

Poetry Series

**Orike Didi**  
**- poems -**

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## Orike Didi()

Orike Ben Didi, PhD was born in Ogbogu Town in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria. He is a realist poet and writes more from the heart. His imagery and diction are taken from elements of his African world.

# A Lost Song

I don't stand out famous  
Like Mandela's cell  
Or Soyinka's cloud head  
Or obj's false faces.

I stand out dumb  
Like a sore thumb, a pain  
Exiting sudden fragrance across seas  
To nostrils that wait.

I don't wish for a papa's grey hair  
But to sit, rocking on his lair,  
Singing to the floating winds  
A song lost in the wombs of a memory.

Orike Didi 04: 15 DWP,03/August/2008.

Orike Didi

## Across Fallen Walls (3)

We are all bugs  
Running around the globe  
With words as weapons.

Metaphors are horrors  
Similes are the killings-  
And I carry imagery  
Dangling from my neck as amulets.

Those who survive the war  
Will be politicians who lied.

Orike Didi

## Dead Trees Speak (5)

I sit at an angle  
At the table head  
To watch children of men.

Full blooded deceit on rampage  
With false wisdom of struggle.

A layer of evil venom  
Behind eyelids of decency

Emptiness, complete, merges with ignorance  
Hidden in the rib cage of animal.

Cocoyam planters, always plotting  
Always busy harvesting plantain.

Wrong-headed beasts, facing mirrors  
But standing upside down.

Tongues arriving one hour earlier  
Than the brain, the heart nowhere to be found.

Apes in shrouds of self-disdain  
Struggling to think politics.

And I sit back  
Laughing at a thousand pretences  
And reverted into my ancient silence,  
That great answer to fools.

Orike Didi

## Dead Trees Speak (6)

With all powers  
Bestowed on me  
I make bold to say that;  
'I, the poet  
Will have my head  
Sit on my neck'  
Not minding others losing theirs  
For a lunch box of cyanide.  
The crowd will come  
And on exit dissolve into imagery;  
They'll stand tall in my poetry.

Those who sold their souls  
Were the first to lose their heads,  
Those who played the ghouls  
Were buried at midterm.

We did not dance on their graves,  
We only laughed at them.

Orike Didi

## Dead Trees Speak (7)

Not all laughter  
Comes in times of joy;  
Some come in moments of pain.

It loathes to watch children  
Walk boldly into assured death,  
But what do we do? Cry for them?

It's offending to watch young graves  
Covered by high mockery statistics,  
But what do we do? Were they heroes?

The wise will surely sit back  
And laugh at the long drawn knife  
Of irony of life,  
It slashes human nature into bits  
And let people laugh  
At the point of pain.

Some laughter is pain  
Made manifest.

Orike Didi

# I Am One With The Trees I

Let it be today  
That I am one with the trees.

I commune with the earth, rooted  
To the stone paths underneath,  
Clasping every sap for life  
With tentacles of an octopus.

I was not one stuck to Mandela's cell  
Or shaved off like Soyinka's beard;  
For I am not in their politics  
Nor living forever with their words.

I am a tree, one with the forests  
Green to a fault,  
Abhorring deserts  
But running close to the river.

I am one with the trees  
And let it be today.

Orike Didi 03/August/2009 DWP 02: 40hrs

Orike Didi

# I Will Soon Become A Song

I come with my verses,  
I come with my debts.  
Accept me like the earth does the sea  
Not minding her depths.

Come with me to my metaphors,  
Clasping your mind like fingers of an octopus.  
Come with me to my home,  
To the centre of a forest of thousand flowers.

Help, build me into the road, that knot  
Filled with mirages for the traveller.  
Help me sing a song to flute player.  
I am tired and will soon become a song.

Orike Didi 04: 00hrs DWP 04/Aug/2009

Orike Didi

## Images (47)

an egyptian king arises,  
his foot becomes the metre;  
statues, statuettes fall  
shadows bend into oblivion.

his huge, still calf arises  
at the high gates  
the valley is splashed  
with his mouth-foam.

he drinks self brewed wine  
begins to stagger on the hill  
before threatened eyes  
chained to the slaughterhouse.

Orike Didi

## Images 37

the triangle-

canons;

clowns

□ and all

□ on roll call,

the fourth angle

of the triangle-

the poet □

and poetry,

a silent shout across ranges

or a regenerative helix?

Orike Didi

## Images 39

and □

preachermen □

politicians □

prostitutes,

and all stunted shoots

why dry up in harmattan,

and kill a new born song

with crude implements

just a little after birth?

Orike Didi

## Of Rodents, Cockroaches And Pests (V)

As darkness begins to illuminate light  
They begin to run in concentric circles  
Of lies and strange debates-  
Parliaments of vileness  
More ill than democratic republic  
Ready to die of prostate cancer,  
Talking mon(k) ey while the house burns  
Razed down by the fire of betrayal,  
Changing heads, rotten like dead fish,  
Parading necks fat like grass-cutter's,  
Competing bellies swollen with faeces  
Like night-soil-chiefs having had enough.  
Madness commences debate on madness,  
Coup plotters start proceedings on treachery,  
An ugly noise initiate debate on farting:  
These animals called men.

Orike Didi

## Paris (2)

Above sea bed, cold  
city of tunnels  
where short and long coaches live  
a life of their own.

City of grand schemes and the tower  
with people walking fast  
running through the cold  
pretending smartness.

Paris.

11: 50pm October,2013

Orike Didi

## Paris (I)

I am another Ken  
standing, short like the Eiffel Tower  
wanting to spew my body fluids  
on the faces at the Ecole Militaire  
like Total does at my home.

But where are the open toilets?

Paris 0300hrs,12 Oct.,2013

Orike Didi

# Reading Poetry To The Dead

I pity those who struggle  
with words  
and the words end up killing them;  
what shall we do at their funeral?  
Read them more poetry?  
Will more words kill them again?

But I have seen men die  
at the funeral of other men,  
I have seen men being buried  
before the burial of the first dead;  
do we call that collateral damage?

So, if words kill a poet  
how much volume of words will kill  
those who read poetry to a dead poet?

Paris.0400hrs October 12,2013

Orike Didi

# The Heart Of Love

I shivered  
and stopped  
to see where 24 bullets ripped through  
the heart of love,  
from where it rose,  
shrugging off shrapnels  
to stand tall like an oak tree  
spreading her shade over all.

Orike Didi 25/Aug/2009. DWP 04: 00hrs

Orike Didi

## The Tree From The Past (For Edith)

Like roots we dug deep, like roots  
We dug into the depth of her soul.  
Her flesh had quaked with fever in a long drawn battle with herbs,  
Her stride slowed like the coming pain of her children,  
Her flesh had dragged its feet, was immured to the props of a journey  
In the plague of timelessness the season was about to be plunged.  
"Go away, go away", her soul ambles  
"Forget about me, but always remember the trees.'  
"The journey is the road; it ends in the river that empties  
itself into the sea and the sea is deep."  
And we said "the mystery is deeper."  
And she said "Go away, go to where the lights are a farce  
Acted in monologues,  
Where the strands of a story exit in installment to await judgement  
At a distant dawn."  
So we gathered our metaphors, hid them in our armpits  
And commenced a journey into unknown depths  
Of that tree coming from the past.

And we were one with the wishes of her soul.

Orike Didi 03: 30hrs DWP 04/Aug/2009.

Orike Didi

## Walls (10)

The sin of yesterday  
has become the evil of today,  
the drummers of yore  
are still the dancers of now,  
and who will dare stop the long laughter  
in the short poem.

The murderers then  
are the official hangmen of today,  
the illness of the pst  
is the epidemic of now,  
and the long laughter in my poetry  
is no sin.

They who sin daily are crowded  
with judgment  
and they sin more to avert  
more judgment,  
and the long laughter will remain with the  
shortest poem.

05: 41 04/08/2004

Orike Didi

## Walls (11)

If I must fight a battle  
it must be one I should were accolades  
from the mind of the wounded.

what have I not seen  
or thought of?  
where have I not been  
with feet or mind?

the walls which lasted too long  
crumbled within flimsy moments,  
the dead words in the telling  
died on tongues of a crooked history.

if I must die fighting  
it shouldn't be in a battle I would stand  
in the dock of imagination  
asking myself 'why? '

07: 40 30/08/'03

Orike Didi

## Walls (4)

I shall dip my tongue in the sea  
and wave farewell to freedom;  
it is not far from mile stone-cold.

eagles hover above rooftops  
of burning warri  
with flame-guns to light  
candles in the calm sea.

young horns howl in the night  
to tear apart the old fortress  
breeding witches to dance  
on the grave of the future.

It is not too far from stone-cold,  
I shall dip my tongue in the sea  
and wave farewell to freedom.

Orike Didi

## Walls 2

Eventually, I speak for  
the limping  
and the dead  
for I, dead too□  
fear only the living.  
And I speak for  
the clouded  
and self-rejected  
and for all trapped  
within walls.

A member of house  
of speakers, I speak.

Orike Didi

# Watching The Waters (For Clyde Tooman)

We watch the waters go past  
Distilled by waves  
And dance to an unknown song  
From the constellations-  
Who knows which spectator will dance last  
on the fresh shore,  
Work boots strapped to sore feet?

For I who was a witness to holiness,  
What will I do than to pour out rivers?  
As we sail to a new location,  
With feet sucked sore by boots.

26/Dec/2004

Orike Didi