fell back to painting to pay the bills.

- Always remember not to be a jack of all trades, do not be here and there but be convinced, confident and define what it is you really want in life and go for it.
- Keep an open mind. You can never tell where you will find yourself. I never knew with my years of education, all the knowledge I acquired and the professional jobs I have taken up that I would one day go back to doing something entirely different because of change in my circumstances. I have met with many other women who moved from one country to the other as well, even men who moved with their professional wives; they didn't see it coming, but they mostly had to sit at home or really struggle to find something doing.

I am aware of the situation in most African Countries. Problems range from joblessness to under-employment, everyone wanting to work in banks or other white-collared employment when they have the ability to start a life from their passion or talent. A good number of youths have all it takes to start on their own gradually but they are not interested in growing a business patiently.

Worse, those who have a 9-5 job do not see any reason why they have to engage in having a second source of income from their passion or talent. We forget that not only can we benefit from it by diversifying from only one source, but we can also be an employer to many others or to at least one other.

Good luck!

Hannah



Mohlaloganyi Kagiso – South Africa

let your dreams dry out

Some people are not living up to their dreams; life for them is just trial and error - a scene they have to get

along with. These people are not living up to their potentials by chasing after every opportunity that

passes by them. Before they can get a clear picture of their so-called dream life, they realize too late that

their final destination is in the agony world.

A wise man once said, "The worthiest place in the world is in the graveyard". This is because in the graveyard, you'll find inventions never invented, books never written, businesses never erected and songs never sang. Those dead people did nothing because they were scared to take risks.

They were scared, just like you. But hey, luckily for you, you are not in a graveyard yet.

If you have a dream, stop dreaming and start living your dreams.

Do away with all the negative energy around you. Speak life to your future - the exact same amount of power that was used by God in the beginning is invested in us.

Remember that in the beginning of all

creation, God created the heavens and earth, but the earth was without form. God spoke life to it; He said "let there be", and there was. It's amazing how nothing happened until God said something.

In the midst of your formless life, say something and enjoy the fruits of your tongue. Young man and young woman, you have a dream, **let it shine.**



Dasharath Naik – India

What a shame

Octopus of immorality grabs the society from all corners.

Somewhere, a schoolboy is kidnapped and then killed when ransom is denied. A girl of Standard 9 delivers a baby in the school washroom, teacher seduces a student, a lakhpati clerk gets caught in the vigilance trap, an officer flirts with his subordinates, and even the

protector of law and order attends the bar with hard-core criminals.

Somewhere being left uncared for, an old widowed mother cries with her untold miseries; son travels abroad for honeymoon leaving her to suffer alone at home. A nephew stabs his uncle over a patch of land, a town bred girl elopes with her boyfriend ignoring values, tradition and dignity of the family.

Somewhere, the young get recharged; love and lust make them blind to indulge themselves in unfair activities. They can't see the consequences beforehand, wander in pairs like free birds, too much craze make them sleep together away from home. The boy makes her pregnant and then blackmails her with their nude photos the next day.

Somewhere, the profit makers hoard essential commodities; their prices rocket high into the sky. The poor and average consumers have no option but to sleep on empty stomachs. Somewhere, justice is delayed and finally denied. The victim lives in mental agony - dead inside. Children are killed while in wombs, polygamy and polyandry are practised; illicit relationship invites AIDS and deadly diseases. The angels inherit viruses, fading before they bloom.

Somewhere, the better half is forced into adultery; the husband sleeps with whores. Children watch porn movies

stealthily, get excited at a tender age, and commit crimes beyond their ages. Somewhere, the sadhus, the self-styled gods assume authority of the super power. Religion exploits the trust, and then faith disappears. Somewhere, a father cries when his meritorious but unemployed son commits suicide. Somewhere, the ailing old couple shed tears in a mental asylum. Medicines fail to work and money grubbers earn much more thereby.

Somewhere, spiritual love is sneered; passion and lust overpower the heart. Money matters more than sun shine and honey. Giddiness is rewarded and industriousness punished. Commitment means nothing and priority is given to fair skin. Somewhere, the serenity of mind is lost, the beauty of the earth is ignored, and we run after more rivalry, more corruption, more scandals, more bombing, more massacres and more bloodshed. ***Where is the civilization leading to? What a shame! What a shame!!***



CALL FOR SUBMISSION

Deadline for submission of Stories, Poetry, Articles, Arts & Skills for November Issue of Youth Shades Magazine is **10th October, 2016**.

Visit www.youthshades.com for our submission guidelines.

Enquires should be sent to info@youthshades.com

Peace and Love,

Youth Shades Team.