

Poetry Series

**Osagie Isiramen**  
**- poems -**

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# A Broken Heart

My heart is broken  
Still am not angry  
I am just in the balance of feelings  
I am cold, hot and warm  
Like twilight -  
Not dark not bright  
My thoughts -  
Sensible, senseless and void  
I laugh, smile, chuckle  
I am hopeful, discouraged and indifferent  
Just weak but strong and lax

A new love I want to seek  
The old one I want to have again  
No! I don't want any love anymore  
Am I stupid, wise or just with common sense?  
I think I have found it  
I think I just lost it  
No! I am looking for nothing  
I feel like drinking, eating and fasting  
Right now, I want to sleep, be awake and doze  
I am in doubt, decision and just waiting on fate  
Should I be with old friends, make new ones or keep to myself

In all these, only one must be taken and others cast out  
The root question is:  
Do I want my love back?  
At return, will I forgive and take back  
Well, I don't know and I know.

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# Cocaine Man Laments

Can I live again?  
I wish this is feign  
My soul has stain  
It's causing me pain  
And no one has the blame  
Except the selfish chase for gain  
Which I could not tame  
Government struck with cane  
Leaving my skin with many lane  
Now I am in shame  
Also in infamous fame  
I wish I never carried cocaine  
To that country called Spain  
Only to be deported in chain  
Now I know I can never be the same  
I shall surely go insane  
Seeing my life's light wane  
This madness has made my dreams lame  
Leaving nothing at which to aim  
Except the drain

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# Da Vinci's Painted Laugh

The picture of the man in the painting  
Leonardo's laughing man  
He has been hysterical for one and half century  
Wonder what has been so funny?  
Could he be mocking our faces, this chubby butcher?  
Or the amusement we show at his laughter  
Making us double doubt his sanity  
Perfected by Da Vinci's paint stained hands with peak of dexterity  
Who, like circus, skillfully balance tears  
At the brim of his ringed eyes  
Without streaming down the lines of his timed countenance

We have gazed from age to age not knowing better  
Wondering still, the cause of this invaluable laughter  
Or, whether to mock our talent far below par?  
By a simpleton's face, show a hand of genius  
Or by genuine humility, by unaesthetic muse  
Seek to conceal his real self  
The first born of a goddess in flesh

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# God Father's Toast

On that day, something happened  
Though non-of us was there except two  
Still we knew something happened  
For you wouldn't have cried nine months later  
Your eyes shown brightness and intelligence  
And behind the radiance  
There was meekness, gentleness  
Your tender nature scared us  
The thought of you crumbling under the teachers scolding  
The thought of you shying away from peer bullying  
We were reluctant waving the very first bye-bye to school  
Then came the common entrance  
Not many could find it  
But you did with your common sense  
Suddenly, everything was changing  
New school, new friends  
Even you were changing – the adolescent blossom  
As things were changing  
Moving faster than you could really handle  
Only one door remained to be passed  
We prayed that in entering  
You did not get stock by the 'jamb'  
The situation: critical  
All fingers: crossed  
The much-awaited result came:  
"You are going ...going to the highest place of learning"  
Again that first feeling and fear came back  
But our heart increased in joy  
As each semester, you returned at a higher level  
Nevertheless, we were often furious  
You demanded so much money  
And finally you called:  
"Daddy, mummy its all over"  
Our smiles were never so broad in a picture  
As it did on your convocation

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# My Mother

I hope it was pleasurable for her  
The night she laid her petals bare for father  
At least to compensate the coming incomparable agony  
Of the nine months I was borne  
And the toughest, the day I was born  
For I am, in the physical sense than others, very heady  
Pushing through the place of pleasure  
Causing the peak of pain of no measure  
Mother, I sincerely say this: I am sorry

That I might grow healthy and strong, she gave me all she had  
That she grew wrinkled and almost bald  
It was clear to all, she was killing herself  
But as I acquired the wings of wisdom to fly  
I understood to live a dream was for reality to die  
Just as the planted seed rot before it grows green leaf  
She forgot all but me and pursuing freedom as a serf  
I was her dream, my success: her pursuit  
As her sweat dripped on the sun backed fields of few sweet  
The coming harvest, my ripeness, made my mother always smile to herself

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# Shadow's Colours

His dark side  
The part of him he always hide  
He did these things  
But said they were never in his doings  
Unknown, the gods staged his shadow  
On stage to show  
We could hear him, but could not be heard by him  
We could see him, but could not be seen by him  
His own shadow made him believe all were asleep  
The gods knew better  
Could there be a stage show without the spotlight?  
At the flash of light  
His head sunk in shame  
Knees knocked together  
The lips formed sorry  
But words never caught wind  
We all shook our heads in disgust  
As we pointed our judgement fingers  
Thinking, heaping and weighing the best sentence  
My thought dug and struck my own shadows  
I tripped over...  
My heart was lighted up by my conscience  
And I became bare as he  
I bowed in shame  
But my knees sprang off my seat  
As though the gods pricked with a pin  
Amidst us I stood  
And my voice caught wind:  
"Are we not as he? "  
None spoke, in silence we all went home

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# The Canary And The Eagle

Now we are close  
As if never to part  
Only a common rule  
Of which we are all subject  
Binds strongly our friendship

Like birds held in a single cage  
Holding in different birds  
Being taken to the fields  
For everlasting liberation  
There was befriending in detention  
Between the canary and the eagle

On the eve of there release  
They both cried without ease  
Knowing that nature would cut their ties  
That the one with long wings  
Would soar into the highest skies  
And the one that sings  
Only would be among the lowly lies

The eagle would miss  
The canary's songs  
Sweet in all seasons  
And neither would the canary  
Ever have after today  
The ample eagle feather  
That brought warmth in all weather

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# The Death Of Poverty

He was born like that  
He was born into poverty  
And his parent spoke it religiously to his ears  
That this chain must be broken  
Broken by work, work and nothing but hard work

His parent worked till their dying day  
Only to still remain in chain  
Fetters fatter and more stubborn with age  
With determination he set out in rage  
Bearing the pain, shame, hunger, and inhumanity  
That the rich dream must become reality

Now, he is old, looking at then and now  
The faded colour of poverty still painted today  
And it will surely coat tomorrow  
In this thought he was lost  
Not knowing when he wandered to the edge  
The neighbourhood of the dark one in black hood  
He was seized by the neck and ceased

His orphaned son decided to be himself unlike his father  
Or his strict grandparent of no par  
The best singing couple our church ever had  
But an ability self labeled vice they never shared  
Not even among factory brethren with whom they worked hard

The orphaned son took to the pun shop  
His father's sacred baseball kit  
In exchange for his love, his passion-  
A guitar

Always under the oak tree the orphan sat  
Harmonizing the strings  
Using his father's words as a song:  
"Of how he was the best bat man in town  
But the game he loved so much  
He had to quit  
For it was but a lure

Away from his purposeful journey  
In the combat to kill poverty"

As the orphan sang, playing guitar one day  
Soaring in the clouds of rhythm  
A Cadillac had since stopped by  
The occupant arrayed in fine fabric  
Nodding with misty eyes  
Wondering why a talent as this  
Should waste away  
He resolved in his heart to take him away

The orphan is no longer with us  
In the reality of his dead fathers  
But he now lives in their dream  
Where the bed is neat and soft  
Allowing only dreams that are sweet  
In a place where the bread is fresh  
And the meat is tender

We see the orphan now mostly on television  
In a life that was his fathers' vision  
Of when the fetters of poverty would be broken  
But he never did despite backbreaking work  
But the orphan did it  
Not by profuse sweat  
Rather by love and passion  
In sharing with others his GOD given mission  
Of how to harmonize strings  
And breathing rhythm from his vocal cord

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