



Painter of Love

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I Have Painted You

I have written you into history
And painted you onto an eternal canvas
Until in full magnificence, you emerged in splendour.
I have made you a monument
Strong enough to survive the great tides
And preserved your beauty
In poems which embody you
And all the wonders juiced in your inner whorls.
Like the nectars in a petal
Anyone who comes across these poems
Will encounter this love with which I love you
They shall come across your immortality
My darling
I have written your name
That neither may you die nor ever be forgotten.

A New Romance

I will not kiss you
The same way I kissed you yesterday.
Though yesterday's romance was beautiful
And the memories still live in us
It has died with its own beauty.
Darling, today has been born anew
Like a fresh flower, blooming from its stalk
with a new beauty, a new love and a new kiss.

Opening

My heart opens up to you
Like the entrance of a court
Before the footsteps of a queen
The secret flowers of my deepest thoughts
Open up like colourful whorls for your eyes
For the affairs of revelation are intimate
And secrets lose their mysteries to love
There is no mystery too dark for your eyes
With the love in them, they reveal
The secrets beneath every dark path.
Sit, Queen. Lord over this cryptic vegetation
Which surrenders its secrets to you.

Weight of Memories

Dawn found me feeling the weight of memories
As though when we parted ways yesterday
A part of you remained with me as a memento
Of having you in so close a range, like liquid caramel
Feeding the eyes
Floral patterns entwined like an arabesque
Where dew drops drip off petals
Meet with the scenery of the sun rising.
So, when you left, you remained
And dawn found me feeling the weight of memories
As though when we parted ways yesterday
A part of you stayed as a memento
Of your glory, the sweetness
Of your presence
Like the finest liquid caramels

Blue

I love to float in the serenity your heart affords me,
For you are a woman whose beauty sways
Like the carefree wind on evenings by the sea shore
And your eyes are clean as the depth of spring waters
And your heart colourful as the blue heart of a lake

For you are deep as the ocean, my darling
And rivers of dreams empty their channels into you
Like tributaries paying tributes to your royalty

And so everything that flows, every water that moves
Every dream through which I sail,
Carries me to you, my darling. Everything I do,
Everywhere I go, every wind that is calm and yet perturbing
Reminds me of your presence, the shore, surrounding an abode
Where the wind flirts with trees and waves rise and collapse into the ocean.

I rest on you like a tourist chilling on white sands
Carrying no burden or prospects of being stained,
I tour your heart, seeking your soulful treasures

I dig into your shores searching your seafood
Not scared of your depth, and here to stay,
to explore you for a lifetime.

To Love and To Paint You

You taught me how to listen to silence
Like the song in whispers
the bass in heartbeats,
nature's meditations in rippling waters

You taught me the character in the eyes of a woman in love
The happiness in her pose
And how her laughter is carefree like a child's

Darling, your beauty compliments the imagination
That love has spelt upon my mind
Because every time, before the rain
You spell patterns on my heart
Like the streak of lightning drawing lines
Over a planetary orb

Love flies out from your eyes
Like an apocalypse of lovely whispers
Singing to me about the beauty of myths

So like a painter, darling, I dipped my brush
Into my oil and I am painting you
And spicing with colours of my love
And making sure your hair in this portrait
Dances to the song of the wind
I am watching your face unveil with each stroke, the light in your eyes
I am painting you by the riverside;
I begin by sunrise
And in the evening, I take clues
Of your beauty as the earth becomes briefly animated
By a departing sun

Love In A New Light

I don't want to love you like light
I want to kindle a romance with your darkness,
Spread granules of my light on you and see how you glow
I don't want to love you like a rose
Everyone knows how to love a rose
I want to love you like a cactus,
Run my hands down your spine
And not judge you by your thorns
Because I know the face of your story
In a way nobody else does.

Forgetting

You ask why you always forget your name
Each time I kiss you:

Every time we share a kiss,
 We lose ourselves
I am no longer me
 And you are no longer you
Our bodies remain
 But our souls vapourise
And condense as one
 On the plains below the atmosphere
On which we make love
 There is no greater animation of the soul
Than that borne by the kisses we share
 No better apotheosis than our lovemaking
Where we hold hands and ascend to
 Where we become gods
Whose names are lost
 To
 The
 Wind

The world steadied itself under your feet

for Uche

The world steadied itself under your feet
... your hair carries current enough to sweep ocean waves,
Your eyes are full of histories
Of how a city once became rubbles
And how it rebuilt itself.
You opened your heart to me
& I beheld an abode, upon which
A poet might lay the weight of his muse.
I dream of loving you and that dream means
That on certain days, all that matters to me
Will be centred on the corner of the world
Where you will sit next to me, holding my hand,
The flame of my love waltzing for you,
Like fires in red hot coal, fanned by the wind.
My eyes have found an insight to love,
Through its guidance, I want to decipher you
How a botanist unwraps the whorls of a flower.
I want to cast love over you like a light,
And let loving you educate my heart
& elevate my senses, and fill me with your wonders,
Known and yet to be unknown.
In you I would experience the mysteries
Of love unheard of, which only the heart
Knows, in which words bloom,
Filling the heart of a poet with expressions

Rocket

I am shooting a rocket of love to you
To spell my affection on your heart,
Like projections on a white screen,
That you may glow with a light
Only love brings, and your smile may beam
With rays only sun brings.
Let the world be our theatre with its darkness
Let our love light it up, and let the plot
Unfold between us like the best play
Which fills the theatre with awe
Leaving the world on its seat
& fast on its feet as it watches
A beautiful love story unfold between us.

To the woman who asked how I feel when I write her love poems

The feeling of love is a music only the heart hears
And words fall short of its beauty
In love, the poet is born again.
Through your eyes, I see the world afresh,
And I try to describe my vision
Through flowers, through music, through sun,
Through breath, through words,
Through feelings, sound or sight,
It assumes the centre of my senses.
& even though in the end my words fall short of your power
The urgency exists like pressure in a balloon
Filled with restless gas looking to explode,
And so I set my words on clay,
And I write you love upon love upon love upon love

Open Heart

for Imaobong

I experience you like a season
Of wild petal blossoms.
Sometimes love possesses us
And holds us together
In spite of what divides us
Like the miracle of two parallel lines
Married in the most unlikely union
In the history of mathematics.
How much more I love you
With each odds we scale, how
When you laugh on the phone
My heart softens
Like a ridge, ready for seeds
To germinate into a garden
Filled with the twingles of rosebushes
Clasping the open hands with which
You receive my gifts

How true our smiles, in our
Photographs together, what a joyful
Memory we are in what we have made.
Our love is an image I never tire of painting
Every day new visions fasten my hands.
What is more beautiful than your hands
Twirling over me like a bougainvillea
Climbing a fence?
What is splendid as the memory
Of your gift, an unforgettable cologne,
Which carries the insignia of your love?

I wore it like a cloak of beauty
And in the words of everyone
Who admired its fragrance
I heard you speak to me
In the light and in the music of your being,
I have made a museum of lovely memories
And they mirror you, and the marks
We have left on the face of our world.

I Fall in Love with Simple Things

I fall in love with simple places and simple things,
And I am in love with the simple things about you,
Your shrugs, your spontaneity, your spontaneous happiness,
Springing forth like water from the crevice between rocks,
The slight limp in your walk, the confidence in your face
which masks the eager child within.

I am in love with your wild beauty and reticence.
I fell in love with a simple girl like you in a simple place,
Like the restaurant, where we hung out that beautiful evening,
Low lights, tasty food, many tables and chairs,
Yet just us together in a private world,
Both of us happy in each other's presence for a while,
Giddy for no reason except that we are happy at this moment.

Explosion

I saw you and you exploded,
And gave rise to the materials
Of a new world where the finest metaphors
Flourish with the glow of your beauty,
A new universe is born of the effects you arouse

I create new melodies for you,
Their tunes dictated by your beauty,
As your presence alters their beats,
Like the hands of a drummer missing a hit

My fingers are in a frenzy to write you into the finest lines,
My lips trembling with your songs stuck between them,
And my heart overflowing with confessions,
A poesy crafts itself upon you, your beauty arouses delights,
In you I see the word afresh again,
So I can confess the world's beauty in new language,
That you might become the ultimate metaphor
For a beautiful new world.

My Head Says Yes To My Heart

I learnt the best way to sing a love song
is not to struggle, but to let the heart
open its eyes and
overflow with images, songs, and letters.
And this is just the same way I love you.
Effortlessly. My head says yes to my heart,
Every time I think of loving you.

Wings

for Mgbeke

Fill a balloon with helium
Watch it walk on air
And make a home in the wind
Immerse a heart in love
And hear it come alive in frenzied beats
Ask me about my dreams
And I will tell you of giving a woman wings
To soar a world mapped with my arteries
I will talk about you flying
To me like a bird with a rose in its beak

Love at the magic hour

I met you at the magic hour,
Where the sun goes down behind roofs
And paints a city in silhouettes
Every event in my heart comes under inspection
Of your beauty, like the setting sun,
Overlooking a beach
Where the magic hour of clouds
Animates the city by the shores,
You grow out of the night sky like a blue crystal

Casting its magic over inhabitants like me
Darling, long have I, Lord of the sea,
Sat and awaited your coming, knowing,
From my nodal signals, that I would encounter
Your footprints in the future today once was,
I awaited, and I awaited
For the star which appears in the north
To a man in the east and guides his feet
To the shores where the moon is seen
Peering into the heart of the sea.
I tried to sketch on a canvas the imagery,
The beauty of that moment when upon me,
Like a city after sunset, the magic hour shall cast
The beauty of things in a silhouette
I imagined.
The journey went onward and endlessly,
Just before my feet were caught by
The magnetic nudge of the compass,
And there, everything was caught in the reflection of your ray,
 Caught in your magic, and your light,
I confessed in the most vivid details,

And as every great event which tilts the universe a bit
My poesy bore witness to your wonders.

Transformation

for Chiamakaaa

I am transformed when my heart warms up to you,
Suddenly everything in me springs to life,
Bearing your colour, green like leaves rich in chlorophyll,
And my heart, filled with melodies of the sound of your name,
And the dark corners of my heart, aglow with your beauty.
Daughter of the sun, you are an intense progeny of light,
How my deeds glow with you, how our worlds come together,
When I hold your hands, when I hug you, when you smile,
You are robed in my heart with the fabric of my affections.
In my dreams you are dressed in the stars of happy moments,
Walking right out of life's furnace like purified metal with a new glow.
I string beautiful words upon beautiful words, and string them on your neck
And you model my dreams of beauty like the matchless diva
Who cat-walked out of imagination with starry footsteps
To write with me, this love tale on the face of the universe

Michael Chiedoziem Chukwudera is a storyteller, thinker and poet. His works have appeared or are forthcoming in *Jalada Africa*, *The Republic*, *Brittle Paper*, *Afrocritik*, *Afapinen*, *Havik*, *Kalahari Review*, and elsewhere. Follow him on Twitter @ChukwuderaEdozi. But don't expect to read love poems from him often.