



THE
IN
BETWEEN

Olabisi Akinwale • Adeniran Joseph

The In-Between

(POEMS)

Olabisi Akinwale

&

Adeniran Joseph

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FOREWORD

Life itself is a product of metamorphosis. There is always an evolution from joy to grief, birth to death, peace to war, love to hatred, this to that, and the other way round. Akinwale and Joseph have demonstrated this in their beautiful poetry chapbook. The duo combined water with fire, by jolting the readers into a state of cognitive dissonance. The chapbook opens calmly with beguiling metaphors and sensational diction, blinding the unsuspecting readers to what they will encounter on the next pages. Both poets serve as a Pandora's box; revealing the shadow and luminance lurking around the world. From the love and desire of women, to embracing God's words, to the wreckage of war, to the lewdness of politics, to the definition of home, to the misappropriation of identity, and to the portrait of life itself.

Akinwale and Joseph unveil attention to several themes in this chapbook. The poems are divided into distinct phases, each revealing the poets' shifting moods and tones. A mixture of climax and anti-climax like a riptide cooling and somersaulting in sequences. The poets' tone shifts systematically, allowing readers to adapt to the changing emotions. The softness of words at the beginning gives way to the depiction of the ugly world; characterized by war, bloodshed, brutality, and anarchy. The poets from there hopped into another tone of comfort, bliss, and fulfillment. An unpredictable metamorphosis. This makes a reader expect the impossible.

Both poets with their language styles, diction, and imagery have created an unusual awareness to the world. They expound on love, passion, and sacredness, while also reminding the world of its darker sides— from the wrath of war, to the brutality of humanity, and myriad chaos soaring in our world today. They draw our attention not only to the beautiful things the world holds, but also the destruction it has nurtured and sheltered. Without a doubt, this is an intriguing, dynamic, and complex work of art that stands as a product of social consciousness, Afrocentrism, sacredness, longings, travails, attachment, and detachment.

Qudus Olowo

Founding Editor, Afrihill Press

PHASE ONE:
Love, God & Order of Things

Àdùfè

the night you whispered your fantasies into
my ears & held me in the dark with your breasts or
something that looked like lust, or maybe love, I knew

there was no stopping my testosterone from crash-landing
on bare floor, from seeking the climax of the mountain
in the valley between your thighs, damn! I was a gone man

& you are a woman, irresistible & fluffy around edges
you asked that I make you feel like a woman, like
the women before you, you wanted the alchemy of pleasure,

I wanted the salvation of your body; two lost birds
finding a mouth to sing their desires. I teased your
nipple, sucked the terror out of every memory inside you

you tasted like tequila, like fire— you unsettled me. I opened
your legs, scrambled your clits like a door knob to the inside
of you & inside you was a desolate room, closed windows,

antiques forgotten by love & light, cold tiles, scarlet rose
growing in a broken vase, everything longed for the miracle of touch,
of homecoming, something that will stay when the day is gone.

& I was nothing but a nomad leaving his footprints in the womb
of time. forgive me, home is no place for men like me.

Third Heaven

you said, you're in love—
but he sees your body as
a punch, your face now
becomes a stitch, holding
onto a bottle of liquor for survival
you said, you're in love
but your body bleeds blood
with a constant pour of water
you said... but this love is red enough
to break you. never claim what
doesn't redeem you. & on this day,
we are reminded that your absence
was influenced by the love you claimed—
this is not sarcasm, but every beginning
deserves an end, just like the way love
renders you, broken.

My Aunt Believes God is Orthodox

says an ancient tale of redemption, a long
salient sermon from the mouth of chaplain
or professor O, who outlines the word
like a road sidelined with trees that knows
every bird by name, by voice, & music.
she takes the front row of every service with her
gele held high, pointing to the heavens as if to say

you must never be far from the eyes of God
as if to say *Lord, accept this sacrifice of praise on my head,*
& Sundays are her ways of mouth-picking
our bodies from their inadequacies, placing them
in her rear mirror as sentinel to chapel,
say it is only where a sermon purges your stomach
from the stench of hell, where scriptures are carved

to take places of your body's longing for sin.
& I do not think God is orthodox,
but supreme, beautiful, & fluid. & could
take shape of the worship of the broken.
like on days the earth wears her pain as pinafore,
God is a cherub with mouthful of intercessions
& praises sandwiched in sandstorms & wildfires. on days

the sins of Sodom perches on landscapes & horizons,
God is Pentecostal, a message of holiness,
a voice at the altar calling men to light & salvation.
on days he feels up to wash off the guilt & scars
on our skins, God is a Baptist, immersing
our bodies in water, rinsing off death, speaking
in the language of thunder & lightening, saying:
this is my beloved in whom I'm well pleased.

Family Tree

it is 11pm, we
waited at the feet of the door
for my father to return.
the night is asleep, but we are
awake— hoping someday, he hears
our footsteps pleading for his return
because nobody replaces a head when
the body still stands in the frame.

Abimbólá

you are a carnival of light.
like butterflies, you break
every silence with flying,
with the colour of your wings.

our love was a war against distance
& desires, your light knows the
ruin that is in my body & my darkness
knows your body as therapy. it knows
your breasts as pillow of tenderness.

that night, you filled the room
with your body & poetry
leaped into my mouth with
love & bubble yearnings
how I longed to part the red sea
between your legs & walk you
to womanhood, to the clouds
with your blood leaving its
footprint in the sky & in my heart.

I loved you, but your body was
too full of God for my excesses.
my darkness is home in itself & I do
not want the ecstasy of light in a
body waterlogged with grief.

Holy Ground

when the church prays
we claim our heart is at peace
we claim nobody burns incense
at the temple, we claim God speaks
through the walls, we claim at every
junction of this end, we embrace love
but we share hypocrisy. when church
prays, we say we have broken sins
with hearts of gold— when we know not
how flames are created through ashes
then why do claim heaven dwells among us
when dog still eat dog?

**PHASE TWO:
Breaking News**

Notes on War

In memory of the Libyan civil war, 2011.

it slumps your country into cold silence/ thickens the sky with smoke &
elegies/gunshots & voices trapped in the air/ say no space for open revival/ for the birds
to sing another song.

the skull of a man whose body is missing from the missile stares at you/ it feels like a
hand is holding your eyes in a loop/ & you do not know how to unsee this terror

or where to say enough of the violence/ of the bullets tearing down walls/ eating souls/
& leaving their bodies as leftovers of war.

it's 2011/ on the world map/ you trail the contours bounding your country/ your voice
an earthquake close to orgasm says / *home/ home/ do not happen to me.*

you break into a tremor/ learned to speak in the language of ruin/ that mother tongue
bloated with the ache of loss & memory/ you learn to speak for the boy collecting his
father's bones from a puddle of blood.

bit by bit/ ruin by ruin/ your body folds and mourn into itself,

suddenly you are empty like your country/ broken like the walls of your city/ beaten
down like your father's house to a piece of wreckage.

suddenly, you understood the complexities of fire/ & could tell the smell of a burning
body from a tyre/ that is the thing with war/ it terrifies you to the marrow/ strips
you of home till you are a deserted house filled with hollows / & silence/ & wounds/ &
dead voices.

at the refugee camp / few miles to the Mediterranean/ a girl from Tripoli is wailing
into the night/ she said the war took everything/ you are one in loss/ you embraced
her/your silence, a response to her grief.

a soldier said it is time to go/ to flee from home/ this mouth of war/ your feet
contemplates the death & wreckage of things as you walk between corpses towards the
sea.

He Reads a News Bulletin About the Coup in West & Central Africa in the 20th Century

After Feranmi Ariyo's 'He Reads a Cancer Booklet'

Because every revolution starts this way
starts with a heart pain has shown the end of itself
before the hand picks violence to freedom.

Because he wants to make sense of the greed and inordinate
desire for power spreading like wildfire across the continent.

Because in Niamey after the coup, the city raised her voice to the
sky and danced with joy.
Sometimes, nothing heals faster than been liberated from the wrath of your own
kinsmen.

Because you do not push a man to the wall and ask him to hold his peace,
some walls are mirror, they show you how ugly monarchy looks on you.

Because when the junta took over power, they were saving Sahel from the democrat,
from men who pass democracy as baton from their stomach to their children.
They invented a room to say enough of economic stagnation.
They spoke for the dead, for men gunned too soon by insurgencies.

Because the colonial masters forgot their souls here
and the men in power inflict pain in remembrance of them.

Because he learned that every coup is a means to peace and order,
which is to say there is an end to terror,
which is to say your country do not feel like home because
the head of the house is no father figure but a selfish thing.

Because in Bamako, the muezzin's call for prayer after the first coup was a call to
tenderness,
the strings of local musicians playing the Kora outside the grand mosque is response
to the sacrifice of our fore-bearers, a redemption sound spamming across
time and history.

Because he ran his fingers through the map of Africa

and it hurts where it is not bleeding, and where it is bleeding are cities with broken walls, towns with sad stories of blood, women mourning their dead and children trafficked away from home.

Because he knows we are nothing but ruins and victims of law.

Because he wants to know the brand of spell plaguing his country, and maybe understand the height of cruelty that could make a man sit on his country's fortune, while his countrymen groan in silence for survival.

Bedtime

for Mobbad

nights like this, the stars are
scared to shine, the moon is too afraid
to walk alone. & every window is closed
to the end. this is an emergency—
because every water here dissolves before
it reaches the tide. they say there is no smoke
without fire; but sometimes, fire burns the
innocent without a trace of smoke
the street is angry again, because
a boy embraces dust for his passion
& now, the world wants to hear
his sounds play on the lips of every bird
because in a country like this;
justice is fought with a broken body.

Blood on the Bible

In memory of Owo massacre, June 5, 2022.

at the middle of the mass,
the priest raised lamentations towards
heaven for a voice from God when
they aimed their AKs at the cathedral,
turned worship into a barbecue of bodies.
the image of blood on the bible
stayed with me, said you are Nigerian
till you are massacred into a citizen
of heaven, till you fall asleep in the
grave with a heart full of grace.
it said peace be unto the world, unto
the dead who died at the moment
between their faith, unto the wild
holding these saints in a trance before
joining their souls with the songs of angels.
the image said even God is not
left out of the bleeding of the earth.

There is the Music of Heaven in All Things

the room where our bodies are
strings with a tongue of their own
knows this, knows your body is
a soprano singer that hits its highest
note when touched, or struck
with desires that streams from the neck
to the soul, knows my body is an
alto singer in harmony with every
song your body produces, and this
is divine, for every night we sing,
an angel on a piano eulogizes God,
calls him by a name where everything
lives in eternal love, where beauty strives
like flowers growing on a broken pavement.
baby, every resurgence begins this way,
every renewal begins from a song
that fills the room with vocals,
I know this because what becomes
of our togetherness is a ritual,
something the heavens do out of praise
and I do not know what music flourishes
heaven like this symphony, this worship,
this slow pacing of a mouth and heartbeat,
this making of wonders from the
chaos of an aching world.

Imole

for Ilerioluma (mobbad)

every dying begins from the heart,
we carry emptiness till we are full of silence,
till our bodies become light enough to float on water.
the words we set free are the echoes we become.
there is a place in your voice where birds sing the dead to life.

before your absence broke the world into sadness,
the storm inside you left a sinking ship in your voice and no angel
to calm the storm, no hand to steady the sea that is your body.
to be free, you left your soul on the street, in the heart
of survivors like you with no one but God.

grief is a love death cannot end,
light cannot be hidden in a coffin.
our lives are rooms with equal measure of trauma and gratitude.
at the dusk of our days, we will be nothing but wonders of the world forged
into silhouettes, broken as mist, as dust rising to the sky with songs.

There is the Music of Heaven in All Things (II)

for Ukraine, after Russia's invasion

you realized this
after the first explosion,
after a bullet reduced a boy
in your eyes to nightmare
and your father stuttered
into a dying thing.

after the cry of mothers
filled the air with elegies
and ghosts of men given
to the wrath of war,

firepower from the mouth of armored
tanks held your city in a loop
like a hand holding knife to a body.
a voice from the wreckage
in your neighborhood
said the Russian army has invaded the city
and there is nowhere safe,

nowhere to shut a gun from
its anger, nowhere to live without
violence preying on bones.

and to survive is to flee
to leave home behind you
like outrunning your shadow
in a race for survival.

and to survive is to come
to the understanding
that nowhere is home enough
to pull terror by the hair
and drag her out the door,
that home is also a pain
that cuts through the faces
in your heart to your memory,

and to survive is to walk away
from everything your tender
hands nurtured into blooming

that is the problem with war.
it tears you apart
and leave you to the
stitches of pain and loss.

war barbecues every body
it touches into a piece
of ruin, or meat or something
dead on the inside with
echoes and images.

because there is the music
of heaven in all things,
even in something with
a heartbeat— and war
have a heart and we
are its heartbeat,

which is to say every
thumping of blood in war's
artery is a burning ritual,
a house rising to the sky in flames
or a beloved watching
his life flash in his eyes
before his last breath,
before a sword hacks his
bones to a dead memory.

which is to say every thumping
of blood in war's artery is a country
losing her heritage to the
rage of bomb and missiles.

see, there is the music of heaven
in all things, even in terror.

Chaos From The Back Door

let's pretend we are dead
in this city
& breathe
from every places that
buries our happiness—
from places where the sun
spread through giant doors,
from places where the stars
dance with burnt bodies
& scream through their eyes,
from places like Lagos, 45
boys & 15 girls protested
for water, but they found
fire on their way.
let's pretend we do not
listen to the radio
even though the radio says—
we are birds meant to fly
but not every bird
fly to their abode alive.

Blasphemy

*“On 12 May 2022, Deborah Samuel Yakubu, a second-year student,
was killed by a mob of Muslim students in Sokoto, Nigeria, after being
accused of blasphemy against Islam.”*

if the stones bruised the psalms in your
throat before they flattened down your
body to a memory in the pool of blood,
or if there was a prayer at the end of
your plea before they broke your bones
to gory pieces of silence, I cannot say,
but this poem is where evening sky
beckoned your spirit into her bosom,
where they set your body ablaze
and the smoke formed a cloud of grief
across Sahara, across tv screens
while mouths pour libations on your soul,
while rages of *allahu akbar* fumed the air
that pipe-lined your body to wildness,
they said nothing must be left of a blasphemer
not even her ashes or memory or body
and my heart ached from this terror,
how a man could burn another man and not feel
a thing, and not feel the weight of death in his hands,
how a man could maim a body into dirge
and say there is love in his heart.
forgive the eyes that hid in the dark
while their temper marked your body,
they do not want to die or leave the world with
trauma, with the pain of dying by the sword
in the hands that once held their names.
that evening, in the ache of setting sun,
I heard the birds setting your soul free with
their elegies and became a castle of misery.
we must never forget the death of girls
justice never found in their graves.
I weaved your face into chrysanthemum and
mourn every night your bloom allures a butterfly.

Gaza

when the world runs,
we bow our heads into bottles of fear
because the world is
a lonely sea craving for waves
soon, we will write the history
with blood, when nobody cares
of how we grow & become thorns
with broken bodies in a society
where the streets no longer rest
before another gunshot is launched.

PHASE THREE:
Love Making

Hardcore

every downpour rains
on your chin, as the wetness
soften your belly button.
the walls in the room points
at you—because the colours
in your voice are red
& blue. another name for ecstasy
you said another way
to draw the moon at your back
is to lay you to rest in your pool
but it is not raining, & we do lay
when the body is too dry to cum.

Sex is Art

or what do you call the
fusion of bodies to light a fire?
meaning this body is a sacred altar
waiting for sacrifice of love to happen
it is Gods', it is the beauty a touch makes of it.
meaning this body is music,
an array of notes waiting to be stringed
into a burning melody, & a finger
digging deep into your skin is a voice saying
your body is home & meant to be loved,
to be returned to, after a lover's error.
meaning this body is rehab & everything
that comes into its shore comes into grace.
I tell you, sex is art & a hand caressing
your skin is an artist on a quest
to the core of your soul, a sculptor
peeling & filing every layer of your
being to birth a masterpiece,
it is a painter arraying the colours of a
quiet room & rhythm of your heartbeats
to paint orgasm on the canvass of your body.

Wet Dream

in the dream | your skin was the first to burst into water
after the ritual of touching | the alchemy of hands gestating
on bodies with desire | a gaseous longing to be rippled into firestorm.

followed electrically by my body | a language you speak to be alive,
to be touched | as if to say you are no river | without something swimming
in you | as if to say you are no woman | without a mouth nibbling you to orgasm.

we come together | & the world becomes lucid with | the passion
that is our medley | we clink our souls | & she moans from our bedroom,
even the night is | accustomed to our artistry | our routine of bustling & burning.

we come empty | away from the eyes of light | our bodies darkened
into an opening | say the mouth of a sea | welcoming the miracle of love into
its saltiness | say the mouth of war | clanking sweat & blood to a pool of pleasure.

this dream is the place | where home was first created from a deep sleep,
where a rib is also | a rod breaking through water | & we are nothing but another
story of lovers making love | leaving their footprints in the night of time.

Coal City Girl

I came to you as a white lily,
as a man disinfected with sex & blood,
no woman's bone stuck in my throat, nothing.
you called it inhibition, that it is not good
for man to live without desires, without
a hole to home his soul on dark days.
& I do not want to tell you about waiting,
do not know how to stop your hands
from tampering with my otherness,
maybe it is the way you carried you,
the way your body was a door & a road
to the divinity of things— I cannot say,
but we were always at the moment between
the rising of heartbeats & the tingling
of emotions & your hands knows
the art that is my body, it understands
the science of a man's thirst.
you unzipped me with a handful of your longing,
led me into the inner rooms of your thigh,
said this is the place where what is coming
& going carries the memory of blood,
I never knew you meant sex is sacred
& this thing we shared will transcend time
until we said the grace & parted with memories.
now that we are worlds apart, what do I do
with this crumb of your soul left in my life?

Nkem

we met at the crossroad of life,
your body, a country surrounded by hills
& birds casting desolate skies into poetry.
there was something in your eyes,
in the way it dances to the song in my blood
& long for memories that said you know boys as stories that have
survived drought,
as erotic gospel in bodies devoid of light,
& you must build your tent here & show me the spaces between
your legs where blood is waterlogged,
where the earth softens men into miracle.
the night our lips first clinked to silence
& I tasted your mother on your tongue,
I knew I was at the verge of becoming,
that I will walk into your nakedness & my body
will join the long lines of men in my father's house,
I knew I was at the place where I must learn
to tame fire, to throw my yearnings at a woman's rain for wetness
& jerking joy.
they said the striking of bodies like matchsticks
to set the world ablaze from the bosom of a room is sex,
you said it is more, other ways to understand
how easily a body can slip into metaphor,
one moment wild, another wet,
& you who have tasted divinity, skinned bodies
from chemistry to alchemy knew your place in my body,
plugged your nipples in my mouth to suck your distress into desires,
held my breath hostage before moaning,
& whispering & calling me home,
home to the sweetness of your clitoris,
come dear wanderer, come, baby cum.

PHASE FOUR:
Life & Everything in Between

Tipsy

in the bar, dancing with mixture of tequila & salt
as we drink 7 cups with multiple shots of tequila
the walls grew orgasm in our body, as we sprayed to the last
the dj's music becomes edible to chew— & we drag ourselves
into a pool of naked girls; they say music redeems the soul
when your body becomes lifeless— & now, we are in a red bar
holding onto girls' horn like Christ. everything becomes little
like the back of a shadow. as the music plays, our bodies
flirt with the pole; we sight snaps of lights capturing our
humble nakedness, but we were too short of lives to come into
conciseness. the next day unfold, as we were called to see the sights
of our nakedness on tv. & now we realize that too much of anything
makes the body behave like everything.

In the City

after listening to Brymo's 'In the city'

there's something missing
in the way morning sun greet bodies
at the park, in the way a stranger bump
into your shadow by the roadside,
in the way the city is a chorus of voices
& jostling of bodies in the eyes of the earth.

it's like the joy of motherhood.

a woman carrying her smile with bandages looks
like the catastrophe of war, like absence,
& this is how to grieve what is lost,
how to live in a body a daughter is missing.

it's like little children running around
like fireflies, making childhood memories
with moonlight & sand castles.

this is how you know war ate the children
before dawn, how the sound of bullets
turns a city into heartbreak & dirge,
& a black abyss with no strains of air.

It's like the warmth of home, of the places
where love live in walls & voices.

on CNN, in the eyes of a Somalian refugee
is an empty room littered with remnants of war,
she said the bomb landed on the roof
of the city, tore the walls & her father apart
I searched her voice for a door,
for an exit from the wreckage gridlocked
in her heart, I found nothing, only hands
collecting bones from a pool of blood.

When the World Falls Apart

night sits//
in between the earth's stomach
watching ants craving for sweet
beneath bitterness//they said
it is an adventure//that when you
seek for stars inside night's pocket—
it is you//storytelling the image of
fancy moons/even the earth
mock God sometimes when
there is traffic in heaven.

&

then//let's prove this
by dancing back into time
well//the night is still lonely
& it is hard to recognize a body
that could

b

e

n

d

into the shape of// G...o...d
when the world is still struggling to STAND

Grey

when you see a boy on the streets
know that he is just a
boy—wanting to survive
without a gun to his head
but nobody knows what
makes a boy different
when his body breaks into pain
just to fill his dreams. you may
ask him, rain slaps him every night
under a broken roof—call him homeless
but his home lives in his pain to be a survivor.

When Race Becomes a Race

the radio says: some dead bodies were
found on a shipwreck moving to Europe
in an illegal route— my mother argued
that they are blacks, my father said,
blacks are too busy filling their pockets
with coins on the streets, my uncle said,
black is death to them, even without
the mention of their names—& i thought
of how every black struggles to fix
their skin in a city set ablaze by people
who claim to have spread confusion in
replace of love. the last time i heard
the radio, it says, another shipwreck
and i wondered how many lives got
bottled up in water because of an identity.

Ask Them What They Wore

like every dead end in darkness
they cannot smell the gravity of every boy
that fell under the rise of their bullets.
they will always say, do not bite the fingers
that fed you— when the fingers are poisoned
what then happens to those fed?
every day, we are reminded of how
running doesn't mean survival
& how their promises ends in their pockets.
when next you pray them into power
remember to ask them what they wore
before what they wear.

London Street

is falling down, falling down, falling down
with a breathing hope it cannot break
nor bend, with a dash of light that rains
on every white being walking on the streets
this is not racism, but every white boy
knows what a black boy looks like
before they mistook us for a monkey
& now the streets are polluted with
war & war as every spin turns to
a battleground filled with hates
we are not guns, but every hates
that touches us tends to pull a trigger
from a distance. when next you hear
London street is falling, know that
nothing falls without a broken record.

Broken Birds Understand Their Stillness

they do
they understand their sad songs
when every door here opens slowly
they understand their burning feelings
when every person here dissolves at the scream of a gunshot
because every black here looks like ritual to them
so we keep getting burnt—call it forced freedom
because black is not a colour to be spelt backward
the street is hot, folding its body to the shape of a mother
a mother building safety and praying her children into heaven
the last time the radio spoke, it says, smiles are now scarce to buy
and tears are the only substances we can afford
we cannot continue to bend bodies just to fit into a photoshop
the newspapers are full, rewriting black men gaining freedom with their
brokenness. keep us alive, do not kill us
we are just children learning the language of tongues
we are now strangers in our own homeland, and our body cannot reject
because every bullet here rents a home in our hearts
and we nurse them with dirty towels made enough to kill us
it is our right to speak, but they said, it is silence.
and we will keep on speaking, because they can only hold us down, not our mind
and definitely not our smell.

Yet, Not Broken

i knew how father pulled his soul
out of his body—
he wanted to spell our names with edible voice
but the next train hijacked his body
& rendered him empty
i have looked at his body many times
i did not see father's face; i only saw
the face of a father whose children
were named after his death—
& how beautiful things dissolve
with edible scream of pain & hurt
before reaching out for survival.

Adeniran Joseph

Tipsy
When The World Falls Apart
Grey
When Race Becomes A Race
Chaos From The Back Door
Hardcore
Ask Them What They Wore
London Street
Third Heaven
Family Tree
Holy Ground
Bedtime
Broken Birds Understands Their Stillness
Gaza
Yet, Not Broken

Olabisi Akinwale

Sex is Art
My Aunty Believes God is orthodox
Blood on the bible
In the city
Àdùfè
Notes on war
There is music of heaven in all things
There is music of heaven in all things (II)
Blasphemy
Wet dream
Abimbólá
Imole
Nkem
He reads a News a Bulletin About the Coup in West & Central Africa in the 20th century
Coal city girl

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Olabisi Akinwale is a writer and poet at night, banker at day. A lover of art and explorer of silence, loss, and beauty, finding an end to grief. A Best of the Net Nominee, Best Student Poet Federal University Lafia 2017, and First Runner-up, PIN (Poet in Nigeria) Poetically Written Prose Contest, 2020. His poem *'At The Twilight of Your Sojourn'* was nominated and won the Itanile Literary Magazine's Award, 2022. His works have appeared in *The Rising Phoenix Review*, *IceFloe Press*, *Agbowo Magazine*, *Itanile*, *Lunaris Review*, and elsewhere. He lives and write from a small town in the Northwest of Nigeria.



Adeniran Joseph is a Nigerian poet, author, and director. His poem *"Home in Bottles of Fear"* and *"Door"* was shortlisted among the Top 100 of The Nigerian Students Poetry Prize, 2018 and 2019 respectively. His poem *"Songs of Dark Rooms"* was shortlisted for Christopher Okigbo Students Poetry Prize in 2018. His works have appeared in *ACEworld Magazine*, *Kalahari Review*, *Parousia Magazine*, *African Writers*, *Barren Magazine*, *8 Poems*, and elsewhere. He believes in the power of words. He hails from Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria.