

ONE DAY IN THE FAILING LIGHT OF DUSK

Famous Isaacs

Introduced by K.G Testimony

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For Evangel

The rosy aureole of your affection

Extends beyond our urban bounded knowledge

To tangled undergrowths of earlier time:

Subtly obscure lymphatics of the flesh

Proliferates bright labyrinths of mind

And cobweb-shadow them with primal dusk...

-DENNIS BRUTUS

"The Rosy Aureole of Your Affection"

None can afford the lyrical sanity

Of the hermit when his clothes are on fire

-ODIA OFEIMUN

"For Chinua Achebe"

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

- 1. A Love Letter
- 2. Asaph
- 3. Nkoli
- 4. Love Song
- 5. Estranged
- 6. When It Gets Dark, My Love
- 7. There Is No Dividing Between You and Me
- 8. Without You
- 9. What Happens To a Broken Heart?
- 10. Rose in the Rosary
- 11. A Day without You
- 12. Queen of My Night, Come!
- 13. Marred
- 14. Blown Away
- 15. Mitigation
- 16. What Shall I Do to Show How Much I Love Her?
- 17. If You Never Loved Me
- 18. Dear Mama
- 19. A Poem for God'stime
- 20. There Is a Fire in Your Eyes
- 21. Nkem
- 22. Lost
- 23. Before You, My Love
- 24. My Heart Remains of Broken Pieces
- 25. If Tomorrow Never Comes
- 26. In This Poetry of My Soul
- 27. Isaiah
- 28. If I die Before I say I Love You
- 29. Day-Dream
- 30. Deceptions
- 31. Confessions
- 32. Love, Oh Love
- 33. Traditional: (from the Esan)
- 34. For Ese Leah Aghedo
- 35. I Must Fight to Be Free
- 36. I Shall Discard You
- 37. In Thoughts of You

Introduction

The poems in this collection are expressions of the complexities of love experiences which I believe are panoramic and true to life. Affections and feelings, battles and conflicts, joys and happiness, frills and thrills, are all convincingly expressed in the poems.

As you journey through these experiences with the poet, caress carefully each one and you will swim deeper and deeper in thoughts about the rudiments of human love communion. Examine psychological theories like will, confusion, indecision, abandonment, filial relationship including night and bedroom eroticism, forgetting not, the extra forces of nature like weather, time, season, space (proximity and distance); also never neglecting animals in the poems.

More so, the true instinct of the artist travels through the traditional beliefs to the modern presuppositions of love. Creatively, he uses words that shed light on the ironies of human love life and synchronizes them in the book. As a tip to understanding this work of the humanities and poetic technology, take time to breathe and read the poems of which you open your reasoning faculty; just grasp the essences of the various human psychological-cum-philosophical presumptions of LOVE.

TESTIMONY, K.G

A LOVE LETTER

My love for you is a feeling of the soul

Not of the heart. The heart is a chameleon, The soul is not. Ask those who have loved; Ask those who have known love; Ask those who have tasted the fruit of love, And you'll find me true. But I cannot love like you do. I must live with my love kept engraved in my soul Where neither rain nor sun makes it wane, Nor a fall makes it break. Times are changed, and so its appeal, (Not exactly like a foam drenched by rain,) but Like desires, and lures, and cared-for charms. So, my lady, What I desire is your fourth finger.

Do not let me live with my grief

As a soldier lives with his gun;

As a cheetah lives with his tears.

As a stonebreaker lives with his vocation;

But do say that simple-complex "yes," which
Through its blind, looks into ages to come
With a heart firm to love, to hope,
To yearn, to believe.

Your lover,

Green.

ASAPH

Since it is true That good news bites into the ears Of those who always expect evil Like a mad man expects to die From accidents, and poisons, and many sicknesses But he lives longer than Than the sanest billionaire: My love, I expect you to desert me And build me a temple in the desert, Where I could worship the sad memories of our love. I expect you to tattoo my name on your shadows When you stand by the seashore, That as you walk away The tide would blow and wash me with it. It is an eternity with you I crave; But since it is true That by losing, I must gain, Do go, and never return.

NKOLI

Desert sand cannot hold water.

That is what you are, Nkoli my love:

You cannot sustain my love.

I lose my pride to you like a virgin looses

Her pride to her first lover;

And when I raise a voice, if I do,

You gnash and laugh at who I am.

You must learn

That my father has a cement company;

I could baptise you with cement

And build you into a fine mould

Until, for all I care, you do hold water.

Why must you be a guinea-fowl

And lay your eggs where only you can find?

Nkoli, I am desperate.

I know you are sharp and hot, desert sand,

But shall the red eyes of the cock

Hold back the Oracle from using it for sacrifice?

LOVE SONG

I love you in the morning

When the splendour of your natural scent

Arrests my nostrils;

When the music of your womanhood

And the sweetness of the tone in your voice

Arouses my passion.

I love you in the afternoon

Because then I miss you;

And I reminisce how privileged I am

To be your daffodils: the object of your love;

And our distances apart bring us closer.

I love you in the night during the dark hours:

When on a boat ride we sail across seven seas,

And two hills we climb,

And from the cliff we fall into the delta and swim away-

Reaping memories; sweet memories never to be

Lost in the maze of time.

I love you because then we both lose;

Because from our broken perfection our race for eternity

Is cast ashore, cast asunder.

ESTRANGED

Your affection wears charms.

I see cowries cast around it.

It is the heart of the gods that I'm loving,
Yet I must love, and plead guilty to my crimes:
This is premeditated love.

If I were sentenced and hanged,
The better for me:
I shall love you even continually
In the land where there are no crimes, no courts,
Where there are no shadows, no dreams,
Only obvious realities and truths.

Even so sweeter,
Because my love is true.

WHEN IT GETS DARK, MY LOVE

When it gets dark, my love,

I will touch your secrete thickets;

And if you do moan,

I will beg to hide in your cave

And stay there for eternity;

And, well,

If you do fall in,

I will jump off this cliff

And keep falling into you.

THERE IS NO DIVIDING BETWEEN YOU AND ME

There is no dividing

Between laughters and joys

Nor between scorns and hates

Nor between love and tears:

My love,

There is no dividing between you and me

WITHOUT YOU

The music of my soul

Vibrates the rhythm of your name.

From a thousand miles I can hear your heartbeat;

It follows after mine: two hearts beating as one.

It is an endeavour pure and true.

Without you my life is all a highway

With neither lorries nor cars nor walkers passing bye.

It is music without rhythm, without beats,

Even the deaf wouldn't listen.

It is joys without laughters, without tears.

Whatever happened to love?

Without you my life is dry like desert sand,

Or else, it is wet like a tree in the rain forest

Wet with charged misery.

WHAT HAPPENS TO A BROKEN HEART?

(Re: "Harlem" by Langston Hughes)

What happens to a broken heart?

Does it become like feathers in a loosened feather pillow,

Cast and thrown in the wind without a trace?

Or does it gather like sand, and rocks,

And become igneous with the touch of time?

Yes, indeed its hopes simmer;

But does it crash to build again?

Does it become like a snail shell?

If so, will the taste of love remain in its charm?

ROSE IN THE ROSARY

Your love-

Rose in the rosary.

Lilly in the hilly valley.

Bouquet.

Smiles at morn';

And at eve,

Dies slow

Like the morning sun.

A DAY WITHOUT YOU

The day

Nightingale sings

Nature's bell rings

Wonders wander

Dies

Luring My pure Nature to Ponder On the thrills And the Skills By which Silk it's all sewn Then I think of you. A day without you-Decade without hue Century without rain Pain. I die of my thirst. In my mystery I drown For without a stare at your austere I'm a stark Starless star

QUEEN OF MY NIGHT, COME!

Queen of my night, come!

Oh stay thou stealthy at mine side.

Sing solemnly, hover over

My graceful hue.

Let our love get flow'
From highs to lows in divine frame.
Dance like a dervish- in heavenly tame,
Love is heaven-made.

In high notes do sing.

Caress my heart with thy song.

Thy music lives by thy beauty,

This, make me see.

Queen of my night, come!

By thy solemnly sung song

Let's keep our loving flow in row:

Ever perfect, ever in our-*

selves eternal.

^{*} This kind of hyphenation across the last two lines of a stanza occurs in Greek Sapphic verse, from which this form is derived.

MARRED

```
You steal
      My soul;
And sing me sweet songs.
      You chew
My pride;
      You drink
My blood;
      You cause
      Me a
LOUDALARM.
      A harmonious
di
S
      ru
pti
O
n
And a VIOLENT peace
 runs
as you call
      on my name, oh Dame.
I fear for my fame;
You've weakened my strength,
Oh peaceful trouble.
My eyes cry;
Overflow of emotions
      Eat me up.
```

My merry is lost

To tender marriage
To mare, yes, to mare.
You steal
My soul;
And sing me sweet songs.
You chew
My pride;
You drink my blood;
You cause me
A LOUD ALARM.
I'm
ma
rred.
I'm
ma
rred.

 $I^{\prime}m$

ma

rred.

BLOWN AWAY

Blown away.

Softly. Softly.
Memories:
My sad memories
With me in your arms.
So I feel.
They wander,
Lost in the maze of time
And chance
And shifting memories.
They're blown away
Like ashes,
Like feathers
In the breeze.
I'm at rest,
A baby in mother's arms.
My sadness
All blown away
With my heart in your care;
My sadness
Long forgotten.
Oh,
In your arms
Surely is where I belong,
Where my sadness
Are all

Blown away:

Lost in the wind

Like smokes from a candle.

Yes,

All blown away.

MITIGATION

It is the sweetness of your charms

That makes my heart kneel before your soul

And in grave passion makes me plead

Guilty of being your slave, with you

Surrounding me with knives, and yet I must

Love: like a goat eating the branches

Of a tree used for its whipping.

I can beg off this cowardice, but at my convenience

Must I not return to love again?

Must I not again feel stabbing pains

And smile like a Christ hanged on a tree?

Must I not beg to be your all-time slave-

If only you would love even just once?

WHAT SHALL I DO TO SHOW HOW MUCH I LOVE HER?

What shall I do to show how much I love her?

Shall I take her to see the stars, or far across the ocean's wide?

Shall I plant a kiss of love, or plant a ring, golden and true?

Shall I sojourn to Forever and back to show I still will always be?

Shall I paint her name in art, as did Ozymandias?

I will make her live forever:

I will plant her name in the hearts of men,

That though the swinging torrents of time and chance would chance to waver,

And the waves of wars, and worries, and trepidations and flaws:

Her name, written to the blues of my poetry

Will stand the test of time, standing true through the torrents of age.

IF YOU NEVER LOVED ME

(A Song for My Mother)

If you'd never loved me,

If you'd never lived by me,

If you'd never fought by me,

I would've been a mirage.

But your life shines forth as the sun on me
And with your every heartbeat
Your love keeps me fly.

Now, mother, never wonder why:

Your love is an eagle,

It hovers over me in my trouble.

Your love covers my heart

Like waters cover the very sea;

And I sprout and smile,
I groom and bloom,
And I live in glee, in passionate spree,
Because you loved me.

Have I wronged you, mother?

It's what it means to be your son.

You're still my sun, mother,

You're still my sun in my gloom;

You're still my moon in my despair;

You're still my care in my trouble.

And so, mother,

I'll love you forever.

DEAR MAMA

(A Poem for My Mother)

I love the cares you give to me

Under the morning light: in the failing light of dusk;

Yes, through the unfriendly light of dawn

When challenging taunts roar through my mental skies.

But you are used to it, and can love me

Through the wars.

And then at noon,

When through forbidden fences of isolation

You are my best friend. You keep me company.

And so through the murderous cold of my winter,

Silent for lost words I fear may be tailored incompletely,

I feel warm.

And then in the wake of dusk,

When in Papa's harmattan heat I must feel warm with fear,

Predicting like a football fan which match he'll play next,

Whether you or I?

Or what goal he'll score, fearing for the worst,

You are my symbol of hope;

A reason to believe, like Israel, that I'll cross the Red Sea.

A POEM FOR GOD'STIME

(Died 29/03/2013, aged 8 months. I was far away in Imo state)

Son, brother, friend,

Yesterday I hoped; yesterday I loved;

Yesterday I smiled because I had reasons to.

I still could hope to feel the days coming close

When your little fingers would crawl upon my hide.

I still could love to dare to wish to see you grow very tall;

That if at all my tears could be turned into joys

Like Jesus in Canaan turning water into wine,

It'll be because I saw your face and saw reasons to live.

I smiled because your love was all to me that ever mattered-

The best that I could feel, child of innocence,

Because your love was as your soul:

Just as tender as was true.

But you've gotten taken away;

Sniffed out in a snap, like a bird snipped out with an AK.

You've nipped my love in the bud; I cannot make it grow.

"Come back, come back little baby mine."

But I pour water on a stone: no diffusion, no osmosis.

NEVER ASK ME HOW

That we are far apart

Like the north and south poles

Makes for a separation of our bodies

But not of our love.

This path is familiar,

Though I've never walked it before.

But I know the path of love;

I have it mapped in my instinct,

And no matter where you are- separated,

I'll find you.

How do ants find their food?

How do bats discover their home?

How do fishes find their eggs in the watery deep?

You cannot tell of these;

So never ask me how.

THERE IS A FIRE IN YOUR EYES

There is a fire in your eyes

That announces your presence.

I feel its burning sensation

Like the muse of my poetry.

In the street,

Or where I sleep,

A day without you

Brings coldness to my heart.

<mark>NKEM</mark>

The sun:

Nkem:

It is a beautiful sight to see
When it rises, when it falls,
When it warms your cold soul-
Until you feel its heat
Standing in the dunes of the Sahara;
Then you change your story.
The fire:
It is a beautiful sight to see.
Good for the cooking, good for the warming-
Until it burns your house,
And burns your child,
And leaves your sweet memories to dusts and ashes;
Then you change your story.
The ocean:
It is a beautiful sight to see.
Good for the travelling, good for the fun-
Until it drowns your mother,
And kills your lover,
Then you change your story.

You are a beautiful sight to see.

Good for the loving, good for the good,

When you smile, when you moan,

When I crawl upon your hills with an endless desire

And get drowned in my ecstasy-

Until you chew up my pride,

And tell me how many have done it better;

Until you demand diamonds and pearls-

When I cannot afford a smile;

Then I change my story.

LOST

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Outside,
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In the eyes of the

Moon and stars and creatures chirping,

I stand, alone: swallowed up in your thoughts,

Engulfed in my muse, dancing to the

Rhythm of your love.

I cannot see you,

But I feel a certain temptation into

Which I dare to fall and founder: to touch you;

But

I have you in my heart, engraved

In living, loving memories

Forever green like trees by a riverside.

Lost I am,

Joseph, dreamer-son of Jacob;

Dreaming dreams I cannot see but I believe;

But your love has cold feathers

And you blow ice into my fire.

Shall I appeal? Shall I seek redress?

Let the judges say.

BEFORE YOU, MY LOVE

Before you, my love,

My heart stands hated, naked;

Laid bare to the eyes of the sun,

Beaten by rain, drenched in misery,

Awaiting judgement

If all hell be broke loose.

I have forsaken the days of my innocence

And let guilt give me a kiss: a French kiss,

If only to win your love

And have it to hold.

I stand naked watching time sit upon my trial;

Worries in my mind, fears in my soul:

I'm lost in thoughts as deep as sea

And tossed about like a ship in a storm.

But I'm a sailor,

And I hope that so little before long,

The storm will walk on bye and calm will return

With your love on a platter.

Yes, I see the future, because I see you.

BECAUSE I LOVE YOU

What I love in you

Is that sweet fragrance that purges from your bubbling smiles,

The sight of which makes me

Feel like a snake spreading out in the sun for warmth

After a night of winter cold.

Without you I have a hole in my heart.

It's my deep feeling of loss

When your moments of absence tell on me,

And I feel like a song without lyrics, without beats,

Like a life without air, like a year without rain.

In your absence I am rusted away with the idleness of age;

Lost in my passion, lost in the river of my thoughts,

Without a boat to sail away

Like a child left alone by the riverside.

And as I count my countless fears I see myself dwindle,

Swinging with time, toying with chance,

Exploring my dares.

But I fear not, because I love you.

MY HEART REMAINS OF BROKEN PIECES

My heart remains of broken pieces.

Broken.

Pi

e

ce d.

Like tomato, pepper, on my mama's grinding stone;

Like a clay cup fallen from my little sister's little hands

Chaffed to dusts and ashes

As if surrendered to nature's will.

But I gave it to you on a platter of gold

With silver linings and diamond shine;

Like pearls of love from a sea's deepest dive,

Yet without care you trash my heart

As if to test its resistance to quakes.

I do not blame you, love,

Today, it's your victory song.

Sing with a loud cheer while I weep in my woe.

Tomorrow I hope to find another, though I will not love;

Like a traveller finding paths, but not his destination;

For my heart remains of broken pieces.

Broken.

Pi

e

ce d.

Like a clay pot fallen from my sister's little hands,

Chaffed to dusts and ashes

As if surrendered to nature's will.

IF TOMORROW NEVER COMES

What if my love smiled no more?

What if it never rains as I've said it would

And my promises mourn their deaths helplessly?

What if this green grows grey with the aging of time?

Love me still, my love,

Save my soul from the lashes of idleness

Ah! Perhaps tomorrow you'll find my love sprouting

Like an oasis in the desert.

It is the reason my fingers are growing to

A mastery of this guitar

To play to sooth and sweetly fellowship with your song,

But:

If tomorrow is never born;

If tomorrow suffers stillbirth;

My love, know I would've become a clock on the wall:

I would have kept the time and continued keeping it

Know that I would've tried, and kept trying.

IN THIS POETRY OF MY SOUL

In this poetry of my soul

In which I paint you in pictures as sacred as my soul;

In which I long for you to live forever and love me for long:

I'll make you live like the sun and moon and stars,

Ever living, ever bright.

Your love has engulfed my soul

Like an amoeba engulfs its meal.

It is in your bounds I make my truest confession, thus:

There is no me without you.

ISAIAH

I feel the presence of your rugged love

Like reflections forth broken mirrors.

It jerks loud with noises

Like a jet faulted in mid-flight.

You have everything to do with it:

Robust exotic breasts beaming with attraction;

I have damned that solo voice in me

Urging me to think twice.

"Here I am, send me!" I say,

"My name is Isaiah."

In this approaching storm

I must fly against my will,

Never mind that together we'll be one:

Us against the world; the world against us.

Now I feel the soft touch of your fingers

Playing soft, gentle tunes on my guitar strings.

Aroused, I moan:

It is my attempt to fix your broken presence,

And I fall more into you.

IF I DIE BEFORE I SAY I LOVE YOU

(A Poem for Evangel)

Charged, I move ahead.

I head for tomorrow facing my darkness headlong.

I have no headlamps, but drive on I must,

However dense as the darkness might be.

I've closed my door on yesterday.

Yesterday died a dried death,

And I shall not return to my vomit.

But tomorrow is wet with your love, I see,

Like a woman charged up for canal exploits.

I hit a thousand potholes,

Car doors flung apart as I drive on.

It is your love and my yearning for you that keeps my tyres running.

But I cannot see my destination however bright my prophetic eyes.

Have I become abiku? Have I lost my way?

In vain the charmed circles are cast on my heart,

I'll keep it breathing, Evangel my love;

But if I die before I say I love you,

Be sure I meant it so.

<mark>DAY-</mark>DREAM

Your amputated love

I sat by the sea
Watching the waves.
You jumped, you hopped,
You came to me;
You came <i>into</i> me.
I felt your warm breath in me-
Like Adam, I became a living soul.
But then I became dead: immersed
Like Christ in the baptism of John.
Oh, if you were the shadows;
Oh, if the shadows were you.
For I tried to kiss you lying on the sea-sand
But I kissed the sand.
Then I awoke,
And you were gone with the waves.

In my dreams:

Walked towards me in broken shadows.

DECEPTION

You may, without me, Bask in the river of lusts. Changed cultures might colour them-Those whose pale love vibrates the colour of petals of a rose-To you, but: Your true self And the true essence of your heart Will always suffer want; always lost, Like a canoe on the high sea left without a sailor. And their true hearts Will always wear a mask-Like the evening shadow-reflections of a dwarf; So that before time grows grey, Their love will become like harmattan skin-Lost of glories, lost of shine, Gleaning on yesteryears And countless echoes of dreams deferred.

Do return and get a filling.

CONFESSION

I caught your love like flu, like cholera; And after these hours

It has eaten deep into my bone,

Consuming with unprecedented speed

The hard walls of my bone marrows.

Today I stand, no more for myself-

Dead to the world and its appeal.

Better dead to you than live else, I feel.

Today I'm cuffed,

Chained in the unbroken circles of your love.

I plead guilty to having loved in excess,

Guilty of having had an overdose of your syrup on molasses.

Do tamper justice with mercy, my love,

AND do let me drink some more.

What's your verdict?

LOVE, OH LOVE

Love, oh love,

Where do you hide your bright shine

That reveals the dept of feeling of my soul

And gives the rhythm of my life a reason to beat on?

Oh love,

Are you a man, or the shadow of him?

Are you poetry, or the feelings it purges?

Are you the songs of the early rising birds

That sounds the rhythm of an African beat?

Love, oh love,

Are you the sweet moans of my lover's night

Or are you the good we do?

Love,

You must be the cold that grips my heart

When I think to revenge my mother's betrayal.

You must be the tears that walk down my cheeks

As I cry, being too weak for fear of being too strong.

You must be the last dime in my pocket

Which I offered to feed a man I saw, who

Was more hungry than I was, though we both were.

Love,

You are more real than shadows, deaths, and taxes,

But do show yourself

And let me paint you in my poetry

And give the substance of you a definition.

TRADITIONAL: (from the Esan)

The taste of breast milk

Is what gives a baby a yearning for it.

It is the taste if hibiscus' petals

That makes the butterfly restless at the sight of it.

Ahaa! Shall the frog not leap for joy

At the sight of a pond?

Oh, it is why my heart leaps up

At the be-holding of you, my love.

FOR MY COUSIN, ESE LEAH AGHEDO

You are my definition of nature's poetry,

Little lily blooming like a rose.

You radiate like the sun

And your voice sings resurrection unto dead bones.

I will not hide my love the way shadows hide realities,

But I will let my heart be a volcano

And vomit the emotions bottled up within me.

Tonight you inspire the song I sing in these lines,

And with the stomach of my heart filled with love,

With my boots full with pride,

I dance to the rhythm of your inspiration.

The candle of my life keeps shinning bright;

Without fear I dare my heart to hope.

More to having you I have your love,

As unto Solomon-more to wisdom is wealth.

For once an undersized coat fits a giant.

For once the roots need the tree than the tree needs it.

For once I travel into my future without a fearful peep.

Who breaks the chain of love? Who dares the lioness?

I MUST FIGHT TO BE FREE

(To a girl who broke my heart, but whose love continues to hunt me)

The rhythm of your love has become epileptic

Like NEPA power supply.

Hitch-hike I struggle to set my soul free;

Free of your fetters:

I'm at war with your heart.

But you have caught me in your net

Like a termite in a spider's web.

With what pitch do chicks scream

When clutched in the hawk's talons?

I know it is in vain I struggle

Like charmed circles cast on Abiku's feet;

But I must fight anyways,

I must win this war with your heart,

I must be me again.

I am not moon and stars;

I cannot live forever.

My heart cannot beat forever

Like the sweet rhythm of nature's poetry:

But when shall I be free from these mystic drums

And the rosy aureole of your imperfections?

Red is the freedom road,

I must fight to be free.

I SHALL DISCARD YOU

(Traditional: from the Esan)

When a fruit is good

It is to be eaten.

But you are a bad fruit,

What shall I do with you?

You are a candy fallen into a gutter.

What shall I do with you?

Oh, okay, I shall discard you.

I shall discard you

Like an orange whose succulence has been sucked.

I shall discard you

The way my upset stomach vomits whatever I swallow.

I shall discard you,

And I shall not be a dog

Who returns to his vomit.

IN THOUGHTS OF YOU

In thoughts of you

I have warmed up in consistent passion,

Garnishing my nights with an endless array

Of corals and pearls and many stars.

It is with you I know how much of a man I am and could be.

I see myself in paradise, yet bothered by

An endless array of flies and fleece,

And yet not bothered-because with you I am deaf

To the pains of the world and their wails.

My life seems lost; I own it no more. But not to worry-

I'll live it for you; for you only I'll live it.

I know you every day and yet I know you not;

You are my every breath and my every blink.

The mystery in your soul is what charms me;

Stronger it is for me than petals charm the bee,

More charming it is than bones for the dog.

In this undergrowth I must, here, lie

Upon my dying bed and whisper as my last:

"My lady, thank you for existing."

My immense solitude is full of your memory.

"The poems are about the 'failing light' on the philosophy of love, though somewhat metaphysical if we are to examine it in complex concept, because it strikes core on relationships and communion, including the complexities of men and women eroticism which in all ramifications is enormous and deep."

-TESTIMONY K.G

"The book is wonderful, emotions well expressed (though sometimes on the verge of an outpouring). Poems to mother are well painted, theme well expressed and the style is well varied. You did well with the emotion of love and heartbreak, and "Asaph" summarized everything, at least for me."

-VINCENT DE PAUL, Author of Holy Emotions



THE POET

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