



Poetic Reflections

Departure and Return

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A billion questions kept him awake
and nightmares choked his burdened repose.

The echoes of the painful cries that tore him
From his cradle
Oscillated with the grim faces
that set him on the journey to an open grave:
Affection and betrayal were the tangled mysteries —
And he wondered: Were the gods in slumber?

In his limbo
The stream of endless nightmares and hallucinations
Poured over his limping soul
As he strained to catch a glimpse of the ancestors.

And then his inconsolable loss:
In whose arms was his betrothed now conquered?
Oh, that love that propelled the wings of his youthful passion
to heroic feats until this captivity
turned him into a living dead.

Overhead, he heard strange songs and prayers
to an unknown God —
All so heavenly and so hellish
Like the routine of day and night

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He saw human faces with hearts of dragons.
His taste buds were dead, his appetite numb.
The sounds of night could not drown
the scorching reveries of home;
Moonlight sneaked through the tiny window
mocking him with sad reminiscences
Of wedding songs and dances and poisoned arrows
that still haunted.

If only he knew the language of the ocean —
This final refuge of countless warriors
Whose voices have mastered the language of silence
and aborted dreams
He would confide his wishes to the pulsating tides.

Then the moon frowned
And the stars wept
And the sun wailed
At the murder of humanity by their humans
Where hopes and dreams were smothered
without mourners or requiems.

II
We return to the empty dungeons
With bleeding souls.
We feel the breath of the wandering ghosts
as we seek to trace the buried pathways
To our lost roots.

We return with the touch of heaven's wounded Healer
Caressing our souls
Finding new names
New siblings
New vistas
New pathways
New homes.

This hope conquers loss
As life conquers death.

A new journey beckons on us
To wipe our tears
To smile at a new dawn
To make flutes from dry bones.

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Reflections of the visit to the Cape Coast Castle, Ghana in July 2024