

# Hope AFRICA

An Anthology of Poems



*Nwodo Chinedu*

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To Chinwe, my Jewel,  
For the friendship and fellowship,  
And the magnified grace and glory!

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## FOREWORD

If literature is truly a reflection of life and the truth higher than history, then Shalom Nwodo Chinedu's **Hope Africa** is a prophetic announcement in the direction of current development paradigms for the continent that awaits exploration.

Apart from the series of poems in the first part of the collection that speak in invocations of the rising Africa, the greater part of this collection deliver messages of hope occurring as dabs of healing balm. Thus, even when lines are dedicated to the restive Niger Delta, there is the urge to "bear the Excellency of the resilient dynasty".

The organization of the collection explores the journey of the inner mind. There are forty Poems arranged in four groups of ten, with each around a dominant theme. Part One presents "Hope Africa", Part Two – "Blow the Trumpet", Part Three – "Tears of Love" and Part Four – "Prisoners of Hope". While Part One celebrate the new found joy that must resonate from the dark pages of African history, Part Two digs deep into the spiritual resource of that joy. In Part Three, the poet weaves messages of the filial love, celebrating his forebears and his partner in the divine assignment of extended creation. Like a consummate artist, he cobwebbed these lines to link the celestial, making the Almighty the Master designer.

The fourth part draws to a close this exploration. It is not coincidental that this section x-rays such contemporary issues as corruption, brain drain, inequality, banditry and organized crimes. Unlike a great deal of his kindred poets, Shalom Nwodo Chinedu did not just stop at a parade of evil, he also provided viable solutions. For instance, in "Spirit of Solitude", he urges us to "read and read until timidity rid... and / by the verity of divinity, defeat / the spirit of solicitude."

Shalom Nwodo Chinedu's poetry is delivered in the language of a scientist which is clinical and precise. His imagery appeals to all the senses, with the message emphasized at all levels.

While I congratulate Dr. Chinedu as a budding voice in Nigerian new poetry, I commend these invigorating lines for your reading pleasure. You are welcome to a new genre of Poetry!

**Charles Ogbulogo**, Ph.D

Professor of English & Dean,  
College of Human Development,  
Covenant University

## PREFACE

**Hope Africa** (an anthology of poems) is specially dedicated to African renaissance! It shares the sentiments of the awakening continent! The poems are fresh and original. The verses seek to ignite the fire of hope, the foremost requirement for a positive change. In Hope Africa, current of encouragement is employed to stir up the ambers of hope. Such virtues that bear on right attitude to life as self-esteem, confidence, patience, prudence and love are presented with captivating simplicity. There are also stirring commentaries on matters of morality, destiny and identity, spiced up with emotive admonitions, enquiries and entreaties. Without exception, anyone can dream a dream and “wake up” to see it come true!

I acknowledge with gratitude my mentors and models who through mighty words and great deeds stir my heart and steer my course aright. I profoundly thank Professor Charles Ogbulogo for accepting to write a foreword for the anthology. My Jewel asked for the compilation; my friend, Isaiah Fortress, encouraged the publication and my brother, Dan Offor, packaged them together for your reading delight.

Keep your hope alive!

**SHALOM NWODO CHINEDU**

August, 2009.

“When hope becomes your companion, life begins  
to deliver its best for you;  
To be void of hope is to live in the grave”.

- Dr. David O. Oyedepo

*In: Mystery of hope:*

*A teaching by Dr. David O. Oyedepo at Winners Chapel, Lagos.*

*31.12.98*

Part **1**  
*Hope Africa*



# 1

## *Hope Africa*

---

My Africa, my dream  
God bless Africa  
Hope Africa  
Pangs of royalty  
Arise Africa  
Be glad Africa  
Hands of destiny  
Bright Africa  
Boomerang  
Stillbirth





### *My Africa, My Dream*

I saw Africa:  
Slurry, miry clay flowing  
Through the potter's hands!  
I saw Africa in mould of life, form:  
A pot, burnt, sun-baked, strong...  
Treasure-full!

I saw Africa:  
Slimy, virile germ growing  
Inside the holiest bowel!  
I saw Africa in womb of life, turn:  
A son, bruised, chastised, discreet...  
Born to rule!

And I saw a new solarium of life;  
And arrays of myriad stars, glowing,  
Lit-up the oceans of darkness!  
And I saw marshes, forests, deserts...  
Turn to gold!

This is Africa,  
My Africa, my dream! 🌍



### *God Bless Africa*

God bless Africa,  
Progenitor of my kind!  
By floods of loud, cascade showers,  
And storms of wild, saharan wind;  
Warm, scintillating sun-baths  
Cleanse her white-washed mind!

Fresh, regenerate, with dew  
Of new dawn onto the excellence  
Of resplendent Day-star,  
Africa, Africa,  
My bright, sublime bride  
Smile to adorn her pride!

Pure, immaculate, with flair  
And ecstasy of flowery exuberance,  
Engraced by celestial embrace,  
Africa, Africa:  
My fertile, volatile virgin  
Erupt in fragrant renaissance!

God bless Africa,  
Pro-creator of mankind! 🌍



## *Hope Africa*

Hope Africa,  
In dust, interred, out of sight!  
Hope Africa,  
Precious seeds sown are shooting out  
Tender buds!  
Sing Africa, sing at sun-set!  
Through the dusk and darkening shadows,  
Stars, bright, are rising...  
To guide the deepest night!

Hope Africa,  
In storm, battered by bouts of tempests!  
Hope Africa,  
Heaven's windows are open, pouring out  
Bounteous graces!  
Dance Africa, dance in the rain!  
Dance through the blitz and blares and hail;  
This isn't the Noah's flood...  
There's a rainbow in the clouds!

Hope Africa,  
In pains, altered by sorrows of birth-pangs!  
Hope Africa,  
Womb, full-grown, is pushing out  
Due glory!  
Travail Africa; travail and prevail!  
Through the blood and sweat and tears,  
Joys, joys, are bursting...  
With the dawning of a new day! 🌅



## *Pangs of Royalty*

### **(Dedicated to the Niger Delta)**

Hordes, self-seeking,  
Hordes, self-serving,  
Hordes, desecrating my mangrove altar,  
Drilling, spilling, stealing, killing...

Because I wear the bullion crown,  
Treasure, laid on Blackman's head,  
So, I bear the pains and griefs  
And travail under the sun  
As if my womb conceived the universe  
By a holy intercourse!

Is this my lot?  
Portion partitioned, apportioned,  
Auctioned and sanctioned; darkened  
By dazzles of blazes!  
Is this my luck?  
Broods robbed, clubbed, ducked,  
Distorted, contorted and uncomforted!  
God, why me in a burning splendour,  
Gasping to cast out sorrows?

Bravo, bravo, troubled priestess:  
Dignity is come to birth!  
Wear your strength O royal armada;  
Push, push and bear the Excellency  
Of the resilient dynasty! 🌅





## *Arise Africa*

Arise Africa,  
Dawn is come to you! See,  
Warriors riding on chariots of splendour,  
Raise your flame!  
Awake, awake, O dryly bones of giants,  
Leap out of the limbo of derision!  
Arise Africa,  
Garnish your famished, desolate ghosts  
Roaming the earth without blood!

Great Africa,  
A new day is born to you! Hear,  
Minstrels returning with the laurels of glory,  
Praise your name!  
Dance O kindred of unyielding conquerors,  
Shake Kingly breasts!  
Let the flaming arrows rend your horizon  
And rout the scary clouds!  
Arise Africa,  
Replenish your ravished, deserted coasts  
Groaning in the agony of melancholy! 🌍



## *Be Glad, Africa*

Be glad Africa,  
Woman, dark and comely.  
Be glad sister, sun smiled on you!  
See, you bear the colour of fertility,  
Of ground, blessed,  
Bringing forth herbs and trees!

O, would God  
I bear the colours of rainbow...

Why Africa,  
Woman, strong and lively?  
Rainbow shuts heaven's bowels  
And mops the earth with drought!  
Remember Adam's white-rib?  
She flirted and birthed man's frailty,  
The ground, accursed,  
Springing up briers and thistles!

Be glad Africa,  
Woman, whole and homely.  
Be glad sister, sun smiled on you!  
You bear the colour of fidelity! 🌍



## *Hands of Destiny*

**(Dedicated to Martin Luther King Jr.)**

Lord, I'm grateful.  
 Through severed kinship and severe hardship,  
 Strength waxed; though I'm no better!  
 My siblings were sown into burning sands; yet,  
 The finest seeds, watered by showers of anguish,  
 Couldn't open the desert's womb!  
 My kind were thrown into churning seas; yet,  
 The flawless kids, offered to angered mermaids,  
 Couldn't calm the raging waves!  
 Though tossed and tossed, we crossed  
 And stripped and stooped to till the cold fields  
 Until freedom came and beckoned on us!  
 Why mock the sacred scrolls of liberty,  
 And bundle a free nation into segregations?

Lord, I'm grateful.  
 Through the unveiled travesty and vilest cruelty,  
 Grace surged; though I'm not saintly!  
 What's the King's dream?  
 Can showers of love relieve the embittered blood  
 Crying out for vengeance?  
 Can rivers of joy revive the withered brotherhood,  
 Dried from roots, and bud a holy language  
 Out of cloven tongues of Babel?  
 "Hush, hush, O ship steered by hands of destiny"  
 "Hush," the little voice whispered.  
 "Your humbled identity engendered posterity;  
 Your trampled dignity tended prosperity!" 🌸



## *Bright Africa*

Africa, bright Africa.  
 Africa of crystal daysprings and festal nights!  
 Africa of celestial glory and paradisaal delights!

Africa, bright Africa,  
 Africa of the woods and gold of lofty castles;  
 Africa of the crafts and gods of ivory towers;  
 Africa of the ores and coals of royal conquests;  
 Africa of the blood and soul of holy prowess;  
 Africa, the cradle and curator of lively cultures!

Yoked, she bowed the aching shoulders;  
 Africa bowed the shoulders and straightened  
 Her back for burdens of freedom!  
 Poked, she shoved away the aged feathers;  
 Africa shoved the feathers and toughened  
 Her wings for the flights of destiny!  
 Africa, on eagle's flight by heaven's light!

Where is the Dark continent?  
 Western noon was her midnight,  
 And Eastern dawn, her twilight! 🌸



## *Boomerang*

When Africa, proud Africa, sang aloud  
And danced in the sun,  
They wondered and wandered about,  
And raced to the moon!  
Where was morality when they stripped  
And raped Africa, virgin Africa,  
In a blitz of banditry?

Mulattoes, tan yourselves; boil  
O Afro-blood mingled with vinegar, boil,  
Sauté the hypocrites, who load our guns,  
Preaching: "son, love thy neighbour!"  
Negroes, bleach out yourselves; smoke  
O Afro-power purged with fire, smoke,  
Burn the mongers, who bite our nipples,  
Asking: "baby, what aileth thee?"  
Boomerang! Boomerang!  
Casanovas, burst out...  
O Afro-stars, explode, dazzle the sky;  
Stun the robbers, who usurp our thrones,  
Shouting: "liberty, democracy..."

Dry your tears, Africa. Weep no more!  
Seeds, dispersed, will return with sheaves;  
Brothers, divided, will hug one another;  
By love, renewed, sharing the good news:  
"The sun is risen, again!" 🌅



## *Stillbirth*

Horns, high and mighty, rage;  
Assaults neither assuage nor still!  
Bruised, reduced, Africa bows!

Herbs, sour and bitter, engage;  
Wounds neither soothe nor heal!  
Sick and weak, Africa vows!

And bees hum the song of democracy  
And humble blossoms with stingy slavo-crazy:  
Jazz of emasculation, pipes of pauperization,  
Orchestra of deprivations, lyrics of mastery;  
Western health and wealth swell!

And foxes beat the gong of democracy  
And hit buffaloes into frenzied mobo-crazy:  
Carnivals of destruction, festivals of revolution,  
Regatta of lamentations, rhythm of misery;  
Africa's birth and death embrace!

Part **2**  
*Blow the Trumpet*



## 2

### *Blow The Trumpet*

---

Holy convocation  
Triune man  
Harvest is here  
Little star  
Yuletide  
Blow your trumpet  
Let there be no night  
Put laughter on  
Battle cry  
Breakthrough





### *Holy Convocation*

The shell is broken,  
Torn by forces of metamorphosis!  
The young is surrendered to end the long  
Solitary siege and sedentary occupation!  
Eaglets are tokens of triumph,  
Born with rudiments of greatness! Yet,  
They yawn, beckoning for crumbs,  
Mouths, wide-open!

The dame has stirred her nest!  
Broods are awakened; one by one,  
Borne through the harshest tempests,  
Wings tempered for winds of life.  
Eagles are made! They soar, sun-faced,  
Mounting storms onto the mountains of prey!  
And by blood and fats of carcasses,  
And honey suckled from ancient rocks,  
The eagles gather, in holy convocation,  
Eyes, wide-open! 🍷



### *Triune Man*

God is gracious to you.  
Thrice,  
Trinity laboured to birth you,  
Triune:  
Spirit, free,  
In His essence, created;  
Body, prepared,  
In His hands formed;  
Soul, alive,  
By His breath made!

God,  
Triune...  
In earthen-ware, crowned,  
Lord O'er earth, sky and sea!  
In His presence, live  
O man,  
Wonder, born to rule  
Three worlds!  
God is gracious to you. 🍷



### *Harvest Is Here*

Sun is sweet!  
May he meet you, ever  
Discreet,  
Reaping your own fields!  
Harvest is here, my Angel:  
A little thought, a little work,  
Your basket full to brim!

Moon is a cheat!  
May she greet you, never  
In the streets  
Leaping out of your shield!  
Rust is there O my Jewel:  
A little talk, a little walk,  
Your lustre dull and dim! 🍷



### *A Little Star*

Stand astride,  
Swing and swing;  
Throw your icons up, above!  
Who knows?  
A star may hang in the sky!

Sun at even'n  
Bows to sleep;  
And moon, even a crescent,  
May not show-up,  
As shadows tall and black...

Stand astride,  
Swing and swing;  
Throw your icons up, above!  
Just a little star, aglow,  
May ignite your darkest night! 🍷



## *Yuletide*

Joy is descending,  
Joy of Yuletide!  
Balloons are ascending, touching the sky!  
Joy is descending,  
Joy of yuletide!  
Blossoms are spewing sweet odours,  
Adorning the gardens,  
Glowing in colours of Christmas!

Joy is descending,  
Joy of Yuletide!  
Praises are ascending, swelling the clouds,  
Distending the sky,  
Bursting into showers of blessings...  
It's yuletide:  
Heaven is descending to wash the earth  
In colourless splash of white Christmas!

Ascend, asend, O breath-filled mortals,  
Let flying colours fill the sky:  
Red and blue, yellow and brown,  
White and black...  
Up, to salute the Yuletide! 🌺



## *Blow the Trumpet*

The night awaits your light,  
Stars of black-hole,  
Locked in hades of obscurity!  
Arise, smile; show the light  
And the sky will laugh  
And lit the earth!

The world awaits your word,  
Gods, in earthen pots,  
Reckoned as dusts of earth!  
Arise, speak; utter the word  
And heaven will shout  
And stamp his feet!

The lowly awaits your glory,  
Saviours on holy ground,  
Groaning with pains of child-birth!  
Arise, sing; blow the trumpet  
And God will rise  
And dance to tune! 🌺



### *Let There Be No Night*

In the night,  
In the middle of a dream, I screamed...

In the night,  
Black shields quenched the arrows of light  
And dark horns grew, and gored the skies,  
And stars fell into the abyss of darkness!  
And I wept and wept in the night...  
Night is a nightmare!  
Lord, let there be no night!

In the night,  
Men comatose lie and commonsense die;  
In the night,  
Princes drowse hiss until conscience cease;  
In the night,  
Gods call at the throes of death and fall  
Into dusts and ashes!

In the night,  
Cold showers drench the billows of delight,  
Thorns of sorrow bore through the heart,  
And eyes swelled with rivers of sadness!  
And I wept and wept in the night...  
Night is death; death is night!  
O Lord, let there be no night!

Awake O my soul, awake with the sun!  
Night is death; let there be no night! 🍷



### *Put Laughter On*

Arise, put laughter on!  
When life's tests put you down,  
Arise and put your laughter on:  
Laugh, free your soul from hell!  
Sorrow aborts tomorrow,  
Heaviness genders quietude;  
Solitary, silent,  
Life becomes a shadow of death!

Arise, put laughter on!  
When life's quests put you down,  
Arise and put your laughter on:  
Laugh, shake yourself out of dust!  
Pressures burst the future,  
Worries hinder the journey;  
Still, motionless,  
Life becomes a burden of earth!

Arise, put laughter on!  
Laugh and light up your world;  
Life's but an outburst of joy! 🍷





## *Breakthrough*

Lift up your hands  
O earth;  
Take away the burdens  
Heaped on me!  
Why is a choice seed  
Buried, rotting away?  
How long, how long,  
O heaven?  
Come, smile on me!

Lift up your head,  
O blade!  
Breakthrough, breakthrough;  
Leap out of the earth  
Heaped on you!  
Then, heaven will smile,  
And come with dew and rain,  
And splendour,  
Till fruits abound,  
And choice seed multiply! 🌺



## *Battle Cry*

Like waters of flowing streams  
Gone by,  
Yesterday passed away.  
Let her rest in peace!  
Today is come to sound  
The battle cry  
Against your dreams of ease!

Son, war is on!  
Adversaries lurk in shadows receding:  
Cruelties retreating to return at dusk,  
In full armour of darkness,  
To smite with the might of night!

Arise, draw the sword at dawn,  
And fight with the strength of light!  
Let sun and moon stand-still,  
Till lights guide your warriors right;  
Foes avowed, all, vanquished! 🌺

Part **3**  
*Tears of Love*



# 3

## *Tears of Love*

---

Living legend  
My heroine  
Tears of love  
Creative episode  
Haven of bliss  
Wedding bells  
Love lights  
Forbidden fruit  
Daily bread  
Before the eclipse





## *Living Legend*

### **(Tribute to a Patriarch)**

Before the harvest, seeds fall...  
In the soil, soiled,  
They shed encapsulating coats  
And rise to live a thousand-fold,  
In corruptible earth,  
Incorruptible!  
And seeds become trees,  
And forests, and gardens...

Before the morning, men fall...  
In love, deep,  
They escape the entrapment of self  
And rise to live a thousand ages,  
In mortal hearts,  
Immortal!  
And men become heroes,  
And gods, and legends...

Only fools die!  
The wise fall to rise,  
Tall, wide, multiplied!  
Cheerio, cheerio, Okorie:  
You are my hero!  
Only fools die...  
Legends live forever! 🍌



## *My Heroine*

### **(To Mother Philomena)**

Mama, my heroine;  
Engraft-branch of the holy pedigree,  
Of majesty, full of graces!

Spread forth O fruitful bough;  
Spread forth the perfumed palms  
Of sun-burst flora till caressing blazes  
Tone your fruits to fullest perfection  
And the tenderest, ripest of all,  
Kiss the breeze in salient bliss and fall  
For the generation next! 🍌



## *Tears of Love*

**(A song for my Jewel)**

Tears of joy,  
Tears of fulfillment,  
Streams of the sweet overflow  
Of dreams come true!

Baby, you're born  
To turn my dreams into deeds  
By the labours of love,  
Love shining in tears -  
In tears of hope,  
In tears of commitment,  
Joys and pains,  
Mingling together, overflowing,  
Billow in ceaseless ecstasy!

Cry, baby cry,  
Dry not the tears -  
The tears of love,  
The tears of loyalty;  
Streams of the soul, overflowing  
To prove true dreams!  
Because of the holy vow,  
We'll live wholly, one for another:  
Hearts flowing, eyes glowing,  
In wonder of love! 🌻



## *Creative Episode*

In the beginning,  
Earth was dark and void, without form...  
The Spirit moved and God said:  
"Let there be..."  
And light fell and night fled;  
Heavens ascended and seas descended;  
Earth brought forth herbs and trees;  
Waters bred fishes and spawned fowls;  
Ground vomited cattle and every beast,  
And Adam came to tend and defend!

If nights are void of moon and stars  
And darkness descends to bury our form;  
If mountains are bare and valleys dry  
And empty winds roar like a mighty sea;  
Remember: In the beginning,  
Earth was dark and void, without form...  
Remember this and hold your peace,  
And move the Spirit with faith of God;  
Say: "Let there be..."  
And there will be!  
For life is a creative episode,  
Sabbath comes after the sixth day! 🌻



### *Haven of Bliss*

Heaven, the haven of bliss;  
Are you a figment of the fallow mind  
Illusioned segments hallow too wide?

Wide and wild, the skies unfold;  
Discrete phases of endless space,  
Of cosmos, laced with worlds untold!  
O constellations of brilliant stars,  
Why say of the way to bliss:  
"Heaven and heaven alone can tell!"

Tell me now, O true blue;  
Here I am, staring at the starry skies:  
Where are you, haven of bliss? 🌻



### *Wedding Bells*

We'll wed in Eden,  
In the garden of delights!  
We'll wed in Eden,  
In the citadel of lights!

Sun will hug dew-clothed fields  
And feed tenderly waving buds  
With sweet, refreshing kisses!  
Moon will lead a procession  
Of bridal train of myriad stars  
O'er lands of gold, bdellium, onyx...  
Birds will sing the union's anthem,  
Beasts cheering, trees clapping,  
Fishes flapping silvery palms...

And Heaven will rejoice  
And join us in holy matrimony!  
And joys will rend the sky  
And tear the mountains down,  
And earth's burden will roll...  
Into the sea! 🌻



### *Love-Lights*

As I looked into your eyes, meteors  
Shot through the sky's symmetry!  
Sparkles of love glowed and ignited  
The black-hole of Adam's creativity!

As I looked into your eyes, Orion,  
Knit together, in a celestial artistry,  
Illumined the beacon of endless love -  
Northern star in a galaxy of fluidity!

As I looked into your eyes, the sun  
Rose to unveil the sacred mysteries  
Of perpetual love, of the Day-star  
Dazzling the firmament for eternity! 🌻



### *Forbidden Fruit*

Like a cap, neatly fit,  
Heaven and earth meet and knit together  
At the farthest horizon!  
Like soul-mates, so intimate,  
Sun and moon click and stick together  
In full eclipse!  
Like the newlywed, united by holy desire,  
Rivers and oceans kiss and mix together  
In deep blue sea!

But Ada and I are kins, nearer  
Than twins in the womb, bound together  
By the bonds of blood!  
Here, dogmas and taboos hold sway:  
Legions of contradictions that turn hearts away  
From love, so dear!  
Else, why is the fruit, so near,  
Forbidden, except for the stranger far away  
From the family tree? 🌻



### *Daily Bread*

God be with you  
As you stand before the jury  
Of prospective bosses,  
Tossing minds about, to find  
Culprits who match paper claims,  
To convict for bread!

God be with you  
To justify your humble looks,  
And rectify your tensed-up nerves,  
And electrify you brain-cells,  
Tinkling, linking thoughts together,  
To prove your worth!

God be with you  
And give you this day  
Your daily bread! 🍞



### *Before The Eclipse*

This is a letter to my father.

Today, I find courage to write to you  
A letter from the heart of my soul...  
I find the courage because termites  
Have eaten up your rod,  
The rod whose strokes made me cry,  
The cry of a beloved son,  
The son you gave your father's name!

O why, why didn't I find the courage  
When we walked together, hand in hand,  
By moonlight,  
In the night,  
Before my day broke into mourning!

Father, I remember you:  
I remember those arms that held me up  
And made me sit on shoulders to see further;  
I remember those eyes that led me about  
And followed me to guide my faltering steps;  
I remember those ears that heard me always  
And listened to the sweet harmony of my cries!

Today, I remember you...  
And upon the altar of your rest,  
I lay my first, my best;  
The son to give your name!

But why, why are we born?  
Are we like breaths, mere puffs of smoke  
Going up in circuits, trailing one another's tail,  
Without a trail on the shores of life?  
Are we like wagers, mere pawns in a lawn,  
Born for a sacrifice, the sacrifice  
That breaks the day into mourning?

This is a prayer of inquiry,  
A plea from the heart of my soul...  
Father, why are we born?  
Tell me, tell me, before the eclipse  
Sink earth into darkness,  
And men, hanging between two worlds,  
Behold children beckoning for tales,  
Tales by moonlight,  
Tales which none can tell,  
Before the day breaks into mourning! 🙏





# 4

## *Prisoners of Hope*

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Prisoners of hope  
Too late  
Another slavery  
Comrades-in-arms  
Coup d'etat  
Spirit of solicitude  
Echoes of harmattan  
Offer them pity  
Parade of insanity  
The end



## *Prisoners of Hope*

The prisoners are not only those who pine away  
In caves of depravity.  
Bandits, awaiting bail or jail, and convicts  
Gagged by solitude and servitude, soon offset  
Their offences or scale the prison fences!

The prisoners are not only those who pant aloud  
In captivity of duty:  
Soldiers rumble in lion's den!  
Workers are humbled with donkey's burden!  
Police wiggle around the vulture's carrions!  
Warders wriggle in holes with snakes and scorpions!  
The regimentals, caged by powers of wages,  
Segregated in wards for rewards, soon age  
Out of use and turn to refuse!

The prisoners are not only those who fret about  
In dungeons of fate:  
Majesties, held by ardour of despoiled nuggets,  
Bang royal hearts on ivory thrones!  
Masses, hemmed in squalor of night-soil maggots,  
Fag loyal heads in sorry ghettos!  
Clerics, hedged by glamour of cosmetic piety,  
Ring regal tones in comely domes!  
Jurists, wedged by clamour for cosmic equity,  
Swing legal scales in solemn silence!  
The sentimentals, tied with fetters of honour,  
Variegated by robes and codes, soon roost  
In the vintage of madness or recompense!

Chance or charter, choice or necessity,  
We pine.  
We all pine away,  
By creed and greed and need,  
In dreary goals for sundry goals!

Prisoners through and through,  
Gagged by magnetism of indulgence,  
Caged by ostracism of prejudice,  
Held by egoism of providence,  
Hemmed in ostrichism of indifference,  
Hedged by fatalism of ignorance,  
Wedged by spiritism of solicitude!

Hear O prisoners of hope,  
Hear the blood of sacrifice cry:  
Go forth! Spread out! 🇺🇸



### *Too Late*

My breath flowed with songs...  
Beckoning on you! My lungs bubbled  
Until they ruptured and melodies ceased!  
My hands spread out, wide open...  
Waiting for you! My arms stretched  
Until they stiffened and withered away!  
My heart erupted like a spring, flowing...  
Flowing to you! My breasts throbbed  
Until they sagged and desires died!  
And my eyes streamed and streamed,  
Rolling for you! Emotive rivers surged  
Until the fountains shrank and dried up!  
Too late!

A mother's tenderest love is wasted,  
On broods, spoilt and estranged:  
Waywards, outlawed,  
Who know neither shame nor pain!

Hope has played her tricks on me!  
Now, at twilight, what's life worth?  
Worthy sons bear their father's name,  
But ears that hear not, soon join  
The severed head in a dance of shame!  
Alas, who can breathe free air  
When spewed ghosts roam the streets  
And vultures and hordes of flies feast  
On cadavers, bloated, dismembered:  
Bywords, outcasts,  
Who know neither shame nor pain! 🇺🇸



### *Another Slavery*

We danced with the steps of liberty  
When our sons conquered Whiteman's pride  
And returned with captured virgins!  
Our daughters adorned the royal beads  
And sang to receive their grooms!  
But soon, the world turned,  
And our princes eloped to become eunuchs  
For harems of exhausted concubines!  
How I weep for the loyal brides,  
Pinning away in a strange widowhood,  
For the estranged manhood!

The world has turned again.  
Our princesses, debased, are coming back  
With contempt and ailments and laments!  
With penance and prayers, they entreat  
For wombs bereaved of nations, unborn!  
How they water our altars with tears,  
The tears of embittered whoredom,  
The whoredom of an impetuous generation,  
The generation of desperadoes gone, unsung!

O dear, what's the destination  
Of a world turning round and round? 🌹



### *Comrades-In-Arms*

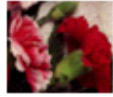
The comrades are armed  
To trade skills and schemes!  
Hand in hand, join together,  
They showcase our stuff!

Comrades who rob with pen,  
Extol our brain-power:  
The chiefs, we robe and red-cap,  
And turban with eagle feathers!

Comrades who shoot and loot,  
Display our bravery:  
The thieves, we revere and praise,  
And bow to save our souls!

Comrades who cat-walk, naked,  
Parade our charm:  
The queen, we hail and cheer,  
And crown to sell our pride!

We are the comrades:  
Comrades-in-arm; armed to aid,  
And kill, in instant or installments!  
Hand in hand, join together,  
We showcase our stuff! 🌹



### *Coup D'état*

The lords are gone with slavery.  
 Servants have become the masters,  
 Feigning to serve!  
 Men who forsook their farms are the Honourables,  
 Harvesting fellowmen's sweat;  
 Women who scorn motherhood are the ladies,  
 Swearing to cover their age!

All went well,  
 All savouring the euphoria of freedom,  
 Until valiant guards rose to froze the rowdy parties  
 And zombies came out of shoel, marching...  
 Deaf! Dumb! Dim! Deadly!  
 Afro-mania: an evil genius is commanding  
 The sacred order of lunatics!

God save my soul!  
 Witches may protect the egg-heads, prostrate,  
 Licking bloodied boots!  
 Eagles may flee to bewail the tigers of Niger  
 Learning to pray behind the bar,  
 But home is sweet: Soja go, Soja come! 🌺



### *Spirit of Solicitude*

Though searing beats raze the earth  
 With charring heat;  
 Though blinding blitz daze the heart  
 With shimmering pangs;  
 A blaze of faith will erase our fears!

Though lofty mountains crumble  
 And tumble into the vale;  
 Though silent fountains rumble  
 And fumble in the dale;  
 A ray of hope will dry our tears!

To drown in eerie floods: ne'er!  
 The torrents may twitch the earth;  
 The currents may bewitch the heart;  
 Timorous devvel and sore travails  
 Of multitudes, multitudes,  
 In the valley of solicitude!

Awake O sleeping god:  
 Read and read till timidity rid,  
 Mind mended, captivity ended,  
 And by verity of divinity, defeat  
 The spirit of solicitude! 🌺




### *Echoes of harmattan*

Wind is blowing; wind of harmattan;  
 Wind, blowing to show fowl's rump!  
 The wind is blowing cold and dry!  
 I can hear the desert storm:  
 Whirlwind of fiery trials,  
 Sweeping health and wealth!

Rain is falling; rain of harmattan;  
 Rain, falling to reveal the vulture's form!  
 The rain is pouring down and down!  
 I can touch the dusty showers:  
 Torrents of clattering tongues,  
 Blasting heaven and earth!

Fire is burning; fire of harmattan;  
 Fire, burning to sweep grass-cutter's backyard!  
 The fire is burning hot and red!  
 I can feel the blazing flame:  
 Wild-fire of virulent thoughts,  
 Wrecking homes and hopes!


Harmattan, harmattan!  
 Scaly, scary harmattan!  
 Harmattan, biting to mark the pink lady's age!  
 The blade is cutting deep and deep!  
 I can see the claws of the fiery beast:  
 Fangs of vengeful acts,  
 Tearing flesh and bones! 



### *Offer Them Pity*

Their enmity  
 May shock our simplicity;  
 The wanton cannons  
 May rock our serenity;  
 Yet, we'll offer them pity!  
 Their falsity  
 May bewitch our sincerity;  
 The rude vulgarity  
 May breach our civility,  
 Yet, we'll offer them pity!

Though imbeciles  
 Grip imperialism and rip veracity  
 To malign our dignity,  
 We'll offer them pity!

We'll offer them big names:  
 Hippopotamus! Hippopocampus!  
 Else, we pitilessly offer to them:  
 An incense to silence immunity  
 And disease the religiosity of felicity,  
 And humanity seethe in frenzied bellicosity,  
 With the ferocity of Armageddon! 



## *Parade of Insanity*

### **I**

Soldier: Captured rouges on parade,  
Ready for inspection, sir!  
Bloody rapists: drilled and stilled,  
Insanity suspended!

General: (Nods his approval. Inspects the parade)  
Bastards! Dullards! Insanity!  
Parade dismiss!

Soldier: Atee...nshon! By the left quick march,  
Left! Right! Left! Right...  
To the Abattoir, forward march!  
Left! Right! Left! Right!

(Returns alone)  
Insanity dismissed, summarily dismissed, sir!

General: (Nods. Smiles)  
Good boy, one more peep!

### **II**

Soldier: Renegade zombies on parade,  
Ready for inspection, sir!  
Bloody coupists: softened and smoothened,  
Insanity suspected!

General: (Head-toss. Inspects the parade)  
Traitors! Saboteurs! Mutiny!  
Parade dismiss!

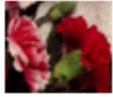
Soldier: Atee...nshon! By the left quick march,  
Left! Right! Left! Right!...  
To the psychiatry, forward march!  
Left! Right! Left! Right!

(Returns with the group)  
Insanity confirmed, Sir,  
Awaiting your orders!

General: (Grins. Thunders in rage)  
Enough is enough! Shoot!

Soldier: Yes, sir!  
(Positions to shoot; heavens thundered  
and earth shook and shook, and General  
fell down and died)

Soldier: Ah... Insanity is dead! 🗡️



## *The End*

When the fathers return  
To see their remains amongst us,  
They'll find no trace!  
Chicks, their wings sheltered, are the vultures  
Hovering o'er men;  
Lambs, their arms tended, are the wolves  
Roving around pens;  
Dogs, their meal-crumbs fed, are the lions  
Roaring in dens!

They'll not see the diamond wreaths laid  
On beautiful rainbow-painted mausoleums  
Or smell sweet odours poured thereon!  
Preyed upon, they'll cry and descend  
To bind us with no grace!  
And fathers will abhor their children,  
The children who devour their world;  
And the world will detour into oblivion,  
And end! 🍷

"Freedom is the discovery of your true self: self-worth, value  
and self-esteem"

- Dr. Myles Monroe

*In: The Burden of Freedom*

There is a wind of change blowing across Africa!

**Hope Africa** is a prophetic announcement in the direction of current development paradigms for the continent that awaits exploration. The organization of the collection explores the journey of the inner mind. Apart from the series of poems in the first part of the collection that speak in invocations of the rising Africa, the greater part deliver messages of hope occurring as dabs of healing balm.

Shalom Nwodo Chinedu's poetry is delivered in the language of a scientist which is clinical and precise. His imagery appeals to all the senses, with the message emphasized at all levels.

**Nwodo Chinedu** holds a Ph.D degree in Biochemistry from the University of Lagos and lectures in the Department of Biological Sciences, College of Science and Technology, Covenant University. He is married and blessed with children.



**Hope**  
**AFRICA**  
An Anthology of Poems