

Poetry Series

**John Agandin**  
**- poems -**

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**John Agandin()**

# Topsy-Turvy

It is a topsy-turvy world this  
For not the doers that count  
Not the men in the arena  
Not those faces marred by dust and blood  
Not those who walk the path and stumble  
Not those who dare the mighty things  
Who win the glorious triumphs checked by failure  
Not those who spend themselves in worthy causes  
Not those who strive valiantly and err  
Not those who lie sleepless so we sleep  
Not those whose silent sacrifices keep us  
Not those who starve to fill us up  
Not those who die that we might live  
No, the credit belongs not to them  
Honour belongs not to whom it is due!

It certainly belongs not to the shoulder shrugs  
Those feeble souls that recoil at life  
Poor spirits who neither suffer nor enjoy  
Cynical in thought and speech  
Benjamin the donkey pales in comparison  
Who see, hear, and knows but speaks not  
When the elephant treads the tale of the mouse.  
Who dwell in the grey twilight of tranquillity  
Who, fearing the critics, knows but doethnot  
Timid souls that know neither victory nor defeat  
For they quit long before they try  
They die long before their mortality ends  
And are cremated before they are interred.

It is a topsy-turvy world this  
Here, the glory belongs to the critics  
The clanging cymbals and empty barrels  
Who point out ways they care not to tread  
Who show us how the doers stumble  
Who reveal the frailties of the darers  
The experts who have never tried

Whose wagging tongues beguile us daily  
Whose words freeze the marrow in our bones  
Who make their living from pointing fingers  
Stopping the trains in their tracks  
And quieting the birds in mid-song  
They stand impenitent in undignified glory.  
It is a topsy-turvy world this!

John Agandin

# Ash Wednesday

The day and the hour draws nigh  
When all shall return to Him  
Who did form them of word and clay  
And did give to all His own breath  
And set them upon the earth to tend  
And to possess it for a time.  
Before him, all shall stand  
Bare, silent, helpless.  
Fear, you sons of men, tremble!  
Fall prostrate before Him.  
Shred the malice of your heart  
And drop that haughty look  
For of all nails that did stab Him;  
That vain look is most piercing.  
For what are thou, son of man?  
A puff of smoke, wisp of air, dust  
That lingers but for a moment  
And vanishes without trace.  
Why do you now risk His wrath?  
And court His just fury?  
Take this ash upon the brow  
Bend your knee and look not up  
But hasten to declare your fault  
And wail in lamentation:  
"Spare us, O master!  
For our guilt is heavier  
Than ever we can bear"

John Agandin

# Cracking Groundnuts

Some nights, when the moon is happy  
Smiling broadly from its heavenly home.  
A small crowd gathers in the yard;  
Grandma, mother, aunty and the others  
Not forgetting me and three smaller ones.  
Akangriba the dog would be present  
As is the cat meowing around.  
Baba is outside on the dampala[1]  
With a neighbour for company  
An age-old ritual is being enacted,  
And none can be left out.  
A hand reaches into the big bowl  
And grabs a handful of groundnuts,  
Ka, ka, crack! goes the shells,  
Hard-pressed between thumb and index.  
Opened shells are clasped in one hand  
Or dropped in a calabash nearby  
And the ritual is repeated again and again.  
Until our fingers ache, we the little ones.

So we find support in our teeth.  
A seed or two usually remaining  
To keep the jaws busy and sleep at bay.  
When this becomes too frequent,  
We earn a rebuke or two,  
And are driven off to our mats,  
Beside the cracking party,  
Under the grinning moon.  
Though we rest our aching thumbs,  
Our mouths shut grudgingly  
Being denied the pleasure of chewing  
And soon we are fast asleep  
With the sound of cracking groundnuts  
In our dreams...ka, ka, crack!  
In the morning, we stare in wonder  
For all the groundnuts is cracked,  
And carefully stored away.  
Then we wish we had stayed awake,

Or smuggled the nuts in our pockets  
As we went to our mats.  
But it is impossible to do so  
When the moon is so exultant,  
Not to mention the vigilance of mother  
And the mischief of older siblings.

There are some seasons and years,  
When one hears the sound  
Of cracking groundnuts,  
But never sees the precious nuts.  
Those are the hungry years,  
When the groundnut is small,  
And the field to be planted is large,  
And it is too dear to buy more.  
Mother does the cracking  
Alone in the shadows of nightfall  
When all the yawning mouths  
And empty rumbling bellies  
Are gone to their hungry mats.  
In those years, groundnuts  
Are endangered species.  
Even balingka[2] is done in secret  
And summons to join the sowing party,  
Are given with strict admonition  
Not to take any prisoners,  
Or eat any of the wounded,  
As that would awaken appetites  
Too dangerous to pacify.  
But verily, verily we all know  
That all the wounded, dismembered,  
Sick, and shriveled seeds  
Have been meticulously separated  
And jealously hoarded at home,  
To be the foundation  
Of the next wokta[3] soup!

John Agandin

# Heart To Heart

The day was damp and raw  
And I was down and stuck in the doldrums  
But on the powerlines outside my window  
I found two little birds in intimate talk  
As they spruce their feathers away  
With cute little beaks that tweet!  
They sat right next to each other  
With their little feet about the copper wire  
Quite immune to the power coursing within  
And talked forever about heaven knows what.  
I wished I could understand their hearty chat  
So simple, so intimate, so beautiful!  
No Facebook walls, no Messengers,  
No WhatsApp, no Snapchat and emojis  
No Instagram and finger Twitter-ring  
No posts, no comments, and no tagging  
Just good old plain talk, eyeball to eyeball  
With little chance of misunderstanding  
And no thoughtless forwarding of garbage  
I sighed in envy of them and smiled...  
Suddenly the gloomy clouds parted  
And the sun shone brighter than before.  
So my day was saved.

John Agandin

# The House In Balansa

All tattered and battered it stands  
Its unkempt walls lay prostrate  
In obeisance to the earthly force.  
Yet once, it was high and mighty  
Or so we have been told.  
With strong encircling walls  
Filled with strong women and men.  
The cries of infants and the laughters of children  
Ever resounded in it.  
Now it lies broken, bleeding, untended.

Where are the happy children?  
The crying infants?  
The strong men?  
The diligent women?  
They have vanished like smoke,  
All their pride and dignity forgotten.  
For nothing scatters a house  
Like bickering and strife  
Separating blood from blood  
And root from stem  
In vanity, avarice, and envy.

John Agandin

# Village Songs

When the harvest is all done and dusted  
And the fields lie empty and desolate  
When the groundnuts are all plucked  
The Bambara beans dug up roots and all  
When all the sorghum in the field is felled  
And only sharp prickly remnants remain  
When tethering the goats is now ended  
And the boys gain such a relief  
As to sigh with gratitude bordering on piety.

When the shepherds no more chase the sheep  
The cowherds no longer shout at errant bulls  
And the moon is happy enough  
To make the cripple hungry for a walk,  
Do we nightly gather before the house;  
Mothers, fathers, uncles, and aunts,  
Teens, children, toddlers and babies  
Brothers, sisters, nephews, and nieces  
With cousins, bastards and orphans too.

There we tell many a tale and laugh  
Loud, long, shrill or deep throaty laughs  
That rouse the sleeping chickens and ducks.  
We would sing our very hearts out:  
Songs of loving and wooing  
At which we smile and sigh and wink  
Songs of winning and losing  
That teach many a life lesson clear  
Songs of living, fiddling and dying  
At which we may grow morose and pensive  
Songs of war, daring and conquest  
As we dance ourselves lame and dusty.

We play on the sitting logs with stones  
Or on the upturned calabashes  
Or strike the cans with sticks.  
And if the house has any drum set  
And horns or flutes to match  
Then it is a communal affair

The dancing would raise a cloud to heaven  
And the singing would wake a drunken god  
Until we see the jealous moon  
Hurrying to her bed  
And the insomniac rooster flapping his wings  
To announce the approach of dawn  
Only then do we break up the revelry  
And departing in groups or pairs  
Make for our weary mats  
Hungry and satisfied both at once.

John Agandin

# Bird Scaring

They come in droves and drones  
Winging wildly overhead at great speed  
Making straight for the millet crop  
Standing all white in the fields:  
The promise of a bumper harvest!  
Men, women, and kids rise up in arms  
To defend their labour and sweat  
Against these marauding birds;  
These little ravenous beasts,  
That come whirling and twirling  
Nibbling, gnawing, hacking!  
Destroyers and usurpers, the lot of them!  
They suck, slurp, and scatter  
And bring to naught months of sweat.  
For this, we howl and yell and scream  
And curse them all morning  
Till we are hoarse and hissy.

We all rise before the sun  
And divide the fields between us  
Every mother and every father  
That has toiled in the burning sun  
Through planting and weeding  
Now stand guard and ready  
Keeping a sharp eye on the fields  
Every kid in every compound  
Is armed with a can and a stick  
And with our shrill voices;  
We must howl and bark and bang  
To stay them and all their kind  
And spare the ripening millet  
From their toothless beaked jaws  
Till at last, the harvest comes.

Over the fields, the banners fly  
Through the nets, the wind whistles  
Overall, the scarecrows stand and sway

Waving their open arms at all.  
But though they scare the crows,  
They frighten you not, little birdies  
In their open arms, you nestle  
And mock our wearisome efforts  
Pitiless, merciless the lot of you!  
We have barked, we have harped  
We have clapped, we have flapped  
We have jumped, we have leaped  
We have chanted, we have sang  
And we have pounded the cans sore  
But still, you have persisted in coming  
Will you not relent, will you not tire?  
Little vicious devils, do answer me!

John Agandin

# Looking Through The Window

Today I looked through my window  
Silent and absent-mindedly.  
I saw the verdurous crowns of many trees  
The multi-coloured roofs of many homes  
And idle white clouds hanging lazily.  
It all looks familiar I thought.  
I saw it yesterday and the day before  
So I thought.  
But did I?

I blinked at the unsettling thought.  
For I have never really looked  
At the sylvan glade outside my window  
Though I see it every day.  
So then, I stood to stare;  
At the deep, verdant green of the trees  
All lusty and still in the smokeless air.  
And yet, and yet, some are in flower!  
A thousand red and yellow blossoms  
On three trees just outside my window,  
Glittering in the early bright sunlight.  
At this profound beauty, I stared amazingly!  
And smiled at its contentment and flourish.  
A warm glow stole over my heavy heart  
And the weight of the coming day  
Was made lighter and easier at the sight.

John Agandin

# When I Die

When I die,  
Cry not your heart out  
Nor weep any tears at my grave  
I will not see you, cry for me now.

When I die,  
Wear no sorrows or regrets  
And bear neither grief nor pain on account of me  
I will be singing Hallelujahs.

When I die,  
Do not come dressed in fancy clothes  
Smelling like a thousand lavenders  
I could not admire you then, dress for me today.

When I die,  
Read me no long tributes,  
And compose me no epic verses  
I will not hear you, praise me today.

When I die,  
Put me quietly in my grave  
Give your money to the poor  
And your tears to the oppressed  
And leave me in peace and quiet to rest.

John Agandin

# Farming Hymns (Kpari Yiila)

Weeding the fields couldn't be more delightful!  
Though backs are breaking in the noonday heat  
Palms blistering from gripping rigid hoe sticks  
Sweat trickling down the groins of labouring kinsmen  
And all their muscles are taut with effort,  
The smell of dark loamy earth freshly upturned  
Releases a singing trapped in the lungs of men

The thrill of the singing banishes all weariness  
And even the weakest muscle would gain  
Such momentum as to break the moist earth with iron  
Whilst hearts throb with the harmonious choruses  
Hymns that at once inspire, admonish, teach, and entertain  
Singing of the village news as much as the secrets of men  
One is forced to pay as much heed as to work harder

Every drop of gin sent coursing into half-empty bellies  
Lends leverage to even unwilling tongues  
And the sweetness of agreeable voices are released  
Every deed of men is censured or eulogized  
From sexual prowess to adulterous relations  
From nocturnal domestic quarrels to miserly neighbours  
From mere gluttony to revolting avarice

The murderous scourge of stubborn ghosts and witches  
The uncharitable host and the bitter taste of his pito  
The sex-starved bachelor who knocked up the village retard  
The man who jumped into a barn to pull back his foreskin  
The boastful imbecile who spends all the day at the local tavern  
Whilst his home and fields are overrun with wild weeds  
All are but themes for singing delightful tunes.

As the whisperings and theories are intoned,  
The hoes rise in unison and the weeds are slain  
Precious crops are freed from their strangling hold  
And hopes for a good harvest are heightened  
Whilst in the house, women feverishly scrub  
Bowls and calabashes to prepare the evening meal  
And the happily-worried host has children chasing his prized ram.

John Agandin

# Unsung Heroines

The sun is searing hot and pitiless  
Hurling down fierce fuming rays.  
The earth roasts under his angry gaze  
As meat over blazing coals.  
Everything bows in submission  
Men, birds, beasts, and beetles  
Trees, shrubs and every blade of grass  
Droops in defeat and compliance.

On this sweltering March noon ablaze  
Upon a deserted torrid path in defiance  
A solitary figure lumbers on.  
Bent forward with a stern grit  
And a double load of wood and flesh,  
Labouring on, towards  
The distant din of a village market!

A mother, carrying her precious son  
And a hefty load of firewood  
Trudging to the market  
To buy salt and pepper  
That she may feed her family!  
Her man, probably lounging in a bar  
Had shoved at her a bowl of millet  
With nothing else for soup.

She had gone to the mortar  
To thresh that millet with sore palms  
And upon her grinding stone  
Milled it all into flour.  
She went to the river with a big pot  
Till all the bigger pots at home brimmed over.  
But not before she had swept  
All the house and compound,  
Mended every crack and crevice,  
Scrubbed every cheng and chimoin spotless  
And pounded her rags in the river soap-less.

There she goes down the burning path!

Along the wearied unwavering road,  
With hardly enough cover for her feet  
Bleeding from the blistering path.  
For the journey did not start from home  
Though it began there in the morning  
When she rose at cock crow for the forest

And tore through thorns and stumps  
To gather the precious firewood  
That she cannot afford to use at home  
But must of need send to the market  
So that she could buy salt and pepper  
That the children may not sleep hungry.

This little baby boy that she carries  
She will feed and cuddle and treat  
And blow his nose with her mouth  
And clean and cover his lidless rectum  
Until he becomes one day a man  
To shout and rave and rant at her  
And beat her up in drunkenness  
To show that he is a man  
Living in a man's world.

She will return down this road  
Jostling with many other mothers  
Destined for smoke-filled kitchens  
Dimly lit by smoking kerosene lamps  
To steer T.Z. for many hungry mouths.  
Whilst the men wait upon the rooftops  
With peppers and gin in their blood  
Impatient to leap upon them  
Like locusts upon fresh green saplings  
And thrust them full of more little babies

Hail the women! Hail the mothers of Buluk!  
Hail the unsung heroines of the land!  
Yes, indeed they are...  
The blood that waters the plains green.  
The manure that feeds our crops  
The donkeys that carry our loads  
The wood that feeds our cooking fires

The breasts that nourish our young  
The menders of our walls  
The nurses of our aged  
The housekeepers  
The dishwashers  
The laundry machines  
And etcetera without end...  
They are the women that make us men  
Hail the mothers! Hail!

John Agandin

# Why Ever Do We Dream?

I heard a man had a dream once  
It was a bold dream  
And they shot him down cold  
Dreams are dangerous things!  
I also had a dream, once  
It wasn't a bold dream  
And I woke up sweating;  
Dreams are scary things!  
Why ever do we dream?  
I ask.

Yet how may we sleep  
If we cannot dream?  
And how may we live  
If our dreams be quenched?  
I say, let us all dream...  
Let the children dream;  
And let the elders dream  
What does it matter  
If we shoot at God and miss?  
Dreams are the salt of life  
Without them, life is tasteless,  
Worthless, pointless, stale  
I should be glad of an early grave!

John Agandin

# When All The Love Is Gone

Behold the light fades and rises not  
And the cute little stars hide in shame  
The moon fears to show her face  
And day and night become as one.  
Here the heavens are shut up tight  
And the earth cries out in thirsting  
All that is lusty and green fades

The streams return to the mountains  
And the oceans pour out their eternal rage  
The darkness return from the abyss  
And the mountains explode in anger  
Burning all that was once green and fair  
Vipers come out in the day to hunt  
And the crows hold a banquet at noon

Alas the nations bare their teeth  
And the rulers rage in drunkenness  
Oh how kith devour kin  
And mothers drown their infants  
To entertain their nightly guests.  
All roads lead nowhere  
And the gardens turn into graveyards.

No, my love, our love cannot die.  
For when all the love is gone,  
When we let it all wither and die,  
There would be nothing left,  
No green, no life,  
No memory, no beauty,  
No flowers, no colour,  
Only nasty empty darkness.

I would love through the pain  
Smile through the tears  
Bleed to keep the grass green  
Swallow all my foolish pride  
Least all the love should die  
And all life becomes a resentful remembrance

Of all that was once good and fair!

John Agandin

# The Math Teacher

With light nervous steps, he trod in  
As one aroused from an upshot of gin  
And stood abashed, a shadow ill-prepared,  
His sealed quivering lips unassured  
Whether it be fractions or portions  
Change of subject or meaningless expressions  
Pondering where and how to begin  
Whilst they continued their din  
Not heeding the unsettled guest  
Framed in the doorway aghast  
Clutching a heavy textbook  
With a finger locked in the nook.

A well-pressed shirt that daintily sat  
And shoes black as night pat  
Were all they could admire of him.  
For he could neither add nor multiply  
Save by that book he held to comply.  
And he stammered badly enough  
To send them reeling to the north.  
He was thrust upon them without a session  
And they could instruct him with fair revision.  
But he messed up his very first lesson  
(‘He’s killing us’ she said)  
So they bundled whatever standing he had  
And sent it through the window hard  
Slapping their hands together as if to say  
Teaching Maths is not a child’s play!

John Agandin

# Fathers

There is a house, half in ruins  
At the other end of the village  
Battered and ravaged by wind and rain  
Half the walls lie prostrate  
As in obeisance to an unseen god.  
The mud roof has fallen through  
The thatch roof cries for a layer  
All the timber is rotten with age  
And there is no gate or door  
To cover the nakedness of that house  
If only there is a father to build!

There is a field down yonder  
Where thick and tall weeds grow  
And strangle the infant crop;  
The millet is yellow and dwarfish  
The corn is stunted and cobless  
And the cowpea run podless  
There is no hope for a harvest  
All are accounted as forage  
For no blade to the sward is laid.  
Because there is no father to till!

There is a boy and sister in the city  
Their beauty you must look hard to see  
For their nostrils run like streams  
And their nails are long and black.  
Flies and all insects go after them  
They sleep in sight of the highway  
Screeching tires and tooting horns  
Are their music by day and by night  
Both are pregnant without child!  
Their coverings are over-sized  
And dyed with many shades and hues  
But cannot cover all their sores.  
They tramp the streets, dust to dawn  
For there is no father to provide!

They grow up but slowly

Each left to his own devices  
He is grimmy and heartless  
And is a terror on that highway  
He rapes and plunders for a living  
And for herb and gin sold his soul  
She lies with men and hounds  
And bears a child before breasts  
Littering the land with fetuses  
Whose cries fill the air with dread  
But she is long deaf and dead  
Because there is no father to guide!

A mother sits helpless beside  
A shack half eaten by mice  
Sorrow and penury has withered  
The once glowing dark obsidian skin.  
Her sunken eyes no longer beamed  
Her ample bosom is shriveled  
Her generous back long wasted  
Her slender waist no longer swayed  
Her lips are dry and unkissed  
Her heart unloved, hips uncaressed  
For there is no man, nay, no lover!  
To protect that once admired beauty

Father is the sage and the seer  
The guide, the guardian, and the lover.  
The hands that build, that till, that make  
That provide, that protect, that care  
Who can make a father?

John Agandin

# Lines Written On A Rainy Day In Bergen

The rain is falling all year round  
Falling, falling, falling... everywhere!  
It rains on the mountains and hills  
And on the shops in the valleys.  
In the parks, lakes, and fields  
On trees, shrubs, and grass it falls.  
Bergen is rain and rain is Bergen.

It rains on men, mothers and babies,  
And on the cars on the road.  
It falls on the umbrellas in the city,  
The snow on the mountain peaks,  
And on the ships at sea.  
Overall, it gives no quarter.

At daybreak, noontime, and sundown  
And through the watches of the night.  
The rain knows no seasons here.  
It falls whether the leaves fall or sprout  
And heeds no summer nor winter  
Knows no vacations or holidays.  
It falls whether you wink or blink  
Falls whether it's cloudy or sunny.  
It falls whether you cry or laugh  
And spares no weekend or day.  
You cannot miss the rain in Bergen  
And you've got to love its devotion!

John Agandin

# The Kayayei's Tale

I walk my beat in many cities and markets  
Up and down in the perspiring sun.  
From Tamale to Kumasi Kejetia  
From Techiman to Takoradi market circle  
The mighty Accra is my home base.  
Whether it be Nima, or Mallam Atta,  
Agbogbloshie or Makola, I am there.  
Down I come with a head pan in hand.  
To tread the markets and lorry parks.  
From six to six each day, rain or shine,  
I carry my wares; other people's loads  
Who strut daintily behind me  
Watching intently, anxiously,  
Whilst I shout and nudge my way in the crowd,  
Lest I should be lost with their goods.  
Yet when I finally arrive, these opportunists;  
These women, mothers, genteel ladies and lazy men  
Even they, begrudge me my wage.

Foxes may have holes and birds have nests  
But I, a mother, a daughter, have neither.  
I make my bed in lidless shacks and verandas  
Where I chase elusive sleep on weary pillows  
I am the prey of mosquitoes  
And all blood-sucking creatures.  
Unscrupulous men lurk about me  
To plunder both my purse and womanhood  
And make of me a penniless mother  
To carry a double load thereafter  
And shout and shove through the same crowds.

Shop-owners scowl at me, drivers curse me  
Shoppers call me scornful names  
Unless they're after my wares; my head  
To carry loads they're too decent to carry.  
I am paraded with my head pan at rallies  
As if I am not me without it or perhaps

To show the politician that I have no job.  
How can you possibly know?  
You the scowler, the curser, the labeler  
You the gentleman, the lady, the man, the woman,  
You the politician, the executive, the big man,  
I would have you know,  
That I am not, I become!

John Agandin

# The Baobab Tree

On an hallowed spot at home,  
Stands a tall, mighty baobab.  
Steeped in myth and legend  
A massive and hefty girth  
Thick, wide and stout arms.  
Bare in the rainless moons  
And green cloaked with the showers.  
From every house, it calls;  
Girls and boys, men and women  
The old and the young,  
The nimble and the slow,  
Birds, bees, beasts, and bats.  
To all and sundry it welcomes  
With food, sweetness, and shelter.  
In its arms; shrouded or naked,  
Or under its shaded bare ground,  
We play, we laugh, we rest, we court.

For the fresh nourishing leaves  
Our mothers fight the caterpillars.  
And for the lip-smacking nectar,  
We wrestle the bees at dawn.  
Fearing neither their ominous hum,  
Nor the eventual virulent sting.  
Devouring the budding flowers,  
Into tummies that squirm in protest,  
And for fruit, fresh or dry at last,  
We climb and climb and climb  
Passing from limb to limb  
Until the entire land lies at our feet!  
Looking down, our legs quake in fright  
Our young hearts pound furious  
And our feet are jelly.

Hail the mighty baobab!  
Hail the mothering love  
Peerless in height and size  
Great in aid and shade.  
Defiant in the parched land

Neither the drought nor the flood fears.  
But the mighty Harmattan mocks  
And the fierce blazing sun scoffs.  
Blooming or shedding the greenery  
At her own sweet will and time  
And her fruit are constant in season.  
Anger or malice she knows not  
Neither a grumble nor a wail she utters  
But within her big beating heart keeps  
All the pain and scars of a harassed land.  
If we but learn her ways,  
We should be twice blest over  
In this harsh and remorseless world!

John Agandin

# Crying In The Rain

I do my crying in the rain  
Shrieking with the thunder  
Howling with the wind  
So that my tears are washed away  
My sorrow is laid to rest awhile  
And peace returns to my heart  
But when the clouds are spent  
I wear a smile and walk around

Thus no one sees my tears  
No one hears the pain in my voice  
No one marks the grief on my face  
No one knows the pain in my heart  
For I weep with the clouds  
And my healing is in the rain  
That washes and dries my tears  
With a million wet kisses

I do my crying in the rain  
Not because I am strong  
But because I am alone  
Many weep on my shoulder  
I find no shoulder to weep on  
So I feign strength  
And wait for cloudy skies  
To pour out my grief in full

He is strong, he is solid  
He can take it all, they say  
And know not that I am weak  
And poor and frail even as they  
But maybe not for I do not cry  
No, not open bitter tears as they  
Yet I too do cry  
I do my crying in the rain.

John Agandin

# A Tale Of Footprints

Take a walk down the village path  
And read the tales on its face.  
A thousand tales told and retold  
In the marks of those gone before.  
Some full, some half trodden down  
Some giantish, some dwarfish  
Some clear, some blur, vanishing.  
All equally lie, telling their tales  
For who cares to read.  
Tales of hope, tales of fear  
Some of terrors and of tragedies  
And many strides of happy success.

Long I stood over those silent tales  
Reading as far as the eye could see  
For many are the voices on the path  
Some speak in the center of the path;  
And leave deep tales in the dust  
That are fast trodden under and lost.  
Others speak on the edges  
Brushing thorns and stubs and weeds  
And hardly leave an impression  
But the dying weeds tell their tale.  
By their effort the path grows.  
Many diverge into the thicket  
And still many converge on it  
But the path leads on and on.

It is man's duty to follow it  
For to take the path, all must  
And everyone leaves silent prints  
Where they meet or take the path  
And those prints add a tale  
To the story of the path  
Methinks there are many stories  
But found there is actually just one,  
The tale of a village path  
Of feet that came and went  
And left their story behind

Silent footprints on a path...

John Agandin

# Everyone Sang

It was a beautiful night, and dusty  
And we were all numb and droopy  
Whilst the preacher droned on  
And the rest of the world lived on

An expectant harmattan swirled around  
As stemmed waters must feel bound  
Yet gyrating as one tickled in erogenous places  
On and on and on towards the climax

The cold outside was threatening to come in  
And we held our sweaters to ourselves  
As we gazed at the clock ahead  
Inching ever closer to the new birth

Suddenly everyone's tongue was loosed  
Everyone's voice was lifted in praise  
And sang in generous grateful tones  
And leapt in joyous ecstasy

Life and beauty poured out as at sunrise  
And my secret heart glowed with love  
And gratitude for life, family, friends  
Oh that the singing would never end!

John Agandin