

Poetry Series

samuel nze
- poems -

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samuel nze(13th October 1980)

Was born to a middle class family; became orphan in 1992; love to read and to pray - hope to be big someday.

A Friend, My Friend

I sit and think of you
Kenechukwu.
Last night I had a curious
Dream.
My best friend saw you beside me
And grew jealous;
Who is this?
He asks in a huff,
Black spectacles closing
Crimson red eyes.
A friend, I say
Unready to precipitate offense.
A friend or your friend?
I am at a loss then;
Where lies the bifurcation
Between a friend and my friend?
Jude, I do not know.
If it is bile that eats you,
Then know that
You are my best friend,
My everything
And Kc is just
A friend, my friend?

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A Good Man Is A Rich One

The road to my house is bad
But men who live there are good
A good man is a rich one
It is so they say

You are good but care less
For what is not in your parlor
Plunk, plank, slurp, dash
The motorists and cyclists go

You watch them and smile
Dark sinister guffaw
You are irresponsible
And unconcerned

Are you really good then
Unpatriotic though you be
If they insist you are
They are not like me.

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A Kiss May Mean Anything

One must not take love wrongly
A kiss may mean anything
Emotion gets physical in different ways
If planted on the head
Think of me always
Is a likely import for a kiss
Planted on the cheeks it calls
For fraternity even in strain
On the back of the hand
What other meaning than adoration
For the one beloved
Or on the feet unreserved worship indeed
It is only when a man
Kisses his wife full on the lips
That romance is exclusively expressed
They lock in passionate embrace
Tumbling to the floor
In throes of devouring passion
Making bashful sounds they will disdain
In the somberness of morning
It is not so I feel for my best friend
With him every touch
Is only a call to truer fraternity
That one heart may sincerely love the other
As unto itself.

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A Man Should Have Respect

A man should have respect
His case may not accord him that,
Nor his situation
Yet he must feel self worth.

A man must have respect
He may be poor
And destitute
But he is a child of God.

He is a spark of the Spirit
He is a wonder in himself
He is unique
The greatest of animals.

A man will have respect
Primordially may refuse him it
But he will strive all he may
To clinch it still.

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A Meal For Seven Days

It was a meal for seven days;
He ate the meat on Sunday
And the fruit salad
The next day.
On Tuesday he licked up the broth
And downed the dessert
Even before the main.
It is Thursday with plain rice,
No broth, no meat - nothing.
There still has to go
Friday, Saturday and what
Will he do?
He looks at the rice and sighs,
Then he prays to the Esoteric -
How am I to eat plain white
With no broth at all?
There is a knock at the door,
Rat tat tat ta!
It's a pretty girl in from the marts
Who says savingly,
I thought I should bring you
A factory-made soup.

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A Robber's Apologia

Dusk has arrived,
Cover for my game;
Vehemence is swifter,
It will be tonight.
Pa goes drinking,
Ma will be asleep;
Siblings are hampered,
The dark woos.
Purpose denies malice,
I bear Earth no ill;
She toughened my resolve,
Gave me weapons too.
I must survive,
So too my kin;
We have no fault,
Except to be poor.

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A Tale Of Two Birds

This is a tale of two birds
Sitting on the wall;
One was not named Peter,
Even if the other was Paul.
They did not either fly away
Only to return,
They sat still on the wall
Gazing into each other's eyes.
They were in love;
That mad emotion
Tied them taut to the wall
And each other's company.
We are like those birds, honey
As we sit across this dinner table;
That rhythm on the radio
Was composed for us.
It speaks of the spark in your eyes,
Glasses or misty silver;
Your lips quiver,
Are you saying something?
Your voice is rich
And the words articulate
We sit at our table
And stare at each other,
The chemistry overwhelms me;
Your beauty entrances,
Draws me nearer nearer
To the heart from which
I cannot escape.

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Agaracha A Guo Miles

It is thirty days since
Agaracha returned
Agaracha a guo miles
He said he went to Spain
To buy fine linen
Agaracha a guo miles
Fine linen for what?
To sell in the stalls
Agaracha a guo miles
Only linen?
Well, some lace too
Agaracha a guo miles
Only lace?
Well, some brocade too
Agaracha a guo miles
Only brocade?
You ask too many questions
Agaracha a guo miles
Tell me to sit down
And find some cold drought
Agaracha a guo miles.

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Agony

One tear drop
walked down my cheek
slowly
he was on errand for
my bleeding heart
he wanted alone
but business was heavy
not a one-man stunt
more tears served the deficit
issued from the same
Agony sends them all
from her chair in my heart
she is a tyrant
that fills us with dread.

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Alive

I am quarreling
With security;
Failing to believe
I am endangered.

I am struggling
With health;
Failing to accept
I am sick.

I am dissatisfied
With love;
Failing to decide
I am hated.

I am bickering
With comfort;
Failing to accept
I am poor.

I think I may be paranoid;
My heart beats
With anticipation,
Refusing halting.

I think I may be fretful;
My mind rotates
With worry,
Disdaining comfort.

I think I may be ungrateful;
My will confounds
With ambition,
Resisting providence.

I think I may be silly;
My pulse quickens
With gusto,
Refusing mending.

Am I paranoid
When I secure myself
Against everything
I do not grasp?

Am I sick
When I worry too much
About a future
I cannot control?

Am I ungrateful
When I forget to say
Thank you
For even little things?

Am I bad
When I control life
Taking fewer chances
Swelling my pride?

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All Africa

Feel me talk proud
Hear me talk loud
Of Africa, the black land
The Sahel and the sand

Among swarthy men
The rythm and rumba
The samba and the conga
In the land of the oil den

My Africa is beloved
Of the setting sun
In the evening, tired
I loll and have fun

With the sea in my ear
The wind is in full gear
I am happy and smug
My ridges are all dug.

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Am I A Man?

Sometimes I see the gaiety around me and
I ask myself if I am
A part of it all;
Am I a man -
Do I feel good enough about myself?
These are some of the things
I wonder when
Having woken up
On the bad side of the bed
I feel like sleeping again.

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Am I Alone In This?

Sometimes I wonder if
People understand me;
They often go away
Not understanding
What I want to say;
I need them to come with me,
To see things the way I do;
I want them to understand and not run,
Not leave me a loner;
I too love company,
But I do not love it more than truth.

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Amity

Amity, it is your faith
That inspires me to write;
You tell me that no matter what
I must believe in love.

Amity, I have a girlfriend
Who is so stubborn;
She says there is someone else
But will not talk about him.

She agrees to go places with me
She spends my money;
She is ready to play
But mention love and she flees.

Amity, shall I continue to hope
In what frustrates me so;
Shall I continue to think
She pulls my legs?

Amity, girls are so complex
Why must we love them;
They make life hard
It's like breaking a ballast!

Amity, I have tried
I may soon leave her;
I know I care for her
But does she care for me too?

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An African Evening

Blunder of a father
Failure of a mother
Bad children
With bleak future
They look to me with pitiful eyes.
I see that little girl
Sitting on a stool by the road.
She is shouting
'Cold pure water! '
She wants me to buy
Hydrogen dioxide in
a polythene sachet
But I have no money.
I ignore her shrills
And concentrate on the road
Okada riders try to shunt traffic
Then the accident occurs.
Blood
Bits of flesh
Coagulating spleen matter
Shocking vituperations
Is she dead?
Apparently the head is hit
And the tommy torn open
The rescuers come hurrying away
From the goof they'd been smoking
Up and help
The skirmish stuns me.
I look away
To the shops over there.
I see a fat woman
Standing before the yam seller.
How much?
The seller tries to phoneticize
She frames her lips for the offensive
Terry naira ownly pleez
What are you saying?
Asks a disgusted buyer
The seller had thought

It was a contest
Buyer refuses to speak vernacular
Seller must follow suit
After all, she too had some schooling
Only that the cruel hands
Of ugly destiny
Kept her behind yams each evening.
You say tarty naira?
Yep
Do you want to sell at all?
Seller does not know if
The quarrel is with cost
Or phoneticization.
Test.
Cancel phoneticization, the cheaper
Of the two and see the result
O bu naira iri ato
Okay
Give me two
That will be sixty naira.
Clearly the quarrel had been
With phoneticization.
Bad world.
No one wants you to be somebody
Slavery the livelong day.
I sigh
I look at the sky
Is God there at all?
No need to worry about him anyways.
So I concentrate on my thoughts.
Africa is like that evening
Like the girl shrilling
About cold water
Like the okada rider trying
To shunt traffic
Like the fat woman hating English in
A seller's mouth
Like me with no money in
My back pocket wallet.
They say the black man
Has no soul
Rather I should say

The black soul
Has no man.
Do you get my point
Or should I write a treatise first?

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Angry Words

When we make arrogant sounds
In anger we spoil something
Bile and bad blood
Fill our chest and choke
Throttles us to spit
Diatribes and ill
It is what we say
That shows what is in our heart
Sad heart, sad words
Bitter heart, bitter words
Angry heart, angry words
The story never changes.
Proud words said in anger
Not stopped
Not checked
These words are like fire
On a roof of common thatch.

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Any Lost Cause?

What have you been fighting for
What is the reason for the sweat
That cleaves to your brow
That tired grunting?

I have a feeling you are discouraged
Worried about a situation
You seemingly cannot manage
You are despondent.

Why - is there a lost cause
Something you had spent energy on
Only to see it fall like a pack of cards
Your life's work wasted at your feet?

There is no lost cause
You have tried and failed
But recall Lincoln
He tried and tried and tried again.

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Aphroditus

Laurence and Mary
Were two lovers
Living in Mexico
And sharing a neighbourhood
Mary was a princess
But Laurence was an orphan
He loved her
But she felt he was
Beneath her standard
Yet he continued to hope
Last year he sent me
An email to say
That Mary was contemplating
Marriage to another man
Older and richer
Of higher social standing
And what should he do
I am worried
Can Mary do that to him
Even when she knew he loved her
Not to mention all the
Time they had shared together
Or the kiss that evening
When for the first time he said
I love you

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As Is Said

I do not promise that
It will be easy
All I affirm is that
It will be possible.

I want to encourage you
To keep on striving
Until at last you make it.
The heights reached
By great men we are told
Were not reached at sudden flight
But they while their
Companions slept worked upwards
Through the night.

samuel nze

As Little Children

As little children
At the block rosary we sang
Around the altar
Singing praising marching
Those songs dull;
The praise leaves our hearts
We are too tired to march
Even now we watch
For those strains
Bringing back nostalgic memories and
Another lease of youth
To an old heart.

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As The Dawn Comes.

As the dawn comes
I remember what mama used to say
You are a man
Never you forget
The truth is that we lose our identity
As we chase the wind
I ask myself again
What my lot here is
One day I will die
What legacy will I leave then?
The truth is that we lose our identity
As we chase the wind
It has been said that
Being siblings is like waking in one room
In the morning each finds
His own way
The truth is that we lose our identity
As we chase the wind
Even saints tell their Lord
Let no human tie however dear
Prevent me from
Following the way to God
The truth is that we lose our identity
As we chase the wind.

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Beauty Deserves Praise

Beauty deserves praise;
If a gecko falls from a wall
Upon your face,
What can it mean -
That your foes wish you
To fall out of favour?
But if you are strongly attractive
No matter what they do,
You will always succeed
In keeping your friends.

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Because You Have No Money

When you carry an empty purse
It becomes too heavy;
A fuller one would be preferable,
By far the lighter!

The weight is in your heart,
Burdensome worry;
There is a passionate heaving
That betrays insecurity.

Because you have no money
You cannot think straight,
Artists make first impressions
With the paper of your face.
Unskilled etchers
In your heart are responsible
For the bad pictorial outcome:
Sadness, insecurity and grief.

samuel nze

Berna

Berna, Berna, Berna my sister-o!

Ayaya

Berna, Berna, Berna my sister-o!

Ayaya

Wherever chewing gum goes,

Berna goes;

Ayaya

Wherever sweet goes,

Berna goes

Ayaya

Berna - ayaya

Berna - ayaya

Berna, Berna, Berna - ayaya

Berna my sister-o!

Ayaya

Whistles blow for Berna

Ayaya

Drums beat for Berna

Ayaya

Berna, Berna, Berna - ayaya

Berna my sister-o!

Ayaya.

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Better Make It Our World

Better make it our world
Where no one lords the other
We parley and combine brawn
You refuse to outwit me

You cannot judge my future
You donot decry me past
You let me swim undisturbed
In the river of my soul

When I shake off the harness
And reach for the golden gates
When I breathe the drought of air
That sifts in through the window

When I take your hand in mine
As we skirt the brambled bush
When we loll in the evening
We become more truly one.

samuel nze

Black Pastors

This is a black country,
Many souls are black with the soil;
Their soles march the dust
But their hearts are even dustier.
There is struggling for everything;
In the church the pastor
Encourages the congregation
To give to the Lord cheerfully;
They eat the fat of the people
And the lean is reserved for the
Workers in the pews;
They say that to him who has
More is given
But from him who has not
Even the little he does is
Taken away -
By the pastors I suppose?

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Blessing

God tells me softly
Can you dance for me, son?
I ask Him why
And He responds
Just to watch you rejoice

He blesses me full for each day,
A God of bounteous love;
I feast for each hour
In His loving embrace that
Enraptures my being;
Soft and reassuring,
A God of benevolent joy.

God tells me deeply
Can you kiss me, son?
I ask Him how
And He responds
On the lips of the one you love

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Blissful Ignorance.

My mother would hiss
At a youth smoking indian hemp
These days I know not
What children are up to
She would curse the world
And preach with gusto
No one who suckled at my breast
Would touch that smelly stuff
She knows not what my brothers do
And she enjoys the ignorance
These ones who suckled at her breast
Could they really be doing what they are?

samuel nze

Bottled Feelings

A bewitching hunger to write
Takes over me
When I see a paper and a pen
Feelings bottled in since yesterday
Rush to be expressed
Choke me to oblige
The neat white of the paper
Attracts the nib
Calls for a kiss
Nay an intercourse
That bears
Blue symbols of meaning
We both gaze at these symbols
And new feelings
Begin to bottle up over again.

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Boys Are Simple And Short

Boys are simple and short
Girls are complex and long
But both are human beings -
How different!

Boys will say I love you
Girls will say give me time
But both feel the same thing -
How different!

Boys lay their case straight
Girls beat about the bush
But both care for each other -
How different!

Boys give themselves up
Girls want to be chased
But both need friendship -
How different!

samuel nze

Breathe

Feeling like the power of radio
Speaks discernedly to my mind to drown
Uninformed confidence that shows itself
Akin to the wind at times erratic

The spoiled brunt of young oligopoly
Masterminded by untold mysteries past
Finds expression by dawn of gaunt acclaim
To ransom slaves and would-be's just the same

Arising from summary slumber hence
The untold mythology of ten spirits
Dares anthropologists to quiz the quirk
And deities to feast on its entrails

Abounding in ghostly affectation
Fording the obstacles to its summit
Lordly in its own shoddy appraisal
Basking in the bliss of folly at dusk.

samuel nze

Busy

I sit before my computer, busy
Most people are like me
Encouraged to be busy
In our fast world - always.

I sit before my books
Cramming hard stuff into my
Otherwise soft brain
So that I can succeed - always.

I will be at the factory tomorrow
Busy like others there
We all are to fabricate this or that
It is one business or another - always.

samuel nze

Buy Your Own

They are not happy
Playing kalo-kalo
And drinking palm wine
In their village
Their mates are in Lagos
Driving big cars
The lean face left over
From yesterday's quarrel
Over the land at the forked bush
Looks regretfully at the fly
That perches on the
Okporoko that she gashed
With bitterleaf soup and nsam
He stares viciously at this intruder
He raises his hand
And strikes at the fiend
One smack and it is dead
Then comes the spiteful hiss
Why can't you buy your own!

samuel nze

Can We Talk For A Minute?

Can we talk for a minute?

Yes?

What will you be about?

Are you in a hurry then?

Questions

Is all we get,

And a Nigerian responds

To questions with more.

We should talk

About this and that

And that other;

We should talk about

The one and then the other

The other and then the one.

If you have an answer,

Give it to me;

I tire of your endless quizzes;

We live in a world

That craves for solutions,

You, and I as well.

samuel nze

Celestial Sessions

Celestial sessions are
Where God decides cases
On men and destinies.
'Let all be black now! '
Curtains open on mysterious light,
Halo of haloes,
Radiance of celestial grace,
God is on the throne;
All hail!
'Let Angel Michael approach
The Holy of Holies.'
Cherubim
Seraphim
Angelic choirs ring out their voices,
Holy holy holy,
Lord God Almighty,
The earth is full of
Your astonishing beauty;
You formed the Plaides
And Orion - who can compare
To you?
The glassy sea tries
To encapsulate your
Divine presence and fails.
God, you are indeed
A sight to behold.
Millions
Throngs
Armies
Armageddon
Halts for the deity,
Bows to his throne
Kisses his feet;
Aura,
Rays of imperceptible light,
God is enthroned
On the sun
With the moon for rainment;
His empire stretches

From sea to sea;
North, where the cold kills
But eskimos bear it;
East, where ideologies
Conflict with one another
But moslems pray still;
West, where technology takes leaps
As Bill Gates sits
Tight on Microsoft;
South, where aborigines
Are chased off their land
By forces tougher than they.
God saw Tsunami wobble
On the pillars that hold
The earth up.
God saw the soldiers stake children in Dafur,
But he is God
And no one can
Question him.
All around me is beauty
In his divine presence;
Light
Gold
Dazzle
Sparks
Of silver from the sleek sea,
In there the fish
Are similarly singing
Praise to this munificent deity;
His name is extolled
Over all the earth,
On his head is the crown
Of a million aeons
And beyond;
He alone knows it all;
He saw best how the Tuaregs crossed the Sahara
And Armstrong landed on the moon;
God is the chief deity,
He sits enthroned still
On his pavilion
On the sun;
Sing

Exult
Ring out your joy
And let the melody endure
For our God,
Then hush
As the celestial session
Begins;
Approach you suppliant.
My lord
I am an orphan,
My father is dead
And my mother too.
Celestial secretaries pen this
Before our God.
You say you are an orphan?
Yes my lord,
I suppose you know that -
Proceed!
You have no right to suggest to
The Lord.
Rise in your splendour,
Lord God of hosts,
Let them know they are only men;
But the Lord is slow to anger,
Abounding in love.
Proceed.
As I was saying -
Forget what you were saying
Bring your matter
Before our God,
We know you lost your parents
Pretty young
And Freud has said
It is a catastrophe.
What now is the matter?
Thank you my lord,
I see the session
Proceeds swiftly;
I am destitute.
Is that all;
And what about that,
What serves your destitution?

It is the so-called
Uncles you gave me,
They have pushed me off
In envy.
Thunderous sounds,
The celestials jump,
I block my ears
And quake in terror;
What was that!
Hold it - our God laughs,
But he is done now,
You may go on.
Why laugh, my lord?
You say your uncles
Pushed you off,
I dare say you ran away!
Alright, suit yourself,
Maybe I did;
They made life unbearable.
And now?
Well, you gave me a scholarship -
That obviously you have used up,
And now you whine;
Tell me, O court,
Is this son of mine not extravagant?
No my lord,
I will speak in my defence
Lest the accuser of our brethren
Take it upon himself to answer
Your quiz -
No, spare me the intricacies
I pray you -
Huhn? God begs a man,
Celestial courts are in turmoil!
Halt.
Be brief then
What is your request?
I want money,
Lots of it.
Why?
To be a man,
To hack my enemies

To the cheekbone,
To build a house to my
Father,
To gather my siblings together
To my mother.
All good.
Celestial session approves;
You shall have
What you crave.
But how, Lord,
How shall I get the money,
Through some miracle?
No.
You have talents,
Skills, proclivities - you know,
Go use them;
My world is perfect,
I try to tell my critics that;
In the soil
At strategic points
I have hidden treasure,
You will have to find it;
I for my part
Will make sure you succeed.
I see.
Well, well, son;
Now you see.
Michael!
Yes my lord?
Go see to it
That he has
All he asks.
Thank you my lord,
You are my
All-sufficiency.
Amen.
Dark thickens
And my reverie ends;
Have I truly
Been to heaven and back?
O celestial trance
I am in your awe

I have never been this filled
With stupendous wonder
At the proud pwer
That is our God's,
But now I know.

samuel nze

Christmas Is Dry This Year

In the past in Nigeria
Christmas was exciting
Gay and merry
Finer than a cherry

Not so anymore today
Christmas is dry this year
There is no money to spend
No one even wants to lend

Chickens are no longer afraid
Of the sharp blade
No one will buy them still
Not anyone will them kill

We eat yesterday's meals
Instead of the new rice
The shops are full
And the traders cannot us pull

samuel nze

Cold

Cure my fever if you can
It is not physical
My ailment lies deep inside
My pithy chordal sacks

I am cold
Not feverish, please
Just empty under
The heat of the sun

Love is lost forever
Or so it seems
Jilted again and pained
What more enjoys?

Hold me then
Remove my shirt
it's so hot
But I really am cold.

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Come Back

Come back to those days
When I took you in my arms
And loved you
When I looked at you
And saw myself
When I had faith
That you would always
Be there for me
I was ready to cross the sea
With you by my side
I was ready to dare the devil
Because you were beside me
I was ready to do the hardest
To win your approval
Come back to those days when
I knew I had to have you
Close by me forever.

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Contemplation

When I contemplate the ages past
And quiz the depths of life
Mystery is all I get
For my labours.
The birds are flying
And chirping;
The tall trees dare the clouds,
Men and women go about their
Travails with unrest in their souls.
I observe the moods of spirits
If that be possible,
Sighs that source deep in the heart;
I try to understand the essence
Of painful musing, but
I see I never can, either ways
Anyway.

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Convenient Wedding

It is her wedding today,
The bridal maids have worn
Their I-shall-be's
So that one will catch the bouquet.
A bucket of water
Is by the corner to welcome
Many men migrating mostly
From Kwara, the groom's town
And from Ankara as well.
I sit and stare at the gaiety,
This ugly, fat man
Weds this slim, shapely sight
Of a damsel
Because his father owns a bank
And the girl's mother
Is a poor widow.
The girl will willingly wait
On this toad,
Kissing
Loving - or pretending to love
Everything about him.
She used to sell provisions
For her mother
Before he met her
And allowed her agree
To marry a man she could
Not refuse if she was to
Remain her mother's daughter.
The hopes of her kin
Are on her scapulars,
She will train her nine siblings
In the universities
And fill her mother's shop
To the brim.
The other day I went to buy
Kerosene from that shop
She was eating a sherry mango
And her sister was bustling -
'Can you help me sell kerosene? '

She asks the girl;
Oh - because I am eating Kerosene mango?
She has always been proud,
Saucy and spicily sleazy,
But the wit carried some weight
Avoiding to say the usual
Can't you see I am eating mango?
Is a mark of considerable literary genius.
But will this toad
I see behind her appreciate her wit -
No, the better question is
Will this saucy sight
Not adore his wealthy wretchedness?
But here is my share of the white wedding wine
I had better shut up
And drink it up.

samuel nze

Copulation

Round

Moist

Virgin

Orifice

Yields

Blood,

Mixes

Pleasure

With

Pain

Love with

Responsibility

Hope with

Sacrifice.

samuel nze

Craft

Your hands turn
because they are nimble
working feverishly on your
craft; expert hands going faster
and faster on your craft,
because they are nimble.

Your hands turn
on your craft; nimble hands, turning
exquisite craft.

samuel nze

Crestfallen And Teary

Crestfallen and teary
Pulses low and dreary
My body is weary
Still with weeping weary
Just this early morning
Ere the sun's awaking
I was weak and sleepy
My torso was ailing
Fear and painful sadness
Struggle with their badness
And their sulky harshness
With her silly hardness
I am still unhappy
Make the term go snappy
My temper is crappy
The year will be nappy.

samuel nze

Dauntless

My foes are all round me
Try to hem me in.
I resist
They cannot win this war
I must be tough
Dauntless.

Whereas we at dawn
Pray to God
To send down
His holy rain
Of blessing
And whereas we at dusk
Pray to God
To send down
His holy wings
Of protection.

My foes are fleeing
Give me respite.
I rejoice
They have lost the war
I was tough indeed
Dauntless.

samuel nze

Day Unto Day

From day to day I cry
I find the case wry
That though I try
I cannot my freedom buy

From these shackles of gloom
I will to rise soon
Like the flower bloom
Giving my heart room

To exalt and run
To have all the fun
To bask in the sun
To swim, jump and run

I want to be gay
To feel the solar ray
To have me a free day
When all I do is play.

samuel nze

Daydreams

When I build castles in the air
I do not use cement
For fear that
It will be too heavy.
Rather I use my mind,
Which is as light as ether.
I draw the plan there
And there too I conceive
The framework.
My mind is the craftsman
And the mason as well.
The building will be tall,
Beautiful; a sight to behold.
The air will hold it well,
Proudly by night and by day too -
It is in the day that
It was built.

samuel nze

Deluded Height

Who will humble this man
That walks taller than tall
And struts like
Ramshackle in reckless abandon?
He thinks I need him
And maybe I do for
The intelligence he inspires;
But I need him brought low,
He must not be further deluded
Into thinking he is of
Outlandish magnitude;
I know not what serves his delusion,
But I know he is no different than me.

samuel nze

Despair Is A Mad Man

Your thoughts are not too heavy for your heart
It is only foolery that makes it seem so
You think till you are hot
And then say you are sick
You cry in shameless misery
And lament your fate
Why me becomes a ballad
And you call the tune till tears drop
Despair is a mad man
Yet you befriend him
He goes causing a nuisance
But you seek him
Insanity has no friend they say
Still you go near to become mad as well
You go looking long and hard for gloom
If you are not mad, then you must be a fool
You do not pray
Nor invoke celestial beings
You do not sing
Nor chase dolour from your soul
You do not play
Nor fill your mind with gaiety
All you do is drone and cry
For all that has been
That should not
You make despair a nagging companion
And gain nothing by the business.

samuel nze

Did You Say Die?

Did you say die, Lord
When my foes looked
Enviously upon me
Wishing I would be off
With my unsettling self
So that they would no longer
Cast acrimonious eyes
On my forced show-off
As they thought my sprightly grace?
Did you say die, Lord
When those who hated my gait
Reminded me that my shoulders
Were a trifle too highly raised
And my heels clicked simpe simpe
Whereas my age-mates were
Smoking goof and talking
Of their amorous exploits
In the solitude of the obeche stump?
Did you say die, Lord
When the jealous ones caught me
Reading by the candlestick
And their faces creased with
Displeasure at the impetuous crime
Of having this a dictionary
And that a too hefty textbook
While they were weeding grass
And preparing the dinner
I too would consume?
Have you said die, Lord
Now that I have this headache
And stomach heaving
To the uncalled for insult
Received from her yesterday
Who told me to pick my steps
From where I left them
As I was sprinting much too fast
For my shadow.

samuel nze

Directly At A Beast

I am looking directly at a beast;
My lecturer is a beast,
He is not intelligent
But he thinks he is;
He is ugly and loves women
A lot -
Worst of all, he talks too much;
Empty vessels they say
Make the most noise,
And this vessel is really empty;
Pot belly
Loud voice
Strain of veins in his throat,
But all he skirmishes
Is insignificant balderdash,
He feels he hates those who
Like him think themselves intelligent
But the truly brilliant -
The wise
Will refrain from
Keeping his ugly company.

samuel nze

Do It.

The first day of our week
Is my birthday
Do not make it bleak
That is all I pray.

I will expect a lot from you
To prove your affection
It is love's due
And it prompts to action.

Give me joy on that day
Make my heart race
Fill me with a sudden gay
Feeling that denies space.

You love me
So you always declare
You need me
In a manner that is rare.

Many men mouth mysteries
Of undying love
Full of artful intricacies
Their hearts in a glove.

Barely seen in doing
Barely alert to the other's needs
Barely ever losing
Barely planting love's true seed.

samuel nze

Don'T Punish Me Hard

Don't punish me hard
I am too young to die
I recall my birth
The day is not too old
I am still brown
In the eyes
And black in the hair
I bet even
The raven knows
I am swifter
Than he.
My blood still ripples
In my veins.

samuel nze

Eating Cat

Lapping up with
its red tongue
and licking its
whiskers
the slurp slurp
tells the duty,
the purr
smiles the gratitude
the bowl at last is
drained.

samuel nze

Endless Strife

The problem with life to me
Seems to be that
Its needs are too many
Causing discomfort;
We cannot take our hands
Into our breast to rest.
The struggle must go on
Indefinitely.
Waking and striving earlier,
Laying and sleeping later,
The hustle is perennially keen
As we brush aside the doctor's caution
And one another too,
Yet the psalmist has said that
Our striving is useless
As God blesses his lazying beloved
As they loll on their beds.

samuel nze

Enduring M's.

Mosquitoes have endured long
Biting people
The same old story of
Insects causing plasmodium
Marriage has endured long
Bonding people
The same old story of
Interested adults wed
Money has endured long
Buying people
The same old story of
Inflated goods sold
Misery has endured long
Bullying people
The same old story of
Injured hearts bled
Motherhood has endured long
Bearing people
The same old story of
Incarcerated fetuses freed.

samuel nze

Enough Of You!

Who do you think you are, man?
Come on, enough of you!
See the way you strut
Like a veritable peacock -
I say enough of you!

The breadth of your scapular
The swing of your hips
The push of your chest
The slant of your eyes
The way you boast
The grin of pride
Who really are you -
O, enough of you, I say!

Get out, I don't want to see you
Big, handsome, intelligent
Get out and stay out - leave me alone
Before I die of grief
Why does your nearness bring such pain?
Why do you remind me of what I'm not?
Why do I wish you would just fall dead?
O my God - help me, I hate this feeling
Deep in my soul. Now, now, fellow, I say:
Enough, enough, enough; enough of you!

samuel nze

Envious Apology

I think it is silly
When you envy someone;
You try to measure up
But find it hard,
So you wish him dead.
Away, away!
Move away from here
I hate to see you,
Your sight irritates me;
See the way you
Strut;
Your shoulders measure up
To your nose;
You give me
That slant look
As if I am a nobody
But the fact that
I do not have the talents
You do
Does not make you any better
Than me.

samuel nze

Envious Banality

Coded banality regards tomorrow
With crimson sockets
Beauty shops are empty
But local loos are full

Shapely bosoms have
Forgotten how to dance
Coquetry ranks high
Among the daughters of men

Sorcery is rife with
Using the Spirit to squelch
The one you are
Most envious of

Stalking with hate
Detecting simplest faults
With string criticisms and
Overt diatribes unjustified

You are sad
Competition takes a pass on you
You did not start late
But you have not moved fast

Not fast enough to outwit
That perceived rival
That lucky Joseph
That rich neighbour

Baseness is lifted
In your heart
You like it in others
Others see it in you

Banality is overt
In the rat race of the slums
Where you live doing
What you do.

samuel nze

Envious Clouds

It is middle May
And the sky is in a mood
Crying everyday -
What is this all about!
Always it is the drip drop
On the roof that I hear,
The pitter patter of a thousand small feet
As they hurry from the
Watery oppression on the
Road from school;
Women gather in their stuff
From the open-air market;
The clouds have envied
Their suckling babes and
Gone off in a rage
To give birth too
To nothing but water.
It is the sort of thing that envy does,
Black eyes at another's progress,
Ugly rain maker;
If you burst forth in tears
Must the sky follow suit
And spoil our trade?

samuel nze

Envious Rivalry

I told them they would destroy my world
They would make it a hell;
They cannot say I did not tell them,
As I looked upon them from celestial heights

The country is full of mediocre ill
Of a lack of understanding;
The land is full of hate,
No one cares at all.

This old man is barking at his daughter
Saying this and that;
He is refusing to reason,
No gentlemanliness about him.

They struggle with one another
Increase the need to strive;
They complain about everything,
There is no respite.

Bickering the livelong day
These ones do not care for the truth;
They love delusion,
They give it heated chase.

It is envious rivalry they prefer
Envious rivalry they choose;
It is envious rivalry that will,
As it were satisfy them.

samuel nze

Evening Remorse

Because you do not know
In spite of the spatial grow
Your emotions still flow
In ways you know
The wind will blow
Your faint dreams so
Over the hills they go
You watch them do
All the anger in you
The witch the old and blue
Make passes with your due
Sadly sadly you rue
What should not do
You would rather have few
Than too many without a cue.

samuel nze

Everyone Wants Love These Days

Everyone loves love these days
Has it always been so?
Where has work gone to,
The sweat of persistence
Leisure
Entertainment -
That is all we get these days;
It is not fair that we think only
Of chivalrous acts towards women
Men aim at kissing
But they should think more of
Books and commerce;
Before it is too late.

samuel nze

Experiencing Attacks

Slowly
Silently
Surely
We gather experience
From life,
Attacks and
Spiritual battles
From witches at night.
Darkness
Despair
Defeat
Gloom
In the night.
Slipperily
Sloppily
Sourly
We gather pain,
Revealing wounds
From unseen foes
Under the cover of dark.

samuel nze

Eze Onyeagwalam

I am a king, do not tell me;
I am Eze Onyeagwalam,
No one speaks to me.
So it was that one day
Eze Onyeagwalam went
To the market
With excreta in his pants
And the kingdom of flies for escort;
Nobody sold him anything,
And no one spoke -
All covered their noses at him.
He was exasperated.
Why does no one speak to me!
A silent voice chided then,
Are you not Eze Onyeagwalam?
No one tells you anything.

samuel nze

Fine Lady

fine lady
make you mellow
if you continue with
your shakara
no person go marry you-o!
you just dey denge pose
like say tomorrow no dey
take am easy-o!
i don tell you finish.

samuel nze

Fishes In The Sea

The sea is blue and white
It is always like that
The dog will always bite
And chase after the cat.

Fishes are in the sea
It is the usual
Business has one plea
The need to be frugal

We catch fishes with a net
Ambition is the spice of existence
Always on the alert
We have no time for pretence

I eat fish, and so do you
Proteins build up the body
It is not about voodoo
But health makes one hardy

samuel nze

Flies Do The Fireworks

Flies do the fireworks
Aided by my reading lamp;
They won't let me be.
Morsels of bread
Are left on the table,
Younger siblings did not
Clean up after them.
I have distracting thoughts
In my head,
I despair at removing them.
I want to read -
What then is all this!

samuel nze

Food

Why food -
Is it at all necessary?
Why must we go
Every other day to the marts
To stock fish, condiments
And rice?
We hustle each day
At work
Only so that our bellies
Can be filled afterwards.
We think we control food,
But clearly it controls us.

samuel nze

Forgive Me For Being Great

Forgive me for being great
I didn't know it would
Merit your acrid stare
The snobbery and disdain
Ache my soul
Draw watery salt to my eyes
I did not choose my gait
You say my shoulders
Compete with my nose
Which is haughty and uncouth
To my brow;
You say I talk gruff
And have this unseemly panache
You remind me that I call myself
A leany genius, one of the anti-social breed
But all you do is try my modesty
I would love you if you
Cared more for my heart:
Forget my accomplishments
Forget my style
Forget that I am nothing but simple
Forgive my being great.

samuel nze

Francis Arinze

The Holy Father at last is dead
Who will succeed him
Who will be the next pope
Francis Arinze?

I dare say he will
First swarthy pontiff
Nigerian on a seat raised high
Negro father of the whole world.

All hail Francis Arinze
Soon to be pope
Prophecy as sure as sunrise
From a hallowed east.

I loved Karol Wojtyla
He was a patron of peace
But I will love Francis as well
My brother and kin.

He will shepherd souls
Like the Saviour himself
With the keys of Peter
He will enter them to heaven.

I do pray to Celestial forces
Move the hand of God
Let Francis approach the cathedral
Let him be pope.

samuel nze

Friend?

Are you my friend
Then why did you rate me
One over five
To spoil my score?

You are jealous or something
I told you that I was now FPC
And your temperature
Began to rise.

You are not my friend
If you are you
Would not treat me so shabbily
You know I least deserve it.

samuel nze

Frolic, Not Stress

Thunder is resolutely proud today
The sound is deafening and not at all quell
The children jump, run, frisk about and yell
As they scurry to keep alive their play
Who cares for this arrogant noisemaker
Or the tearful gray bags that it escorts
My father needs it and hence his prayer
Farmer man and the earth's darling of sorts
But I, young and brawny and ever careless
I do not need it, nor could I care less
All I want is to frolic, not to stress
To be gay - O this my young heart, God bless
I am concerned just for this very day
That tomorrow will be here, who can tell?

samuel nze

From The Sweat

From the sweat of
Our old poor parents
We grew into men
Ready to sweat for others
To make them grow too

Society is founded
On the sweat of slaves
Those working hard quarrying stones
Build others like houses
Even though the pope
Quarried stones
To build himself

From the sweat of
Our old poor parents
We grew into men
Ready to make ourselves
The best we can.

samuel nze

Gloom

Dark heart and a hurt head
There is disappointment in my soul
I groan in tired dissipation
As melancholy hems me in
There seems to be no escape
As foes lock horns with me
Seeking to entrap me in
A web of frustration;
I struggle and whimper
I ask for divine help
God will come to my aid
I only have to trust.

samuel nze

God Is God

Logic of sorts does not it explain
From pride and calumny though we stay
God alone must all the time attain
Our deepest affections when we pray

Innocents fall dead at guilty hands
Bribed mouths are mum to bitter truth
We do not know why He folds His hands
But to berate Him would be uncouth

The rich will get all the richer still
I go on keeping poverty kin
Who am I to quiz the divine will
That would very likely be a sin

So my sorrow must be respectful
I must cry and yet say I love God
I cannot understand it in full
But my pastor insists that God is God.

samuel nze

God Takes Care Of Me.

God takes care of me
In ways I know not
He knows I am an orphan
Without Him I'd die
He gives me to eat
Comforts and shades me
He helps me when down
Tells me sweet nothings
Yesterday it was a miracle
Today it's praise
Tomorrow will be a
Surprise I can't wait to get.
God is my sufficiency
Every way unique
It is not thus with others
If it is let them say
He has told me not to fret
To look at the birds fly
They have no farms
Yet He provides to their fill.

samuel nze

Good And Bad Times

In the evening
The shop owners
Prepare for home;
They arrange the goods left unsold
Hoping it will not have
To be the same story again
Tomorrow.
Good times may continue
All the time
But bad times should endure
For only today -
Who needs them anyway?

samuel nze

Grieving Like A Fulsome Song

Grieving like a fulsome song
Harps the exit of the loved
Wreaths will curtain on the pane
As with pain the loser sighs

Mournful irony will quip
That his loss is disguised boon
Lesser pain perhaps, but this?
We must let him still to weep

He will cry and rent the air
Quarreling with God or fate
Asking why it must be him
Puzzle no one can resolve

Quizzes of the same allure
Leaved etched lines above the eyes
Raised and stoic like the priest's
Causing one to age with speed.

samuel nze

Haikus Are My Kind

Haikus are my kind
Easy to write
Fine mathematics of lines
In solemn display
Five seven five

Haikus
What splendid poetry
Beauty of expression
Precision of words
Haikus
What crafty writing
They intrigue and challenge me

I write haikus
Plenty of the time
One of my favourite kinds
Creativity calls every other day
Write a haiku

samuel nze

Happiness

It is the feel of a family united
In love and comfort
Daring the odds
It is the feel of you and me
As one joyful people
Happiness is living in our space
Without hassles
Understanding that springs
Deep from the heart
I love you
You love me
What else is there but to sing
We are happy
We are full of joy.

samuel nze

Hard Work

A spade is in my hand
Dirty spade in my hand
Dirty sandy spade
It is in my hand.

It is used for work
Hard work in the farm
Dreary straining work
It is done in the farm.

The sun will beat me
Harsh sunlight on my back
Terrifying rays beating staccato
They fall on my back.

I sweat in the face
Salty sweat from my face
Salty trickling sweat
It falls from my face.

samuel nze

Hollow Heart

I have today a hollow heart;
Best friend says I'm insatiable,
That he has tried
But love cannot seem to fill me.
And maybe he is right.

Love is like a cup of chocolate,
Sweet but never enough;
You drink and empty the ton,
Then you greedily look for more.
You drool and swoon,
You hunger for filling
But it is never enough.

So he is probably right
When he accuses me
Of being insatiable;
Perhaps I am - who is not;
Who really?

samuel nze

Holy Holy Holy

Angelic choirs raise their voices

Holy holy holy

God is the brightness

The aura of perfection

Holy is he.

Holy holy holy

Perfection in semblance of light

Radiant beauty of whiteness

Purity of celestial bliss

Aura of clear silver

Mirror of grace from

A hallowed height.

Angelic choirs bring forth music

Holy holy holy

God is light

The beauty of radiance

Holy is he.

samuel nze

Home Is Where The Soul Stays

Back tide water brings the swan back
Home.
Home is where the heart is.
Inside those four walls
Where papa smokes pipe
And mama keels the pot;
Inside those four walls
Where siblings play ayo
And visitors inform of market prices;
Inside those four walls
Where my girlfriend steals me a kiss
The moment grandma's back is turned;
Inside those four walls
Where my bed is covered with sheets
And my feet refuse to move.
Back tide water brings me back
Home.
Home is where the soul stays.

samuel nze

Hypertension

With dark blood
You heave air in your breast
It is heavy
That load on your chest.

Doctor will call it hypertension
You eat no proteins
There is no milk in your bowl
And you think too much.

Your family have not known him
They want everything
It is your duty to swot
Is it yours to die too?

Father says sacrifice is true religion
But you are not Jesus Christ
If all this doing will snap your ribs
You had better rest.

samuel nze

I Am A Man Now

I catch a fish in my hand
And do not let it go.
The fish stands for luck;
The juju that wicked people
Have been doing
To tie down my progress
Is waning fast.
I am mastering the tide,
My eyes clear;
I see the road a mile off,
I am a man now.

samuel nze

I Am Licking Sugar

I am licking sugar
To make the day sweeter
What else can I do!
I have rallied my wits
To no avail.
Even as I loll on my bed
My nose testifies to
My weeping
Over the sad day.

samuel nze

I Am Thinking Of You

I am thinking of you

Today

Yesterday

Tomorrow

I have been thinking of you

Now

Before

Always

I will be thinking of you

Tomorrow

Week

Fortnight

I was thinking of you

Then

Past

Long

samuel nze

I Am Wondering

I am wondering why mama
Is always agitated
She cooks
She farms
She sweeps
She tends
Soon she is pregnant again
I am wondering why papa
Is not always agitated
He reads
He talks
He sleeps
He scolds
Soon he is drinking again
I am wondering why I
Am always bemused
I watch
I think
I ask
I follow
Soon I am wondering again

samuel nze

I Believe

I believe I shall succeed
I believe I shall be an inspiration
I believe my troubles are temporary
I believe I shall be rich
I believe I shall swell wide
I believe I shall take on the world
I believe I shall speak of wealth
I believe I shall carry sufferers along
I believe I shall show how I made it from nothing
I believe in God
I believe that he is taking me somewhere
I believe that the darkness of today gives way
I believe, I believe, I believe.

samuel nze

I Feel Like Crying

I feel like crying
When I remember the loss
The Tsunami disaster
That shook our hearts
I feel like crying when I
See the tears fall down
A victim's cheek
Feel her wish it never happened
I think of my own poverty
I shudder at the depravity
And mediocrity that is Africa
I am saddened by the greed
Of leaders who
Instead of seeking to save the lost
Continue to waste
What is left.

samuel nze

I Felt Like

I felt like pumping him with lead
For all he said
He should have been dead
For all I cared.

It did not seem right
That he should fight
For what was not his right
It was like flying a kite.

Today and tomorrow
He goes to borrow
Turn the mind to sorrow
Like a bent arrow.

Alas for the end
That prosperity would lend
To the bitterest end
No one would tend.

samuel nze

I Have Been Angry With God

I have been angry with God,
Things did not go the way
I planned;
That was why.

I have been angry with God,
He did not observe my moods
But chose His own course;
As always.

I have been angry with God,
I felt betrayed and left alone
As he spurned my yearnings;
In preference to His.

I have been angry with God,
But not for too long
I understand His sovereignty;
And I repent.

samuel nze

I Kept On Going

I kept on going
Even though the road was rough
Life's journey became death's trap
Hamstrings and frustrations
The livelong day
Electronic hatred, mechanic wickedness,
Mindless perjury
I was rendered incommunicado
By hooded men with black
Spitters of fire
They broke the window
Clang, clang and pieces of glass
Came crashing in
At the door, in and gun at my
Forehead
Shift back, shift back -
A sudden scar at the arm
Blind nonrecognition
Head bowed in forced awe
I had no money
Poverty for once a blessing
But I had my electronic talker
I had to give it to them
Back out, back out
The show is over
And no applause
It was too dark at night
For a show without spot
And floodlights
I keep on going
Though life gets tougher
I keep on living
Evading death's trap.

samuel nze

I Need To Have Faith

I need to have faith
It is God doing and not me
Struggle I may
But he gives increase.

O that I would rest
In the knowledge
That he alone is king.

There is need to hope
It is God rewarding and not me
Anxious I may be
But he calms me

O that I would rest
In the knowledge
That he alone is king.

There is need to love
It is God giving and not me
Romance I may
But he gives fertility.

samuel nze

I Packaged Their Assignments For Them

I packaged their assignments
Neatly arranged for them
I had committed intellectual fraud
And I was not going to care
Africa is not making it,
We're living double lives
Our intellectuals
Sport borrowed grades
Our students have empty brains
Those whose skulls are full
Are drained away abroad
And we are left here to stifle
One another in jealousy
When it is confirmed
That my head as well is full
I will allow myself to easily
Be drained away like my
Betters and compares, to the States
Or even to Europe.

samuel nze

I Pity My Enemies

I assured myself I was
Not giving up without a struggle
Where were they, who were they
These attackers of mine?
I pity my enemies
Those anticipating my doom
Praying feverishly for my
Ghastly undoing
Visiting this a dibah, that a witch
Mixing this a potion, that a drug
For my doom
I tell those who insist
That if it is me they are after
To go get better employment
As they are really wasting time.

samuel nze

I Saw You

I saw you
Clearly,
A photo worths more
Than a thousand words;
I observed your moods,
Your smile came through the colour
And made me know
You were there true;
Two dimensional reality
Of opaque significance.
The picture is still in my head;
It is there because
I saw you.

samuel nze

I Sold My Blood For Money

Sometimes I saw my blood
Drain out at the prick of a needle
My blood was draining out
As money was draining in;
I was selling my blood for money.
The nurse said I had excess blood,
Whether she told the truth
Or lied to get me part with a pint or two
I cannot tell,
But of what use was blood to me
When I was dying of hunger?
I agreed to sell that
Dark red fluid in my veins;
That rich red rumble of liquid
Filled their plastic bag;
I saw the vampires smile and praise
The quality - your's is rich, they say.
I am impatient; all I want is money, and
Soon enough they count me two notes;
I look at the sum - the price of blood.
They say blood is life,
But I have traded it here for money;
Does that mean that my life is priced?
Perhaps - if I cannot eat
Food bought with money
I will certainly die.

samuel nze

I Want A King's Daughter

I want a king's daughter
To be my friend
But she is too proud
Her head is up in the sky.

Let me whisper in your ears, friend
You must cut the head
Axe to her neck
She is not the only princess.

Ah, but that is cruel
I cannot do it
If her head towers
Then I must let mine too

Suit yourself then
I give you solemn advice
But you refuse to heed
You will end in stroke

A Compromise then
I will sit and stare at her
Maybe she will of her own accord
Hunt me like a chick.

Afterall she is the eagle
Ugonna is her name
The eagle of her father
The eagle of a king.

samuel nze

I Will Never Forget The Pain

I will never forget the pain
The sadness, the tears
As my heart sank in the shadoof
And the water seeped in
Mixed with salt and came up
To my eyes
Sadness, grief, despair and longing
There was pain in my soul
Hate with the pasiion of frustration
Moaning impatience in a mediocre country
This man was insensitive to my feelings
Cared less for my moods.
My spirit spited God and was restless
Wishing to have nothing to do with the
Impersonal deity: sooner no God and
No grief to drive me crazy
Millions of churchmen greedily pray their way
To wealth, having duped their following
The grand theft of machination leading to
Confusion, the staccato of overwhelming
Discomfort in acrid economy
National uncouth and disdain, miserly
Debauchery in the oligarchy of the haves
Of course I am pained
I hate to be a Nigerian - I hate God
For making me who I am
Let me be!
Let me be!
And the restlessness goes on
In the sadness of dissatisfaction
And the growing malice
Of frustration in the sheer
Insensitivity of man
Yeah, the black man
Who claims to be my brother
But is but a swarthy elf
A negative of the devil himself.
But who cares for the devil -
Who even cares for God?

Only the pain is recalled
The pain of sitting in that room
Looking at the same
Narcissistic in sensitive creature
That claims to feel me
I will never forget the disdain
I will never forget the pain.

samuel nze

I Will Not Be All Alone

Even when they all leave me
Even when they say they
Do not care a hoot what I feel
I will not be all alone

I will have the air in my lungs
The dreams in my head
The passion in my breast
The courage in my arms

Even when they refuse to chat
Even when they put me down
Do not call or send texts
I will not be alone

I will have my books to read
My prayers to say
My lessons to attend
My friends to trust

Even when they forget old days
Even when they refuse to dream
Do not recall my wooings
I will not be alone

I will have my God to pray to
I will tell Him what I feel
The pangs of anguish
The sorrows of loss.

samuel nze

I Wonder If The Dusky Dame

I wonder if the dusky dame
Enjoys her night in bed
Stiffened thus by bitter bile
And sixty silent snorts,
Whitewashed sepulchre of slaves
Brimmed by blackened bones
Giddy grotesque gaiety
Honed in practised pain,
The envy in the marketplace
The diatribes of hate
The visit to the juju priest
For medicines of death;
Bickering in the backyard
With the senior wife
The afternoon is ever spent
Licking soulish wounds,
Will she ever moan then
As the prick persuades
Pleadingly, soothingly
Pleadingly, soothingly
Pleadingly, soothingly
Burst forth woman, why so numb!
The man's fluid alone proceeds
The woman only sighs
Caged so by her guilt and hate
Her fears and sourly soul.

samuel nze

I Would Be A Fool

If I did not trust
I would be a fool:
Sometimes to trust is
The only alternative -
When you eat only after
Having hoped for food;
When you sleep
Only after having tired out;
When you dress up
As the only safe keep from nakedness;
When you hold her
In your arms as a relief
From lonely pain.
If I did not trust
I would be a fool;
I would be a fool
Even if I trusted.

samuel nze

I Write

In my quiet moments
I write,
I try to examine the connections
Between events;
The phantasms in my head
Correspond to the thoughts
Spread on the sheet.
I try to express,
To create a consonance
Between what I imagine
And what I scribble.

samuel nze

If

If

I am told

The same conditional dictum

And

If not

The action is reversed

If

I do well

I am rewarded

If not

I am punished.

samuel nze

If Not For Anything Else

Give me your hand
And make me your friend
If not for anything else
For all there has been
Between us,
All the secrets we have shared
The games, the fun, the happy hours
We have been partners
To many a crime
We have risen and fallen
Like the tides
Near Bar beach
I laughed to see you
Gay on Christmas day
Si if not for anything else
Give me your hand.

samuel nze

If Only You Would Trust Me!

If only you would trust me
Things would be so much better;
Then we would not
Have to quarrel so much.
All the bitter wrangling
Would be gone,
And there would be no more envy;
None of that vicious stare in your eyes,
No painful diatribes.
If only you would trust me,
There would be no need
To have written this poem.

samuel nze

If Tomorrow Comes

If tomorrow comes,
Our sorry situation will improve;
We will have a new lease
Of bearable existence.

Unless tomorrow comes
We will remain poor,
Sorrowing the livelong day,
Unable to smile deep.

Although tomorrow comes
We quake;
What if it comes
Without the needed remedy?

Should tomorrow come empty-handed
We would rue;
We already recall that today
Was yesterday's tomorrow.

samuel nze

In A Hurry

When I was younger
I used to think
My ma would outlive a hundred
She shocked me when she
Couldn't even half it
Was she in a hurry
Or was it just destiny?
Whatever it was
That too was in a hurry.

samuel nze

In A State Of Anomie.

In a state of anomie
You look for order
You search out a pin
In a hay stack

In a cold heart
You look for love
You seek out a swarthy man
In a blackout

In a hovel
You look for comfort
You hunt a reindeer
In an African jungle

In Nigeria
You look for truth
You chase water
In the Sahara

samuel nze

In Fearful Pain

She was pounding yam
For her husband
The pestle went up and down
Her breasts did the same.
For her husband
Her breast pounded
He was pounding her
His torso going up and down.
Her breasts pounded
In fearful pain
She had offended him
He was pounding her.
In fearful pain
She received the blows
His torso going up and down
He was pounding her.
She loved him too much
To run away
She bore his pounding
In fearful pain.

samuel nze

In My Country

You must know I like my country,
Life here is simple.
Pressed for release
There is no need for a lavatory
The bush is a welcome variant;
No one bothers, no one looking your way.
Needing provocation
You need not search far,
Unwary face may welcome excrement
Thrown from an up stair window;
Burst upon your sockets
Your shriek is disdained.
You are dull
It matters only a grain,
With deftly copied reminders
You are sure to pass.
Even when you flunk that interview
Lady with fat bottoms,
You will sit in that office
After sitting on your employer's
Masculine rod in the dark.
Tell me you need a wife
And reveal your having not looked,
Every girl needs a husband;
Crusades where they call down Fire, their
Sorcerers mixing love medicines
And many draining cosmetic shops
Greedily seek men.
Happy and holy is my country,
Land of many twists;
That old woman does not smile
At you for naught
Grease you her itching palm;
The motorcycle rider will shunt traffic
If you are late
But you must pay.
There is always a short cut to everything,
It only needs you to belong;
Do as I do, don't worry.

Keep the nation as poor
And as depraved as is.
In all the oppression of the have-nots,
The poverty of the squelched
And the confusion of the youth
Full churches and clubs
Point to the truth that
Suffering is compatible with obsessed grinning
And smug laughter in my country.

samuel nze

In Pain

In needful pain
We wait for an answer
To all of life's irks
Slowly, reverently, gingerly
In fearful pain
We anticipate life's answer
To all her tiresome longings
Patiently, quietly, silently
In hopeful pain
We treasure opportunity's answer
To natural quandaries
Softly, resignedly, gainly
In joyful pain
We appreciate life's answer
To all our worries
Lately, surely, purely.

samuel nze

In Praise Of America

America is the answer
To all of life's problems
America, the home of freedom
And self actualization.
The world revere America,
Paragon of beauty,
Epitome of pride;
I love America
Hopeful home,
Benevolent barn.

samuel nze

In The Dusk

In the dusk
Hunts for human blood
Reclaim erstwhile portions
Of flesh left over from
Yesterday's gory feast
At midnight;
Sharp fangs
Red-stained teeth
A mass of tangled hair
Horrorific portents
Remind us of death;
Black
Shocking
Red
Awesome,
A pool of somebody else's blood.
We go through sadistic tunnels
Hearing ominous hoots
And eerie chuckles,
Sinister selfish spirits
Share aristocratic jokes;
Their sadistic pleasure
Satisfies only hearts
As perverse as they.
Wicked, cruel, thirsty for ill,
The jaws of death
Are kept perennially open
As vultures wait impatiently for
Yet another supper
In the dusk.

samuel nze

In The Evening

In the evening I loll,
Sitting down on a tortured fork
The wind in my face,
Your voice in my ears.
Paradise -
It is what you inspire,
Your soothing presence
Is heavenly.
Yesterday I was crying,
The loneliness was unbearable;
I could not grasp why it had to be so.
But I see you now
And can relax
The evening passes slowly,
Fruitfully too.
You and I in the moon's embrace
Speaking softly to each other
Loving the sound of our voices
Keeping the dark company.

samuel nze

In The War

In that war
We fought bravely
But the gods had decided
That we should not win.
We were fewer
Than our aggressors
Their weapons
Outshone ours.
Gallant youth was sacrificed
For our land
Biafra needed their blood
To appease her gods.
Even now our leaders
Have no recompense for the fluid
Their slow wits say
No victor no vanquished.
It is not what the bereaved quip
They are hurt
It is they who lost dear ones
They are vanquished.

samuel nze

In The Workhouses

In the workhouses
The slaves are pit
Against one another while
The masters are in palaces
Enjoying themselves.
We are the black monkeys
Of Africa, in the sun we work
And even when we go to school
It is to envy the brainy lad;
We kill him at work
Because his star shines too bright
We hate him strut like
The whiteman
We hate the whiteman too,
But as he is too powerful
We vent the hate on
His black imitation.

samuel nze

Innuendos

He was talking with two mouths
trying to fool me; now this
and now that - innuendos.

I fear him when he is like this,
talking with two mouths
saying this and meaning that;
now this and now that - innuendos.

Will he ever stop fooling me with now this and now that;
will he give me respite from these innuendos?

samuel nze

Insecure Poverty

I have no money in my pocket
See me separated from the world
I am insecure
Who is there to help?
Lift me up from misery
I am tired of this mediocrity
I want to fly
Give me wings, I beg.
God has been kind I concede
Let him be kind still
If I cannot get through today
Can I survive tomorrow?

samuel nze

Internet Lover

The world is a complex dream
The internet is the denouement
A world intricately woven together
Never ceases to amaze me
You are on the other side of the world
And I am here
But we can see and speak to each other
It is the white man's juju.
On this chair I reach out to you
See that smirk on your face
Hear your voice sift through the speaker
Like I did yesterday on the phone
You complain of Chioma
And the life you left behind when
You reached America in January
I tell you of my dream
To win a visa lottery
But in between we speak of love
And marvel at the complicity of life.
You are an American best friend
Far far away
But you also are an internet lover
So so near.
I may win that lottery, my love
And join you over there
But till then
I will sit still on this chair
And reach out to you on the internet
As I did when you were here with me
Back home in Africa.
I love you, Jude.

samuel nze

Ironic Hate

Speedily he comes
And goes slowly
Like the mist
Of the morning.
Let's sing him a song
Let's cook him a meal
Let's bathe him in oil
Let's cool him in wine.
Uppity miser
Careful poet
Shrewd minister
Ugly witch.
Let's fear them
Run for your life
If they catch you
Don't say you saw me.
My mother is a witch
I discovered yesterday
My father is a miser
I knew long ago.

samuel nze

Is It Love?

Is it love between us
When you fear me?
You cast suspicious eyes
This way and that,
You are not at home when
You sit with me;
You quake with insecurity
In my company.
Is it love then?
It makes me sick.
Is it not love afterall?
It makes me wonder.
Beautiful face
Lean physique
The type that make queens.
All about you is perfect,
But everyday
It is your intrigues that
Catch my fancy,
Stealthy slippery sleuth
Of the passion
Brewing inside of me.

samuel nze

Is It Singing

Is it singing I hear in my heart?
And why singing by the way -
Am I happy?
And how can I be happy
When I am stressed;
But am I really stressed?
Is it stress when I have to
Do a little work to keep
Body, soul and mind together?
I should not at all complain -
God is with me.
He loves and guides me,
Whispering in my ear,
Be content; don't fret my son,
For I love you.
I will lead you on to the end
And then you will not quarrel
With the singing in your heart
You are happy now,
But you will be happier then.

samuel nze

Is There No Liquour?

We have toiled hard
In the sun,
We have defied the torments
To prove us men;
Is there no liquour
To cool our thirst?
When we now are back
From the fields
With the grain piled high
And the sweat on our backs
Deflecting to the wind;
When we see our children
Looking proudly into our faces
And our wives preparing our food;
When the sun defeated and shy
Hides behind the clouds,
We ask the rhetorical quiz:
Is there no liquour?

samuel nze

It Is When We Play

It is when we play that we know
Who is angry
He keeps his face like excrement
And says nothing good
It is when we play that we know
Who is sick
She drones and wants to put
Her head on my chest
It is when we play that we know
Who are wicked
They make us cry aloud
And do not play at all
It is when we play that we know
Who are part of us
They smile like we do
And sing like we always do.

samuel nze

Jealous People

I have met some people
Who are full of bile
Dissatisfaction is their middle name
They are the jealous ones.

'Why does he strut so
Is he better than me
What does he have that I don't
Who does he think he is? '

If you have met these kind of people
Then you are old enough on earth
They are all around us
And they make me sigh.

For goodness sake
If he seems better than you
Pray to God to improve you
But leave the poor guy alone!

samuel nze

Jesus Dies For The World

It was uneasy
For this strange man
To preach a new gospel
Of resignation.

The Jews would none of it
Pilate asked the worth
Of his truth
He was to die for the world.

Jesus claimed to be
The son of God but
According to Mosaic authority
He was a blasphemer.

Upon the cross they nailed him
Mocking and jeering
He saved others but
Cannot save himself.

Till giving up the ghost
He accomplished the presagesse
It is finished he said
Into your hands I commit my spirit

samuel nze

Juju

Black magic can tame a warrior
Make him break his spear
Carry the loin cloth on his head
And run like Ele

The one and then the other
The other and then the one

You sleep but never wake
Spirits welcome you on the other side
Make you settle down
Like a wayfarer

The one and then the other
The other and then the one

You are pregnant and think it a son
But soon you bear a tuber
That rival in the market caused it
She buried something in your stall

The one and then the other
The other and then the one

Your breasts seem full of milk
But the suckling babe
Tastes only tar
It must be juju

The one and then the other
The other and then the one

Your son was well yesterday
Today he has the sleeping sickness
Recall the old woman's hateful stare
She gave him something while he slept

The one and then the other
The other and then the one

You once had a store
Where you sold yams
A fire came from nowhere
And burnt it up

The one and then the other
The other and then the one

Your wife gives you pottage
You smack your lips
Soon your stool is tap water
Your intestines are in your hands

The one and then the other
The other and then the one

They planted a cock's crest
In your back garden
You stepped in and had legs
Swelling like the elephant's

The one and then the other
The other and then the one

It is juju doing all these things
Your enemies have remembered you
Call a pastor presently
So you may remember them back

The one and then the other
The other and then the one.

samuel nze

Just Wait

When life troubles you unduly
And you are in a hurry to
Do something new
Just wait - it may not be time yet.

The wind blows where it will
Carrying dust that
It pours on us.

You seem frustrated
But it is a calm resolve that
Will help you to cope
Just wait - it may not be time yet.

The wind blows where it will
Carrying dust that
It pours on us.

Believe, all that is important
Be slow to rush
Fate has its own passion
Just wait - it may not be time yet

The wind blows where it will
Carrying dust that
It pours on us.

Be still then and hang on
Fret not and no demure
It won't be too long now
Just wait - it may not be time yet.

The wind blows where it will
Carrying dust that
It pours on us.

samuel nze

Keep Singing

It spurs me, your singing
Makes me feel light
And cheerful
Because I love you
And your voice is your part
In the joy that
Is my heart
And the radiance
Of that smile of yours
That imbues in me
A wealth of feeling;
Do keep singing then,
I pray you my love.

samuel nze

Lachrymal Fountain.

Lachrymal fountain
Oozed from blue sockets
Served by red rioting
In chordal sacks.

I weep
Love is soon lost
It was not so yesterday
You were by my side.

The sea weds the shore
In a soothing embrace
Your body was touched
By my tears.

Salt-water well
Filled by round boreholes
Served by passionate heaving
Of hurt flesh.

samuel nze

Last Night Produced A Lover

He was a greenhorn,
Or so he claimed;
Entirely new to the
Business of lovemaking,
And wanted me to teach him.
To teach him!
Why show him how to please me?
To give him the keys to my will;
To make me his puppy?
But he tried well enough
To gain mastery on his own;
He worked me up and down,
Willing to go that extra mile:
Shock and pleasure,
Pleasure and shock -
Ah!
But he said he was a greenhorn!
Indeed,
Last night produced a lover,
A rarest gem of
Filling lovemaking
Without previous experience.

samuel nze

Laughter And Song

Sing to me of laughter
Songs resembling my heart
That exults like sea waves
Rolling, frolicking and taut
In romance lasting like life
Full of gaiety
In the morning as well as
At night.
Sing to me those soothing melodies
Of bliss unparalleled
Untouched by the grim
Demure of disappointment
Let me hear the rhythm
Of the drums that
Laughed loudly on my
Sister's wedding day.

samuel nze

Lenten Fast

Lenten fast
Lean stomach
Longsuffering
Lengthy prayers
Labour pains
They say it is sacrifice
God will reward the penitent,
Anger lasting briefly
Smile for henceforth.
Holy hours
Happy years
Honoured ageing
Hallowed home
Highlife
They say it is heaven
Where no one need suffer more,
Having worked painfully here
You enjoy eternally there.

samuel nze

Let's Say The A, B, C And D.

A is for America,
Land of opportunity;
If you go on over,
Send home some dollars.

B is for bank,
Where I will store the dollars;
Money saved they say,
Is always gained.

C is for cashier,
That pretty woman;
She will count the dollars,
So they are in tact.

D is for dollars,
Lots and lots of them;
Those you will send,
Mint and fresh.

samuel nze

Life

On that hill
songs by a humming bird
remind me that
eternity calls after years spent
on the journey of life.
there are many roads to living;
life calls, attracts and shapes
for perfection,
intrigues ever so real and ever so daring
all make me realize the potency
of a blitz at survival,
another prism from which life can
be viewed and braced.
if we relentlessly choose
our own way
we would only be able
to waste ourselves on
an energetic chasing the wind
in our mock perception of
life.

samuel nze

Like Salt On An Earthworm

Like salt on an earthworm
Is bad news,
When you are resting you suddenly
Jerk up and say
Sat what say what?
O dear -
Do you mean this!
Well, you must be sure
To ask me when next
You have bad news
If I am ready to take it.
Fine - Jesus has called us
Salt of the earth,
But I am no earthworm
And you have
No legal right
To perturb the peace
That is socially mine.

samuel nze

Like The Fulani

Rub off all your sins
Ere you stretch yourself
Onto your prayer mat
Like the fulani
Cleanse your soul of dirt
Wash your dress with bleach
A pedicure will help
And some Arabic scent
Like the fulani
If your hands are clean
And your clothes are neat
If your hair is cut
Your feet free of mud
Like the fulani
You may enter mosque
You may sing and pray
Fast and raise the chant
Like the fulani.

samuel nze

Little Men

Little men toady
Lip loud laments
Little on the ground
Little on the hill

Little hearts quarrel
Skirmish over rats
Knowing not their niche
Hastening their end

Little eyes see
Only others' merits
Little mouths quip
Stomachs full of envy

Little hands fight
Without making money
Little bodies trap
Garbing little souls

Little meanly lowlives
Die little deaths
Stashed in little coffins
Confined by little skill

Spending little effort
Only little zest
Doing little good
Paying little dues

Little classes, little state
Little markets, little land
Little leaders, little codes
Little churches, little faith

Little gods, little people
Little dreams, little glories
Little cares, little patience
Little little, little still.

samuel nze

Liturgy

The priest is in the chapel
Praying
Liturgy
The missal is by his side
Mass servants
Are dressed in enviable attire
Dominus vobiscum
He entones
To which the reply comes
Et cum spiritu tuo
There is pontification
And the prayer is ended
Latin has confused the audience
Who is deceiving who?

samuel nze

Luminous Showers

The dawn is welcome
After black long hours
Our eyes shut
We saw only dreams.
Dreams informed us
Of mysteries unearthed
What we now know
We did not.
We did not care for truth
Before the light
Luminous showers make us
Realize fact.
Facts are always sacred
To the learned
Wise men keep them close
To the breast.
The breast holds the heart
Which flows passionate rivers
It is in these rivers that
We sail our restful boats

samuel nze

Mama Africa

I think of my Africa
Black woman of mettle
Sitting like a forlorn work-woman
On the slimy green.

Mama let me help you up
Take my hand and heave
Just one move of muscle
Will raise you
From your stooging.

She sits still
Reluctant and bemused
Unrepentant of her inferior folly.

I am agitated
Mama cannot go on such forever
One more effort
Must remind her that
I am still her son and
Her shame is mine as well.

samuel nze

Marriage

A sigh from the heart
Alarms me; it is
Passion.
I swoon to discover that
I am in love
With a girl who does not
Realize that someone out there finds
Warmth
Just being in her presence and
Looking into those eyes to find
Satisfaction.
I believe that your soul
When matched with mine will bring
Happiness,
The grace of two hearts
Firmly roped in
Marriage.

samuel nze

Melancholy

Strained and drained
Of strength for the journey
That ails and pales and
Makes youth age.
O make me tough
I pray you gods
To harden me with pain,
Deaden my senses
With teary pathos
Make me feel the stab
And jot of more distress;
If tears be my drink
Each and every night
I shall be impervious
To the company
Of melancholy.

samuel nze

Melancholy Lonesomeness

You are lonely,
You swoon in melancholy;
The bustle outside does not concern you,
It is for the happy ones.
You are thinking of the hollow
In your breast;
Love is lost and far away,
Twilight every moment;
Aurora is gone;
She cares less for your mood;
But even the day she returns
What can you do?

samuel nze

Money Is Greater

When you are asked to choose
Between love and money
As a young girl
Born with a wooden - not silver -
Spoon,
What will you pick?
Do not say love,
Unless you wish to deceive
Yourself.
I am told that women
Are to be loved
But that love is sometimes
Too feeble even in her own home,
So that when poverty comes
In at the door
Love instead of struggling him away
Flies out the window
To God knows where.

samuel nze

Mores

Silent noise
Wise foolery
Happy grief
Long brevity
All is in you

You grate your teeth at me
And there is that agitation
In your soul
You feel I am hurt by it all
And hence your sick joy
It is brief, but you stretch its keep.

Late haste
Spoilt remedy
Failed victory
Heavenly hell
All is in you.

samuel nze

Mullato Or Black

One cannot be short
And tall both at once
You're either rich or poor
The in-between is boring

Mullato does not claim birth
At the bellows and heat
Rightfully maybe on the grass
A hoe perhaps, not likely the furnace

Gray, is this the colour of metal
That has been kilned?
But the brunt of heat
Makes charcoal deeply swarthy

Or else who can say
That the sun of the African jungle
Is not in whole or in part responsible
For our black, black faces.

samuel nze

My Best Friend Loves Me.

How does it feel
Having a best friend that sincerely loves you?
I am sure it feels good
Especially when you love him too.
Love is like a perfume
That becomes a clean man.
Because you know too well that
Your intentions are pure
You go ahead to wear it
Knowing too that the gracious aroma
Which always attracts
Will draw the object of your seduction
Closer closer
To the heart in which
He will always stay.
I love you, Jude.

samuel nze

My Comfortable Foes

In the faces of my comfortable foes
There is a smirk;
They delight to see me suffer
So they can gloat.

They come to me with fake smiles
Hoping to try my patience
Hoping to show they
Are better off than me.

I look to God
From their treacherous visages;
Whose report have I believed?
None but His.

samuel nze

My Darling

My darling
It is for you I swot thus
To make money
And marry you
I love you it's true
But that does not put
Food on the table
Roof over your head
Clothes on your body
If I love you truly
Let me work then
So that when I am ready
To ask
Will you marry me
You would be ready to
Ask in return
Can you handle it?
I should then say yes
And say it with gusto

samuel nze

My Friend, A Friend

I sit and think of you
Kenechukwu.
Last night I had a curious
Dream.
My best friend saw you beside me
And grew jealous;
Who is this?
He asks in a huff,
Black spectacles closing
Crimson red eyes.
A friend, I say
Unready to precipitate offense.
A friend or your friend?
I am at a loss then;
Where lies the bifurcation
Between a friend and my friend?
Jude, I do not know.
If it is bile that eats you,
Then know that
You are my best friend,
My everything
And Kc is just
A friend, my friend?

samuel nze

My God Is In My Room

Here in my house
I make a space for my God,
My God is in my room
Living with me.

I am not a holy man
Not at all a saint,
But I entertain my maker
In my house.

Everyday I sacrifice
Praying with ardent faith;
I pour the wine of libation
To this costly deity.

I invoke, entreat
Supplicate this celestial kin,
Paternal radiance imbues in me
The desire to pray.

For always I see
Blessings perennially assured,
Peace a lasting grace as
My God is in my room.

samuel nze

My Heart Palpitates

My heart palpitates
And my head aches too
The sorrow proved too much to bear
Yet I had to bear it
Had to endure a liveless life.
My heart palpitates because there
Seems to be no remedy
Because there seems to be no end
To the miseries attacking my soul
Trying to wreck my mind.
My heart palpitates because I
Am unhappy
Unhappy because I am poor
Poor because I am destitute
Destitute because I am forsaken;
So my heart goes on
Palpitating
Without end, without respite.

samuel nze

My Jaw Is Full Of Rashes

My jaw is full of rashes
Oh-ho!

Jangolo tangoro
Ara rah
Tamboloso kiokio!

And I am shy
Oh-ho!

Jangolo tangoro
Ara rah
Tamboloso kiokio!

But I will not bother
Oh-ho!

Jangolo tangoro
Ara rah
Tamboloso kiokio!

The rashes will soon tire
Oh-ho!

Jangolo tangoro
Ara rah
Tamboloso kiokio!

Then they will go back home
Oh-ho!

Jangolo tangoro
Ara rah
Tamboloso kiokio!

samuel nze

My Life

I have a life
I have a family
I have myself
And I have a God.

My life has me
My family has me
Myself has me
And my God has me

Do you have a life
Do you have a family
Do you have a self
And do you have a God?

Does your life have you
Does your family have you
Does yourself have you
And does your God have you?

samuel nze

My Life Is A Baby Boy

My life is a baby boy
Born on Monday
Orphaned on Tuesday
Destitute the day next

On Thursday I go to university
To get a degree
They give it to me
I seek next a job

I meet a damsel on Friday
She says she likes me
I too like her
And soon we are wed

Saturday brings another baby boy
I name him Madu
He has his life ahead
He will be like me

I train him to grow well
Teach him to meditate
Inspire him to love
Force him to work hard

I bend coarse will with strictures
I never let him stray
I was orphaned early
I know life is hard

This baby grows
Becomes a man
He will inherit my wealth
When I die

Sunday brings death
Priest and doctor at my side
One thinks it a hopeless case
The other says eternal hope

Who knows what it is like
On the other side
I leave Madu my estate
I go on over

He was a baby
So was I
He is now a man
He too will join me there.

samuel nze

My Little Child

Hear again the sobs
Perceive the demure
Weep with him
My little child.

Long past and fearing
Today like days gone by
Hoping yet unseeing
It was my little child.

Oh my little child you speak
Silent volumes of painful misery
The hardship and gloom
I see all.

The lessons are not lost to us
Posterity will know them still
If I take you out of my sight
I cannot remove you from my mind.

samuel nze

My Past Lives

Once I was the son
Of a king
Then I died and had to
Come back again.
Next I was a scholar
Trying hard to
Fathom realities
Beyond the human scope.
In the next life I was
A sailor and Simbad's ally
Coursing the seven seas
Looking for gold.
Then I was a
Medicine man winning
Renown for myself and
Loyal clients too.
Once I imagined I was
Buddha's crony
Mystic guru and prophet.
Now I want to rule the entire
World in this life
Wielding a scepter
Above every head.

samuel nze

My Skin

Twilight next to setting sun
Reminds me of my skin
Black, black like charcoal
Bold and beautiful

My skin the stamp of race
Negroes are forever
Stout swarthy strong saints
Ultimate of soul

Egypt's civilizations
Preceded those of Greece
Or was my teacher
Imagining things?

My skin colour is my pride
I must always keep it
Once a man did not
He had himself to blame.

samuel nze

My Struggle Is To Be A Man

My struggle is to be a man
In every respect.
A man is not simply
The owner of a rod,
Even if that is a criterion;
Women adore that rod
And use it against themselves
In sadistically pleasing pain;
They moan yet are happy,
They cry yet insist on more -
A woman will always love a man.

My struggle is to be a man
In every respect.
A man is not simply
A successful worker,
Even if that is an ambition;
Some men are slaves
And earn a keep washing pants on Sundays
In shameless smugness;
They swot yet are content,
They are degraded yet bear it well -
A slave will always love the base.

My struggle is to be a man
In every respect.
A man is not simply
A humble worshipper,
Even if that is a necessity;
Every soul must have its god
And pray ceaselessly to him
In faithful submission;
They suffer yet are hopeful,
They doubt yet believe -
A man is deeply spiritual.

My struggle is to be a man
In every respect.
A man is not simply

A proud lord,
Even if that is an attraction;
Many men have to endure hardship
And oppression of every sort
In quiet longsuffering;
They are harried yet are not overcome,
They are tortured yet unruffled -
A man is resolutely resilient.

samuel nze

Mystery Thief

Lover of the dark
You mystery thief
Are you really
A brother of mine?
They say you are
A human being
But your actions ask
Where is your heart?
Did you suckle
At your mother's breast
Six months at least
After the cord was buried?
When then did you
Break Society's hold
And become thus
A renegade?
I know your mother
Back in the village
Shall I tell her
That I have seen you?

samuel nze

New Money Has Come

New money has come
We buy garri for ten kobo
We give Mary to cook it
She cooks it
It is not sweet
We beat Mary
She does not cry
We kill Mary
She does not die
Which kind of Mary
Is this one?
Raga rogo raga rogo
Sipepe olodesi.

samuel nze

New Politician

You cannot have grasped the quandary
The elections must hold
Then be rigged
Before results are announced
To reveal the choice.
You fret in itchy speed
Yet you must tarry
For due process:
The elections must hold
Then be rigged
Before results are announced
To reveal the choice.
You call yourself a genius
Have booked in the States
Degree marrying another
But do not see that
The elections must hold
Then be rigged
Before results are announced
To reveal the choice.
You shout yourself hoarse
At the many rallies
Where you throw away money;
Your group is modern
You dream since you sleep,
Fail to see how
The elections must hold
Then be rigged
Before results are announced
To reveal the choice.
I have warned you
To join the winning party
To master its lords
And serve their antics,
But you are proud
Know the compound logic
Ignore the facile that
The elections must hold
Then be rigged

Before results are announced
To reveal the choice.
Now you brood
New politician you be;
Africa is cursed, you declare
But ignore the whole
The clear truth that
The elections must hold
Then be rigged
Before results are announced
To reveal the choice
And not the victor.

samuel nze

No Home

So many people
Do not have a home
Sure they have a house
But not each house is home

They say home
Is where the heart is
Not cushions and a rug
But smiles and a kiss

They look hard for love
The house walls them in
They embrace the streets
Trying to ignore the din

Where can my soul rest
From the nagging pain
Where can I go to escape
From feeling the loss again?

samuel nze

No Way

Not so good you say;
Not so good -
Whatever is good enough
For you!

You tell me to halt -
Halt!
So that you can
Walk over me?

Ah, no
I refuse to give you
That chance
Never!

You think I am a fool
Some chattel
On your shelf
Some rag!

samuel nze

Nostalgia

How would you feel
If you spent five days
In a cosy inn
Only for you to come
Back to your poor poor shack?
How would you feel if
You ate good food for five days
Only for you to come back
To dry bread and lean meat?
How would you feel if you mingled with great people
Only for you to come back
To mediocre creatures
calling themselves individuals?
If you experienced heaven
And came back to earth
After five memorable days
You would feel nostalgia.

samuel nze

Novelty Requires Strength

Novelty requires strength;
We need to be strong
To break those fetters
That cage us in,
That say, Quo vadis?
Stay and refrain from movement.
But we would move
Here is not best,
Our chests rise for what
Lies ahead.
We must proceed; move we must.
Yes, we need strength, and
God will avail it us.

samuel nze

O Beauty!

O beauty
O aura
O mysticism
Praise!
O finery
O scenery
O picture
Adore!
O gaiety
O sun
O radiance
Extol!
O heavens
O angels
O God
Worship!

samuel nze

O Dear!

O dear!

This must be shocking indeed -

You mean he just walked out on you?

How strange;

He had always been a sincere lover,

Had always cared;

Had always asked after your good -

I was even looking forward

To the day when he would

Lead you to God's altar,

But you say it is over;

Are you kidding me

Or keeping back something I

Do not know?

samuel nze

Of You.

You are like a god,
A symbol of authority
And you never cease
To intrigue me.
You hold me steadily
In your grasp,
Filling me with the oil
Of satisfaction,
Grace and charm.
A bowel of praise
Replaces my lean stomach;
I want to
Ring out my joy
Of you,
Sing out my eulogy
Of you;
I want to tell the world
Of you.
All in me is in ecstasy because
Of you.

samuel nze

Oil And Gold

Oil is like gold
Similar hue
Not at all blue
Both can be cold
Yet

Never in the history of man
Has it been said
That oil is the priceless
Of the two
Gold and oil
Solid and liquid
Precious and common

Of like and love
Mettle is in degrees
Perfection nearing
Elongated bliss and
Sacrifice

samuel nze

Oligopoly Of Slaves

Oligopoly of slaves
Is an aberration of human rights
We are too fiendish to notice
That when these rule us
Mediocrity holds sway
They will beat
They will rob
They will be corrupt
They will steal
They will kill
They will be uncouth
We had better had the kings
Or even the colonizers
We had better had the pope
Or even the industrialists
But once we are ruled
By the likes of you
Aha, then we know we are in soup!

samuel nze

Oluchi (Part One)

This girl is sitting across the room
Looking my way.
I know she likes me
A little too much for,
Though I have done all to make her know I
Cannot go out with her -
As I am engaged already -
She still hopes one day
The story will differ.
She stalks
Talks
Walks up to me to make small talk
Which I am too busy to attend.
I want us to go to your house
For the one and the other thing.
It tries me.
She sees a handsome face
Inspired by a proud full head
And thinks
What a prospect of a hubby!
But I know that if she
Were the only girl alive
I fain would be a priest

samuel nze

Oluchi (Part Two)

That is the source of her jealousy -
Where can I find a man like Sam?
O Sam
You are so handsome!
O Sam
You are so intelligent!
Sam, my Sam
You are everything;
Tall
Dark
Broad chested -
But is this all girls think about!
You must pardon me, Sam
It has to be love,
What else could it be?
Oluchi my dear,
Believe me
It could be an illusion
And nothing more.
Yet instead of understanding
All I get in return for my explication
Is piqued pride
And hurt anger;
Sighs too.

samuel nze

On The Day My Father Died

On the day my father died
i should have been laughing
it was April fools
but the joke was too dear
usually it would be a quip
and we would roar
in bogus laughter
today it was an eternal slumber
and we had to hush hush
patrick would not
sing of old roger now
the lyric would sting
nicole would not play ball
no one would cheer
look at mama sitting
like the world has closed
soon her head will be shaved
and the accusers
will come to say
she killed her spouse
mama will then hold her breasts
like a horrified penitent
and in tears forcibly invited
say it was untrue
the mourners will cry bitterly
but when the food was ready
they would pause and
demand a chicken
before wailing louder
to show their despair
this April fools is dramatic
and even now i
am undecided
on whether i should still laugh
or cry my heart out

samuel nze

Only Love Counts

Only love counts
Honesty may prove valuable
Build trust
Make me believe all you say

But honesty like faith
Cannot charm me
Truth is not always logical
I believe when I choose
Doubt comes when it will
Stays long enough
And goes of its own accord

Only love counts
Honesty may prove expedient
Confirm hope
But will not bond me to you

samuel nze

Only When I Am Sad

Only when I am sad
Or irritated
Do I wish to escape
From myself.
Irksome boredom
Trying to hem me in
Is an enemy;
A wise man has said
Give me freedom
Or give me death;
I say give me both
But only at the
Proper time.

samuel nze

Onyenachia Munachim

Man is lonely at birth, they say
Even when his dreams keep him company;
We all need dreams to move on,
To save ourselves from death.
Gloom is death,
Deflation concomitant with
Not knowing what to do;
A miserly scrape here and there
Brings nothing until we use our gifts;
There is buried in us
A truest calling loud and clear and sharp
That must persuade us to success;
Some were born to use their heads,
Others their hands or legs or bodies,
Each with his spirit, his destiny,
His truth;
No one better, no one worse;
We are all born to search and find,
To ask and receive,
to knock and be opened to;
I am me, you are you,
Onyenachia
Munachim.

samuel nze

Oppressing Others

We learn to harry others
Refusing then to grow
Preclude the boasts of those
We think can do no good

We ignore Him that taught
To heal our logged eyes
We go on playing prophet
Outweeping those bereaved

We prefer ugly people
They cause us hearty joy
The quick and brainy lad
We treat with bloated scorn

We do not want to see him
His greatness will offend
We want to swell but fail
Oppressing those that try.

samuel nze

Orisa Bunmi

She is an African goddess

Ho ha

She has a lovely sport

Ho ha

Bend with grace

Upon your faithful servants

They love you

O African goddess!

She is a frightful goddess

Ho ha

She has a defiant stare

Ho ha

Speak with fire

To your loyal servants

They obey you

O African goddess!

She is a loving goddess

Ho ha

She has a caring soul

Ho ha

Weep with pity

For your distressed children

They adore you

O African goddess!

samuel nze

Pain Is Not A God

Pain is not a god
It doesn't have to rule our hearts
It may come
But it doesn't have to stay
Chase it away.

Far to the abyss
To the bottom of the sea
To be with the sea monster
To be with the shells
Far far away.

Pain is not a god
It doesn't have to oppress our souls
It may come
But it doesn't have to spoil
Our solace and peace.

samuel nze

Painful Loss

Sorrowful hearts remind me of
Painful loss
People mourning with me at
Deprivation so gross
The boss
A willing tyrant
Has a penchant
For blood
At a solemn toss
Of the coin of fate
Head or tail
Will bring forth its own tale
And the candy floss
Is soon replaced with grate
Because my mother is late
And her spouse as well
Is the late.

samuel nze

Papa Loves Me.

Yes indeed papa loves me
Because I praise him in
My actions and attitudes
Bouncing in glory
Radiating inexplicable light
A testimony of truth
And success
People see and come to accept
That I am a son of light
Of grace
And of the glory emanating
From deep within my being
Papa loves me because I
Do him proud always.

samuel nze

Passion

Hot

Heaving

Heart

Hoping

For

Freedom

From

Fear

To

Taste

Truth

Totally

And

Abide

Astride

Amity

In

Ideal

Ingenuous

Inspiration

samuel nze

Perfect Stories

Jesus' was a perfect story
Granted by his father
To die for the sinner
To carry his cross.
Gandhi's was a perfect story
Designed by fate
To fight for the freedom
Of his beloved state.
Mohammed's was a perfect story
Destined and true
To seek the truth
In the garb of religion.
I am a perfect story
Ordained by God
To be the very best
That I can be.

samuel nze

Persistence

Like a road to heaven
Is persistence
We walk down it
Gales blow
Rain falls
The sun is at its worst
We meet cynics
Who sneer
Where do you think
You are going?
Clowns
Who jeer
You think
You can make it?
But we go on
That same road
Persistent upon our course
One destination still
A peaceful end.

samuel nze

Plato Has Said

Plato has said a
Fool at forty is one forever
He did not remember
The senile jester
Solomon has said it pains him to
See a man proud over nothing
He did not remember
The vain politician
Socrates has said a
Reckless life is not worth living
He did not remember the hopeless libertine
I have said it is useless
Categorizing humanity
I did not remember
The sages of old

samuel nze

Plotting My Downfall

In the unsure pain of my heart
I kept my pulse beating
Unsteady, unsure -
I was sick with worry,
Yet I had to go on.
Mediocre filth was all round me
Pressing its summary advantage;
People without purpose
Aimed at deflating my pride:
I was arrogant,
An upstart,
I had to be stopped;
I was ill-mannered,
A daredevil,
I had to be harangued.
Brash and uncouth
The users found me hard;
The oppressors and enviers waited -
All plotting my downfall.

samuel nze

Poetic Wells

A collection of words
From the nib of my pen
When arranged in indented lines
Will make a poem

But it is not just words
On their own
My heart joins in
To give them weight

Wells of feeling
Are dug in my heart
By endless life experiencing
From youth

My pen is the draw bucket
That gets the water out
And pours them onto the paper
So you can drink in

samuel nze

Poverty Is Not A Calling

Poverty is not a calling,
Even if the priests think it is.
Poverty is a distraction,
The intellectual must think it so.

Think of the books you could have bought
Had you had money,
Or the food you may have eaten
In a posh hotel.

You soak garri in water
And wipe your mouth,
Then put on a fine shirt
So no one will know.

You are a lie - you know you want more;
Chicken dipped in sauce
And maybe some wine too,
But you cannot afford it.

You are ill
And so run to the chemist;
No doctor for you,
A card is three hundred naira.

Pain killers, multivitamins and blood capsules,
You will still have change;
Why then bother with the syringe
Or the bespectacled grave face?

You see?
Poverty denies you the good life;
You cannot do what
Your seeming betters do.

You discover it is a sad state,
Poverty is not a calling;
We both know that,
Even if we pretend not to.

samuel nze

Pride Is Power

Is pride power?
Think of that woman
Smugly ensconced on her
Backrest.
She would prefer to give
Of her wealth
Than beg for anything.
She is proud
And exerts power
Over her beneficiaries.
Think too about that
Beautiful girl
Who shakes her bottoms
This way and that
On the road;
She woos boys
But does not show it.
She is proud
And exercises power
Over her lovers.
Or is it the politician
Who preaches prosperity
At the political rally
Where voters assemble
After favors received.
He is proud
And exercises power over the electorate.

samuel nze

Profuse Strength

Profuse strength

Agile walk

Dressed in black

Ruthless stare

Hardened heart

Grim visage -

He wants to make it

And he will.

Smug laughter

Hearty smile

Leisurely stroll

Calm demure

Open hands

Proud strut

He has made it

And he knows.

samuel nze

Realization

Esoteric realities are round us
But we are too busy to notice.
In our hearts we feel estrangement
When we know too much.
There is loneliness
And irritation in our souls.
Black pictures from the past
Try to humiliate us -
You are not as good as you think.
Wake up man,
You are a nobody!
Stop! You're hurting me -
You are the one who are a nobody
Oppression is your game,
But you will fail.
Then tell me about your friends,
Do you have any?
I ought to. Am I not attractive?
Are you?
Think - they think you show off;
They do not appreciate you,
You are not of their clique.
You have never been.
So?
Think. Resign yourself to fate
Or better still to reality.
You are just one poor loner.
Poor? But I dress rich.
Are you rich?
Am I not? You tell me
You would be rich
But where is the money?
Some in the bank...
Where else?
I laugh at you, Sam -
You are too young.
You have no true friends;
You should have known that before now.
Things do not work that way,

You do not make life;
Life makes you.
Allow it. Just stay...
Wait.
I will. I must.

samuel nze

Rear Boxes

Our friendship is forgotten
Stashed away like rear boxes
In which were piled rejects
From last year's choices
You made them.

You gave me no space
To contribute
You placed me on a scaffold,
Parodied a session;
Accusations were the proffered
I was guilty of course
You were just in sentencing.

Even now those boxes
Keep the rear
They truly are rejected
Forgotten
Like our own friendship.

samuel nze

Reconciliation

Again
We meet
Last
It was war
Aggression
Frenzied
Passion
Affray
Of two
Hearts
Today
I
Hope
It will
Be bliss
Joyful reunion
Reconciliation
Of two
Hearts

samuel nze

Results

Oily mouth justified by muddy hands
Full barns topped of green fields
Profitable employment after hard study
Full bank account fed by fruitful work

Happy home derived from good marriage
Useful children resulting from prim training
Peaceful neighbourhood oiled by diplomacy
Prosperous country manned by good leaders

Quiet old age because of moral youth
Paradise gained by charitable living
Progressive existence inspired by thriftiness
Inertia consolidated by steady movement.

samuel nze

Revival

The pastors will soon come
With the choristers singing
Tunes of the revival
And the spiritual hymns

The breath is fresh
Loud-mouthed soloists
Have welcomed air
To compete with dinner

Allow him to kiss you
No harm intended
If he was passionate about
The Jesus he never saw

Will he not be passionate
About you - you
You with your breast quarreling
With your lean blouse!

samuel nze

Rich And Poor People

Rich and poor people
Have the same trouble
The former from overeating
The latter from swelting

Both die just the same
Rich people always rest
The poor are lame
Yet endure the test

Rich man poor man
Both are the very same
No one cares or can
Lay on either the blame

I am poor but was rich
I will still again be rich
I was smug but now swelting
I want to be more a blessing.

samuel nze

Rich Poverty On The Vulgar Street

What critics may think improbable,
Today I saw with my own eyes;
In case you think it a fable,
Recall that I tell but few lies.

A hawker was answering a phone,
He had a call and was responding;
Had it bought it on a loan,
My curiosity to wonder was tending.

There was the spectacle before me,
Rich poverty on the vulgar street;
I felt in passions and frenzy,
The joy of my heartbeat.

Let the poor and the rich talk,
To people far away by waves;
Not just the great may balk,
The common man too craves.

A phone is no more a status symbol,
If an urchin can own it;
We feel it an idol,
I know for sure it isn't.

samuel nze

Riddles

Purple blood rising with red
Availing osmotic imbalance
Bringing forth disquiet
Slipping taut with winsomeness

Bring it on, bring it on
Let me taste the quirk
Palate with remorseful blending
Sedate with the aroma of pain

Alas the day has come
When I no longer quiz the end
The tentative allure
The summary relaxation

Greater men have slumped
Along the same tortuous path
They have wondered why they
Could not make it to the end.

samuel nze

Saturday Today

I will tell a story
About today,
It will resemble the story
Of poverty.
I did not eat throughout
Yesterday evening
So I woke up feeling weak;
I lolled on my bed,
No NEPA;
I had fought with heat
All through the night
And here I was sweating,
Weak, hungry and tempted
With irk.
I got up from the mattress
And went to greet my
Neighbors on either side;
The one on the left
Is a boy who has a black heart
But tries to wash it
With costly bleach;
I avoid him as much can.
The one on the right
Is a bitter old woman
Who tries to hide her hate
Behind costly smile;
I avoid her as much can,
So I return after a brief
Chit chat with either
To say my morning prayers.
They last an hour and half;
In them I remind God
To kill my enemies
And to make me succeed soon soon
Soon enough to hasten
Their death.
Prayer over, I go to scout for water
In rich men's houses, where
Water shares their homes;

In poor men's homes
Water is a vagabond
That must be sought after.
So I get hold of a jerry can
And three buckets and begin my hunt.
A kind man gives me water,
God's free gift which
Men make costly,
And I return to wash and clean
My hopes.
I then relax a little,
Play computer games
And cook rice.
My rice has just been put down from the stove;
When I complete this long poem
I will go bathe
And return to eat.
Later in the afternoon
I will go to the wedding
At a suite close by here.
What a Saturday!
Which of the two do you like:
The poem or the Saturday -
Which really?

samuel nze

See Him Approach

See him approach
In his cragly wag
His silent trumpeting
Of poverty.
Scruffy lad
You arouse my pity
My nose is loose
Because of you.
You approach
In your cragly wag
Your silent trumpeting
Of poverty.
Scruffy lad
He arouses my pity
My nose is loose
Because of him.

samuel nze

Serene Evening

Azure, soothing, cool
So I find this eve
The leaves are playing
With one another joyfully
In the church, singing
Compliments the rustling melodies
The clear face of the sky
Smiles congruent, not bashful
Not glaring either
White butterflies enjoy
The choir and the leaves
Both in concert harmoniously
Cool, with tonic sol-fa mixing
Trite, yet full of pleasure
My heart joins the chant
Silently, exultant, clear
No more of those emotions
That caged me
The sonorous key
In the gate of my warm blood house
Will leave me for now and for then.

samuel nze

Shadows In An African Jungle.

You say I walk faster than my shadow
And why not
There are too many shadows in Africa
Gloom, defeat, despair
All are in me
But I must transcend them
I must be what I must.
To the African jungle
White enslavers came with gun powder
To shoot me down if I ran
Like a monkey.
I was to go with them in chains
To the Americas.
I was to work their farms
I was to die if I fell sick.
The row-row water turned my belly
In big ocean-going vessels.
I was told to hush hush
Even when I would cry aloud.
When I got to America
They changed my name
Onyenachia is too long
You must bear Samuel.
No problem.
They give me a spade and
I begin to swot
Dig in
Dig out
Oops - are you tired already?
You black man silly -
Crack of the whip
And I begin to swot again
Dig in
Dig out
Work till dusk.
I pray
God I am sick of this
I need you to save me.
And he does.

The white man does no work
But soon he is tired of keeping me
Working for him
So he orders me to leave.
I rejoice
And return to the dark jungle.
To my chagrin
The shadows are still there
Gloom, defeat, despair
All are still in me
But the faces of my brothers are changed
They do not recall me.
Hello?
Even my language is strange
I plead
Shriek
Persuade
Coax
They cannot understand me
I am sick again
Not with row-row water
But with aloneness
I am sick sick sick of it
I pray
God help me
And he does.
Soon I must return to America
But not as a slave
Not as Samuel
But as Onyenachia again
A free man
Onyenachia Munachim.

samuel nze

She Lied And Died

She lied and died,
Ananias's wife fell
At Peter's feet by
The command of God.

Did you sell your field
For such a price?
Of course I did;
It was a lie.

Her hubby corroborated
Her false testimony and
At Peter's feet
He too died.

They lied and died,
Two two-mouthed fellows;
They sold their field
But hid the real price.

Don't lie and die,
Speak always the truth
So that at Peter's feet
You do not similarly fall.

samuel nze

Sighs

When the heart heaves
And air is let out
It is a sigh.
Emotion rising to the flurry,
We often know the cause;
Dispirited moaning,
Impassioned feeling -
All we desire leaves us
Dry; unaccomplished.
The sigh seems to condone,
Even if it does not
Do so well enough.

samuel nze

Silent Jibes

The music is in me,
draws me into myself
but now I am weak,
too sluggish to use my body
for what I longed for
has simply eluded me.

samuel nze

Silhouettes

Shadows stalk by our wall
Tracing a frame of me and my brother
As we sit side by side
On the corridor
Silhouettes of our companionship
Silhouettes of our love
Silhouettes of our friendship
Shadows stalk by our wall
Tracing a frame of life itself
Life that is shared
Even if not anticipated
Life that is lived
Even if not mastered
Life that is enjoyed
Even if not conquered
Shadows remind us that even if we are intelligent
We do not know enough
Not enough to trust
Nor to conquer
Nor to succeed.
We need something outside ourselves.
We need all of life itself;
We need each other
Even when we do not know
Each other well enough

samuel nze

Silver Lights

The night with its silver lights
Caresses my window sill
Night of nights
So calm, so still

Refreshing, that's what I call it
I feel the zest
Ooh, it touches my stomach pit
My soul is at rest.

I shiver with melody
As my body vibrates
With the solemn evening symphony
My head simply rotates

Round and round I swing
Imagining my lover in my arms
I hear Celine sing
The blues and solemn alarms

In my chest begin to sound
With a happiness carefree
Newly found
For my lover and me.

samuel nze

So

Mama use to chide
Don't punctuate all your stories
With so.
Then she would add
So
What next?

samuel nze

Some People Say

Some people say
They have not suffered
And in truth they may not have;
We have
And know what it feels
To endure the pain of deprivation,
The harsh reality of poverty
Seeking to throttle us;
Choking, coughing, crying blood,
Sweat, bile, hate -
Passioned heaving;
We try to adjust our thoughts
To hope for a better nation,
A richer economy in a stable polity.
Even America that now glories
Of all the world
Once too was poor.

samuel nze

Song And Dance

Till dusk tomorrow
You play your lute;
Birds above your head
Supply needed chorus.

The wind punctuates the stanzas,
Happy melody and relief;
The calm rippling is
In your chest.

Pipe and reed
Supplement percussion;
Sekere and gong,
Added audiophones alluring.

Sing in synchronization,
Sombre symphony;
Mild and mellow,
Graceful and neat.

Tonic solfa
Supplies its own arithmetic;
The scientific art of music
Inspires the genius.

Clap your hands
And shake your lean bottoms;
You must dance
So the ballad is saved.

Dum dum da da da,
Haroo haroo ha;
Limdim cha limdim cha,
Songs from the skies.

Don't leave so soon,
Enjoy the song still;
We play on and on,
We do not stop.

samuel nze

Soul Wars

The din inside the ribs shakes
The still atmosphere is replaced
By endless turmoil
The blood heats up

Let there be peace
This is the certain wish
Let the rays of prayer
Fill the doubt of my soul

I am humble about life
Meek about salvation
I am like Paul
Fearing and trembling

Let there be peace
This is the certain wish
Let the rays of prayer
Fill the doubt of my soul

My insecurity threatens
To eat me up
My endless longing
Frights my spirit

If my certain wish is
Left unanswered
If there is no prayer ray
To fill my soul

Then know that
The endless search will keep
The painful musings
Will outstretch the livelong day.

samuel nze

Souls

If you put your head
Outside your bedroom window
At night
You will feel a gust of air
The sea would be wooing you
And you would feel too powerless
To resist

Aroma and sound
Silent and reassuring
Romantic and suave
Love and aura.

If you go on a walk
Somewhere on the lawn
In the afternoon
You would sweat
The sun would be blaming you
And you would feel too guilty
To argue

Heat and humidity
Merciless and conquering
Fiery and stiff
Anger and hate.

If you sit at home
Smug on the sofa
In the evening
You would loll
The clouds would be caressing you
And you would feel too lazy
To run

Blue and white
Coaxing and refreshing
Calm and quiet
Peace and love.

Our souls are a myriad of emotions
A well of diverse frenzies
Our souls are full
Of liquids
Passion, guilt, sadness, joy
Our souls are like God - omni capable
And anyway, he made them.

samuel nze

Spear

A spear
Long
Sharp
Pointed
Can draw blood
Whose blood?
Certainly not mine
Could it be yours?
God forbid -
Whose spear is it anyway?
Not mine
Hers
The gladiator's
Bought
From
Overseas.
Take it back then
No way!
You care so much for it
You take it back.

samuel nze

Spells

Spells trying to close my eyes
Witch doctors are dictators
Trying to destroy the bright future
Which Yahweh has made for me
Shall I let them succeed?
I should do well not to
I may seek to swell my future prospects
But the Spirit is still in charge
Of each and everything
I will succeed
When the time of God comes
Till then I shall pray
And seek well the face of God.

samuel nze

Step Up, Step Up

Masks on the faces I see
which come to dance
They step up, step up
The oil is on canvas
Yet the painter is dead
On those rails I see blood
You wish to see too?
Then step up, step up
Mama Gita, where is your gal
Today of days
The dance of dances
When garlanded maidens
Step up, step up?
Does she shy away From men, eligible bachelors
Just in from the tumbles
Proving themselves cats?
Remind her that her cronies
have long since tied the knot
And buried placentas under
Those tall tall trees.
Oh, there she is at last
Come on, hurry!
Step up, step up.

samuel nze

Stomachache

Grr

Rumbling

Bogo bogo bump!

Your stomach is on fire

And you are restive.

You have eaten

A little too much sugar

And your belly is angry

For all the labour you

Put it through.

It is true you are master

But must you

Drive a willing horse to death?

samuel nze

Struggles

Struggles with pain
And disappointment are killing
Make me shiver with gloom
Because they offer no respite
Save the looking at tomorrow.
Negligent grief
Cares less for my emotions
Enemies watch for my fall
Give me cause to ponder on
The expediency of human
Effort at regaining lost portions
Of the heart from
Eerie clutches of despondency.

samuel nze

Suffering African Child

My little brother,
I sympathize.
The hand across your nose,
The sniffs
All remind me that you
Behold me with tear-filled eyes.
But what can I do;
I am not liberated yet myself,
Can I help you?
It is your leaders you must look at;
It is they who have slapped you
Across the mouth,
Exchanged you for money;
Taken your share of
All there is.
I despair at you enfant -
Will tomorrow be a better day?

samuel nze

Sunlight Today

The harsh tyrannical sun
Alarms me today
By its fierceness -
It is so hot!
Jeez - this weather!
I sweat
And my shirt is washed
All over again
Hopeless case
Bloody tyrant
Get off my case,
Will you!

samuel nze

Tango

The dark was a friend
For their tango;
In the blankets
It would be bliss.
Silhouettes of two forms
Joined by passionate activity;
It was a fever
In their bones.
There was moaning
And a creaking of the bed;
A shout was the climax
The denouement was relaxing.
He rolled over and said
I love you;
Then he sighed deeply
And went to sleep.

samuel nze

Tedium Tallow

Pander after beauty,
The bounty minds the cost;
An aura of praise
Haloes the bifurcation
Of a million stars
That tell of cosmic sport.
Pride castigates in part
But steals the day;
Pears fall sealed,
Corn and beans
Wash away appetite;
We place all our cards
On the table at home;
Shops closed with books,
We go off to school;
Marathon the coming day
Will precede sleep.

samuel nze

The Beat

Calls in the moon
With thoughts of desired love
My brother's heart
Is the destination.

Thoughts of my brother
Fill me with love
Make me long
For his face.

Calling him at night
Is soothing
The response
Heavenly.

His heart
Belongs to me
I love him
And he loves me too.

samuel nze

The Love I Bear An African Woman

You are my sister,
African woman;
You smell like the ash
Of the mud-house kitchen;
You look like the charcoal
That is left of the wood
That feeds the fire.
I know your tears,
They prick my heart;
Your voice is the sonorous
Silvery attraction
That moves my limbs,
And your breasts attract my
Look and sigh.
I love you, African woman
And if I had money
I would marry you;
Your father is a clan chief
With a big palace in
The village;
Your mother has learnt book
In the modern schools;
All your siblings snub others,
They will snub me too.
I fear, my woman;
I fear to be the fool,
The moron before
Your father's scrutinizing stare,
Your mother's censuring;
Your siblings' reproach.
I refrain from causing you shame,
Pain and longing
For a better bargain.
Look to me then my sister
And tell me;
What is it about me that you love?
My demure, my fear,
My insecurity over everything?
Halt - I know the answer;

You look at
The love I bear you.

samuel nze

The Market Is Full Today

The market is full today
Traders till dusk will stay
The buyers troop in
The area is a din
Come away, little one
Or you will get lost
And then mama will cry
Let me buy you a bun
Despite the cost
Or even a fry
I will not have you lost
At whatever cost
The buyers keep trooping in
The area is still a din
the market is full today.

samuel nze

The Mystery In Love

There is mystery in love
When I am in Africa
And the only one I love is
Out there in America
I dunno what he is doing
I dunno what he is thinking
I dunno what he is feeling
There is mystery in love
I sit at the computer
I log onto the internet
To reach out to
The only one I love
To find out what he is doing
To find out what he is thinking
To find out what he is feeling
There is mystery in love
A girl wants to be with me
She wants my attention
She wants my sympathy
But she is not the one I love
He is in America, my brother
He is far away, the one I love
My heart longs for him
His soul drags me to the computer
And when I sometimes catch him
I ask him what he is doing
I ask him what he is thinking
I ask him what he is feeling
To solve the mystery in love.

samuel nze

The President Tells Assembly

The president
Tells Assembly
We shall import
Toothpicks

Assembly replies
Of course
We have a tradition
To import everything

O yes
That is quite true
We even import paraffin
From sold crude oil

Smart Assembly men
Says he
That is how it shall be
An import intensive economy

Back slaps of joy
As the House closes
Happy senators
Leave the Assembly

The president
Checks the time
A fine wristwatch sir
A senator observes

Thank you
It is gold all through
And as you may guess
It is imported too

samuel nze

The Rain Comes Just The Same

The voyagers beheld the sky intently
'Will it rain?
If it does our journey is spoiled;
It had better not.'
But the clouds took in just the same,
Conception is erratic sometimes;
Dark nimbus above their heads
Like swords of damocles
Threatening a watery onslaught.
Drip drip drip
Before the torrents,
Merciless deluge in sharp ladders
Beat staccato on their temples;
The old friar prays
And bolsters his fellows.
'The rain came just the same
It cared too ill for us.'

samuel nze

The Red On Our Streets

He was his mother's son
Before he joined the army;
He who joins the army
Has no mother.

He has sold his will
To an iron god
That spits fire
And orphans children.

There are many of them
In the barracks;
Orphaned with parents,
Wills sold to iron gods.

Blood is on the streets;
Wine of rebellious arteries,
Freedom fighters
Are imprisoned in battles.

The iron gods
Rule our land;
They take our youth away,
While the umbilical cord remains

Buried under the palm tree,
Upon which are red nuts;
The red of fire in the iron god
Foretells the red of blood on our streets.

samuel nze

The Roads

The roads split in two
Belie portents of shame
The crooning livelong day
Astride illustrations of the past
To outstanding yonder bliss
Of sworn comforts
For many seasons;
The roads lead nowhere yet
But in time they lead to
A glorious brighter end.

samuel nze

The Sun Casts Its Fierce Eye.

The sun casts its fierce eye
On the swarthy lad
Out in the fields
Where might is right.

Might is right
In the African jungle
In the tyranny of armed overlords
The toughest rules.

The toughest rules
In a lawless state
Democracy thrown out the window
The winner takes it all.

The winner takes it all
In the battle for supremacy
The poor are further deprived
The rich keep getting richer.

samuel nze

The Sword Of Passion

The sword of passion between my thighs
Is rigid; you touch my hairy chest
And stroke my trunk
Dipping your finger in my belly-button;
The sword hardens
But you are not finished yet:
You tease, caress, please me
Head, neck, ear sucking and licking down, down
Till you mouth the sword.
I gasp; spasms and tremors; my head runs riot,
Still you are not done.
You free the sword and push me down flat
Falling astride and sheating the blade:
You sheathe, you remove
You sheathe, you remove
You sheathe, you remove
Apparently, you cannot make up your mind:
You sheathe, you remove
You sheathe, you remove
You sheathe, you remove
You cannot decide what you want,
You sheathe, you remove
You sheathe, you remove
You sheathe, you remove
Then suddenly you jerk and shout,
Dig your fingers in my skin;
Your eyes dilate and you are in shock
Clinging unto me as if for life
I am infected and I hold on to your torso
I feel something hot and fluid leave me
Then you fall flat on my belly
Tears are in your eyes and on my hairy chest
Are you sad that you could not make up your mind?

samuel nze

The Train Accident

Spirits on the rails
Wait for the caboose
Just to tip it over
So children will die

Angels on the lines
Escort the small tram
Just to keep it upright
So children will live

Children in the train
Sing their lofty tune
Oblivious of threat
Wanting to survive

Obstruction on the path
Portends ugly doom
Sinister of cause
Wanting to destroy

The spirits will fight
The angels defend
When the obstruction
Trips the fated tram

Jikoloji
The tram is tripped
It begins to burn
Is anyone dead!

Some of them are killed
Many more injured
Few of them are scratched
Some strangely saved

The caboose will burn
The dead will be mourned
The living proceed
To tell their tale.

samuel nze

The True Friend

The true friend does not
Compete with you
Is not envious either
He does not wish to outdo
All your many successes
A true friend loves you
Values you
Does not want to overshadow
All your numerous exploits
Is it not a true friend that cares
Consoles you
And does not laugh at
All your nagging little sorrows?

samuel nze

The Underpinnings Of My Dreams

When I search for motives
To my thoughts and dreams
I find little material.
I search deeper
Into the hollows and crevices of my mind
To unveil associations
Directly alien to my thoughts -
Could it be just my moods,
Or the strains of past experiences
As they come flooding in;
Could it be sounds outside the window
Injecting into my slumbering duty?
Could it be malicious witches
Aiming to frustrate my bliss;
Or is it just me and my idleness
Seeking an unconscious relief from realness?
I continue to quiz
Meditations upon the bargain
To grasp the truth,
The utility of which to put paid
To the endless search to the underpinnings
Of the intrigues of my mind.

samuel nze

The Virtue Is To Trust

The virtue is to trust
To have faith in the face of strain
We must rest secure in
The truth that God cares
If he doesn't who else will?
It was he who designed us
To occupy the cosmic estate
He who ties us firm to
His apron strings.
It is God who envelopes us
And wraps us in smug comfort
The Lord who will uphold us
When in quandary

samuel nze

Their Eyes Open

Brightness of solar smirking
Encourages fruitful activity
Men look for money
Women for love
Their eyes open

Few hours ago
The bed was kept warm
Groggy balls
Looked wonderous
In strange states
Chasing summary delusions
Seeing events with eyes closed

Now the bustle
At last concerns them
Ambition speeds on
The clock on the mantelpiece
Keeps their eyes open.

samuel nze

There Is A God

There is a god
Moving in this room
Stealthily but surely
Magnificent in his stride

In this room
The light footfalls you hear
Belong to a gentle giant
Moving stealthily and surely
Magnificent in his stride

Like the soft breeze heralding
The Supreme Deity
Met by the weary prophet
Outside the mountain
Like the sweet softness of
Whispering palm trees
And the hush-hush at
A solemn burial
The presence of a god
Is felt in this room.

samuel nze

They Thought I Was A Thief Too

They thought I was a thief too
Get those handcuffs jiffily
Let us brace him
How I quaked!

In terror we pray
Gnash our teeth
Our knees knock,
Our hearts resigned to fate.

It was my voice and identification
That affected my release
I was simply lucky
One of them knew me.

In terror we pray
Gnash our teeth
Our knees knock,
Our hearts resigned to fate.

Now I can exhale
I came closely calamity
Jaws of exclusion closed in on me
But Samson's grip loosed them again.

In terror we pray
Gnash our teeth
Our knees knock,
Our hearts resigned to fate.

I swing and exalt like Lekeleke
But I also quiz;
If God dwells in thick darkness,
Must I too?

In terror we pray
Gnash our teeth
Our knees knock,
Our hearts resigned to fate.

samuel nze

Thinking In A Dark Room

I was thinking in a dark room
The room was dark
And my thoughts were dark too.
The light was off in the hall
The light was off in my brain too.
I was thinking long and hard,
Thinking in that dark
Dark room.

Plenty of worry
Plenty of strife
Long and traumatic
Deep and relentless
I was still in that dark unlit room.

No one came to see me
I was all alone
In my world and
Needing my space
I had only my thoughts for fellow
I strove hard on my own
I wanted to be free
But I had to slave to win the day

Plenty of worry
Plenty of strife
Long and traumatic
Deep and relentless
I was still in that dark unlit room.

I was frenzied yet dispassionate
Tortured yet calm
I was needing friends yet alone
I was drunk with sorrow -
The world was buffeting me
And I was too distraught to resist
I was needing comfort
But all I got was pain
Needing a shoulder but getting only a rocky pillow

Plenty of worry
Plenty of strife
Long and traumatic
Deep and relentless
I was still in that dark unlit room.

Visions of today melting into the next
In that unlit room
Reveries from yesterday mingling with the distant past
There was no hope for remedy, no hope
For extrication from
Pain
Worry
Disturbance of the soul
Or maybe I was paying
For my sins
The wrongs of my youth
Maybe I was paying for the evils
I had committed as a kid
I was derailing
My spirit needed rest
But I needed to work
And could afford it no respite
One needs another working for him to rest
But I was all alone
I was by myself.

samuel nze

This Fat Woman.

The other day this fat woman
Came to visit us
She nearly broke the chair
In which she sat.

Excuse me madam
Could you change seat
That one is already creaking
It will soon fall.

O dear
She cries
It is what the bike rider
Told me a while ago

My tyres are going to fall
Under your weight
Choose another bike
Mine is old.

samuel nze

This Girl Will Drive Me Mad

Why should I worry my head
Trying to impress Ugonna?
I am sick of it!

This girl will drive me mad
If I do not watch it.

Yet she is a queen
And deserves the best -
But she has called me a nobody

This girl will drive me mad
If I do not watch it.

this must stop immediately
If she cannot like me
I will not think to force her

This girl will drive me mad
If I do not watch it.

I will be myself
Whether or not she cares
I will refuse to impress her

This girl will drive me mad
If I do not watch it.

samuel nze

Thought Or Romance

Mama's world is different than papa's
Hers is romance
His is thought;
Thought and romance
Which do I prefer?
I prefer mama's world,
Tears
Joy
Passion
Love;
A kaleidoscope of hearts,
A diversity of human expression;
Children play
Adults kiss
Old men stroke the beard gently;
Even the sun
Is not harsh,
Casting as it does
Warm glistening showers and
Not the harsh passion of
Dreary
Pondering.

samuel nze

Thought Processes

For thought processes
And decisions to be made
Pain is in the heart
Troublesome worry
Makes us sigh
We want to do right
But it is too hard
Evil seems alluring
And cheap
We can buy it with time
Spent in idleness
Quirks of the spirit
And selfish longing for pleasure
Summary bliss often welcomes
An eternity of painful regret
False decisions
Lead to agonizing fate
It is our thought processes
That require a world of industry
Some to make us glow
Others to make us ill.

samuel nze

To Be A Lecturer

I will not be a lecturer -
No sir!
To be a lecturer
Is to serve an ambivalent lord,
The government.
I sweat to prepare my notes,
I task my students,
Expect them to put in their best,
Hope to get rewarded
At least financially -
Whossai!
The government looks at me
Morosely
And makes countless promises.
They talk and keep tongue in cheek
I know they like to talk
Long, fine speeches
Of course meaning nothing,
But when action is demanded
There is no help, no support.
I am fed up with the government
And the system
That chokes education;
When will we be like even
Ghana,
A fellow third world nation,
In educational excellence?

samuel nze

Today

Thinking thoughts
Meditating meditations
Feeling feelings
Today.
Today is like any other day
They say the sun has risen in the East
Soon they will see it set in the West
It happened yesterday
It will happen tomorrow
It is happening today.
They say so
Prescribe a remedy for social confusion.
The rule of law
They say so
But some men circumvent it.
'All men are equal
But some are more equal than others.'
They say so
And they are right
Perhaps.
Today she will return like always -
Usually the same process
We will gather to welcome her home
But she will still go away again.
Nothing seems complete
It was so yesterday
It will be so tomorrow
It is the status quo
Today.

samuel nze

Today Differs, Painful And Ill

Liquids hot and perturbing
Well up in the heart
They sting and smart,
My stomach is now troubling

I was serene, calm
Yesterday was very mild
There was no stinging, no curse
Nothing was troubling me

Today differs painful and ill
Roaring agitation in the head
It hassles me still
My eyes are all red

I was indifferent, gay
Yesterday was very mild
There was no hassling, no ruse
Nothing was bothering me

The afternoon is a tyrant
Sunny oppression and sand
Bikes stall and stand,
Riders are so adamant

I was carefree, glad
Yesterday was very mild
There was no stalling, no fuss
Nothing was troubling me

I try to read, to write
My fingers quiver
The pen is full of spite,
I have a nagging fever

I was peaceful, smug
Yesterday was very mild
There was no spiting, no quirk
Nothing was troubling me.

samuel nze

Tsunami Tale

God was cooking
He put the fuel
In the stove's sink
Then he threw in the match
Too late - he threw it foul
And it will explode
In the sink
With the fuel.
He gets water quickly
To halt the blast
On cup and two
Pour pour pour.
Then comes the blast
Gbam! The pot is broken
And the table as well
All that was arranged thereupon
Is thrown into the water
Drip dropping to the floor.
Salt dissolves quickly.

samuel nze

Tsunami's Fate.

There has been disaster late
In the vast Asian estate
Groups and people now donate
Steady they Tsunami's fate
Gifts or money they will pay
Sizes which no one can say
It has always been the way
Now to give or least to pray
Struck though not by human sword
Man and beast are now devoured
It has been a bitter gourd
Unto them thus now outpoured
Many lives are lost to us
Swallowed up in earthly fuss
The ill-fated omnibus
Fares a population thus.

samuel nze

Ugonna

My lofty eagle,
how I think of you as I
gaze into the sky to behold your
siblings drift through,
wings going platter-a-platter
In the golden sun.
You are resplendent my love in
your simple greatness,
Dark practicality and nimble demure.
Come into my arms for
respite; I swoon to catch
a whiff of your smell and
the fragrant warmth of your body
that enraptures in me that
wellbeing which the sound of
your voice alone can conjure.
It makes me tremble, I can
assure you.

samuel nze

Uncovered

When the age was younger
Swarthy women went about
Naked.

Now the age is older
They go about
Uncovered.

samuel nze

Unless

Unless
I think upon
That same truism
And
Unless not
The result differs
From the main.
Unless
I work hard with determination
I cannot reach my goal
And unless not
I slack upon the way
I will be a scholarly saint.

samuel nze

Waiting

Sitting with palm under chin
And looking at the world
As it rotates on its orbit
Waiting

For that something
For a relief from pain
Longing for eternity
And
Hoping

Hoping for truth
Realization preceding knowledge
Just hoping
For the substance

Of the long long wait
It will come when it will
It will come and
Hopefully not delay.

samuel nze

Waiting For Opportunity

When we
Wait
For gratification
It sometimes takes
Long
But we
Suffer on
Without minding
The cost we incur
How so many
Countless
Opportunities
Having once presented
Themselves
And waited long
For our grasp
Flit past again
Without
Waiting more.

samuel nze

Watch It!

You want to succeed
But care less about the success
Of others
Watch it!

I know you are good
But you are not
The only good one
Watch it!

Try to be tolerant
Of other people's progress
They want to grow too
Watch it!

You are to know that
Egalitarianism is not forced
Not all have equal potential
Watch it!

Be the good man
I know you are
Give others a chance and do
Watch it!

samuel nze

Water Drips

Up
In the sky
Clouds
Heavy
Nearing
Parturition
Your eyes
Are clouds
Too
Misting
Nearing spillage
Salt drips
Will soon
Cascade
Down
Your cheeks
And I may
Find myself
Saying
Take heart
It is
A
Pity.

samuel nze

We Fear To Be Poor Again

Sometimes we fear what people may do
When we brag,
When things go too well for us.
Our hearts sink at the thought
Of falling again after having risen.
People who knew us
When we were poor will laugh
If we become poor again;
His wealth was just a flash in the pan,
They would say.
That is why we fear
When we check our pockets
To find coins instead of notes;
When we check our stores
To find empty bags of cereal;
When we check our toilets
To find tablets of soap used up,
Then we know we must fear
And fear indeed.
Tomorrow may make us poor again;
Our friends will despair again
Our enemies will rejoice again
We will go begging again.
O God -
Teardrops fill our eyes,
Our knees knock,
Our hearts are weak and melting;
Will we be poor again?
Those supercilious faces
Looking down on us as they
Hand down their charities -
Take this for supper
And that for tomorrow.
Do you have any beans left?
I bought you some onions;
Try out these jeans,
There - they fit you just nicely.
Now do this task for me,
I am too tired.

If these days come again -
I despair to think of them -
I think I cannot bear it
I just might faint.

samuel nze

We Struggle Here

When I came newly to Africa
I met a young man
And asked him my way about
The only thing he told me was
We struggle here
I did not take him seriously until days later
When in my usual evening stroll
I was robbed of all my money
I fumed with disgust
But the policeman who ought to
Share my irritation simply
Reiterated what that lad had said
Here we struggle
He put the here before the struggle
I took it as emphasis

samuel nze

We Write

We create beauty
When we write
And we create art as well.
It has been said that
Of all the arts in
Which men excel,
Nature's supreme gift
Is writing well.
We make art come alive;
We express thought
And ejaculate emotions;
We inspire thought
And create phantasms;
The power is in our heads
And in our pens as well.
When our hearts will
We do what we will -
We write.

samuel nze

Were You Sleeping?

Were you sleeping on duty?

Who - me?

What do you mean, me?

Weren't you asleep?

O dear

I guess I was!

I did not sleep last night.

And why not?

Well, it's like this

The cat harried the mouse

From nine to six

No sleep was possible.

To whom are you wed?

It is not hard to guess -

I am the mouse,

She is the cat.

samuel nze

What Are My Feelings Like?

What are my feelings like
This Saturday afternoon?
They are like a mob
Protesting poverty
On a hot day.

What are my feelings like
This Saturday afternoon?
They are like a mason
Wearing wool during
A noon shift.

What are my feelings like
This Saturday afternoon?
They are like rolling
On coal tar
Under the watchful eyes
Of a grim grim sun.

samuel nze

What Exactly Is Faith?

What exactly is faith?

Faith is like talking first
And paying attention later;
You assert what you don't see
And then remonstrate for
Not seeing it.

What exactly is faith?

Faith is like acting first
And explaining later;
You do what seems irrational
And then justify
Your doing it.

What exactly is faith?

Faith is like laughing first
And brooding later;
You rejoice at an aspiration
And then trust
That it will come about.

What exactly is faith?

Faith is like thanking first
And supplicating later;
You believe you have it already
Even though you still
Have not prayed for it.

samuel nze

What If I Was A Woman?

I am a man
And so I am expected
To walk and talk tough
With my chest
Forever quarreling with the wind.

But what if I was a woman?
Then I could easily sing
And cry without shame;
I could follow the samba's lead
And speak of my romantic
Undertones;
Dusky dealing,
Rolling frolicking lipsticked
Mouth maneuvering
With my beau.

If I were a woman
I would seduce the menfolk
With my taut nipples
And fish them out of
Their egoistic pretenses.

samuel nze

When I Am Hungry

When I am hungry
And have no money to eat
At least I have hope
Which keeps me fed for the time being
Till I get money
To go to the cafe
And get myself a meal

Hunger is not ignored
Except in fast
And even in fast
It is ignored with strength

When I get money to eat
I am no longer hungry
My hope has paid off
Has served its temporary term
I am back from the cafe
Where I have had food
To quell my hunger

samuel nze

When I Am Sad

When I am sad
And it seems everyone has let me down
And my heart is bleeding
And I feel like crying
And I just want to wail
When I am despondent and totally disappointed, shattered,
When I am not at all happy
I recall that tomorrow could be better
Yes I have enemies
So many people hate me
They hate my faith, my guts -
They hate everything about me
They want me to die
They do not want to see me smile
When I am tempted with gloom and despair
And my world seems to be closing in
I reach out my hands not to grasp air
I reach out in the hope
Of catching God
Of holding him close on tight.

samuel nze

When I Am Tempted

Melancholy
Gloom
Despair
When I am tempted
I recall
The days that were bright
They will come again
If I wait
Hope
Long suffering
Patience
When I wait
I pray
To Forces that can help
They usually do.

samuel nze

When My Head Is Full

When my head is full
Far from trying to empty it
I fill it the more
I tell myself what to
Make me feel better
Inspire faith
Build hope
Keep love alive
I fill it to the brim
With matter that weighs
As light as air.

samuel nze

When You Seem Tired

When you seem tired
You need not worry
The journey is trying
I know that well

Stifle the yawn
And brace up
You may be startled to learn that
Tomorrow may bring relief

It may not be true
That you are squelched
Ad ignorantiam is
A fallacy of philosophy

The truth is that you seem
A little too tired
Tell yourself that even so you
Need to get to the end.

samuel nze

Which Is Black?

Are you a nonentity, African child?
Some say you are
Because you are black.
I have heard of men who
Change their noses from flat to straight
Their skin colour from black to white;
They say it is fashionable.
But why not black anyway -
Is the race inferior?
Quandary indeed.
I have heard of men who
Patronize black whores with white skin
White flesh upon swarthy,
Swanking away in the cover of dark
In clandestine exploits;
Mix of blood, mix of fluid;
All blurred and barely perceptible
In the shade -
Which is black and which, white?

samuel nze

Who Killed My Father?

Who killed my father,
Will he kill me too?
What would my father
Have done for me
If he were alive?
He would have given me
The best education
And secured me a job,
But I can do both on my own.
The proof of success
Is that though they
Have killed him
I still got educated,
Will still get a job
Marry, make money
And become the best I can.
I know who killed my father
And I pray that he be killed too;
I have not lost anything,
I will still be all I was meant to
And then my father's murderer
Will be shamed.
His hope was that
If papa died I would be useless
But I am not;
His plans have failed,
It is now his turn to die
So his children can be the ones
To bear the brunt of uselessness.

samuel nze

Who Will Punish Time?

At the sound of the gun

The squirrel falls dead

Who will mourn him?

Rain.

But who will punish the gun

At the sound of which

The squirrel falls dead?

Rust.

And who will punish rust

At whose hands

The gun is punished?

Time.

So who will punish time

By whom alone

Rust is scathed?

Nothing - Time is too strong!

samuel nze

Why Do You Worry?

Why do you worry
When your brother grows
Richer than you?
He will share,
Don't worry.
You probably fret that
The fellow will be the
Ultimate dispenser
Of every utility,
But that is fallacious;
It may be that in some small
Occasion, or in event of a
Quandary he will
Come to you -
Wait.

samuel nze

Widow's Mite

Alas for the widow's mite
That which Christ adjudged
Valuable over the wealth of the rich
Proverbial coin
Reminds us of the perennial nature of
Poverty
Who cares for a widow's mite!
Give me many dollars
Even if I give a pinch of it
Give me houses
Even if I lie in only one bed
Give me stores crammed full
With earthly bounties
I am not a widow
And I hope not to be one.

samuel nze

Wilt Thou Be Made Whole?

Jesus looks at Nigeria
As once he beheld the leper
He asks the historic quiz
Wilt thou be made whole?

The pharisees are the government
Sneering at this saviour
You must not cure a man
On Sabbath day.

Sabbath is everyday in Nigeria
We do not stretch our hands
No healing can take place
It is hard work.

But he still asks,
Persists
Coaxes with countless entreaties
Wilt thou be made whole?

Gloomy import-based economy
One commodity alone for sale
Social injustice the livelong day -
And you would not be made whole?

The leper stretched forth his hand
And received his healing
But the pharisees withdrew to plan
To kill Jesus.

We keep our disease covered
Who cares for healing!
Jesus withdraws
To bemoan our government.

Our pharisees have the alternative
We will not be made whole
We will rather go on
The way we are.

samuel nze

Winding The Clock's Screw

Winding the clock's screw
Round and round
Ensures that its hands keep
Moving;
Long hand, short hand keep
Moving;
They move at the same slow pace,
Poco a poco
In the day
And in the night.
Millions of ages have sought
To put paid to this
Timeless phenomenon,
But time is of
Overwhelming strength;
It keeps going on
Just the same.

samuel nze

Windy Sun

The weather is like
Two enemies fighting
One hot and passionate
The other cold and longing
The former is a chum of the sun
The latter a friend of the wind
Each invites his crony
To a symposium
Blow the wind
Blow long and hard
Shine the sun
Shine bright and splendid
Who will outwit the other?
We simply change our dress code
To applaud them
When the sun gains the upper hand
We wear singlets
And bathe seven times
Like leprous Naaman
But when the wind wins
We wear coats
And avoid the water
Like a dressed damsel
On the beach.

samuel nze

Winsome Long Hours

Long hours of dolour
Can be winsome
If you fear less
And brave the period
If you are smug
About it all
I tried to ignore the dull
Part of the week
As well as my moods
I struggled not to
be drowned in the
Sea of melancholy
Because I was strong
Through all the pain
I considered myself winsome.

samuel nze

Woman Power

They say she understands
Body language better
Than men do
It's part of her power.

She is relationship savvy
Miles ahead of the guys
Anticipation a necessary touch
She knows what I wanna say.

It's woman power
This girl has a hold on me
She takes me by the nose
She holds my heart.

Shaggy has wondered
If God is a woman
I don't blame him
I wonder the same thing.

samuel nze

Writing

Pen,
You intrigue me;
Blue ink tailored
In straight lines
Leaves me dazzled;
A spirit in you
Draws out my heart;
You read my mind -
How do you know
Those secret thoughts
Caged in my brain?
You preempt,
Prompt
Permit
The steady flow of
Colourless Ideas
As meaningful blue lines
Get spread out neatly
On the white blank sheet.

samuel nze

Years After

Let my cry touch you, fate
You who killed my father
And let my mother follow him
Down below six years after

Let my cry touch you, fate
You who caused my guardian
To hate and maltreat me and
Drive me away seven years after

Let m cry touch you, fate
You who made me roam
Without a precise future after school
Confused even five years after

Let my cry touch you, fate
You who caused me to be
Dried up of love now that I
Miss mother fourteen years after.

samuel nze

Yesterday And Today

Yesterday I was sad
But today I am happy
There was about you this fad
And it made me snappy.

We must not quarrel so
Our friendship must not suffer
I couldn't keep my voice low
It was all in my ire I could offer.

But love should overcome ill
Let us be strong
Evil should not friendship kill
That would sincerely be wrong.

Today is all that counts
It makes up for the past
True peace continues to mount
And that peace is sure to last.

samuel nze

You Enveloped Me

You enveloped me
When others would flee
You were all steady
Though I was heady.

I hassled you long
But you bore the wrong
You studied my moods
I doubted you could.

I was tiresome
Not at all handsome
But you braved the hook
Never once forsook.

I owe you my life
You will be my wife
It used to be tears
But love stills our fears.

samuel nze

You Want To Kill Me

With rat on my chest
I had to pray hard
I pleaded with God
From midnight till dawn

I grabbed a bucket
To rub down his car
But this man intoned
You want to kill me

Am I to kill you
To make meat for soup
Am I to kill you
To use as kpomo?

He pointed at me
And grit his brown teeth
He began to say
All that I did not

That he would soon die
His children would cry
The Nzes would fall
And I alone stand

Am I a dreamer
Saying this and that
Am I a dreamer
That you hear me foul?

He said to keep shut
That I was wicked
He'd tell the whole world
I needed him dead

He fetched his dane gun
To keep at his side
That when I was near
He'd ward off the threat

Am I an uze
To keep me a gun
Am I an uze
The type you shoot at?

He called a dibah
To poison my food
He fashioned a charm
To secure my death

He quarreled with me
And sent me demons
Concoctions and spells
Witches and devils

Do you want my corpse
For sniffing the ooze
Do you want my corpse
For drinking the blood?

I had to escape
I couldn't stay on
He was determined
To ensure my doom

I packed up my bag
And made for the road
I would change me name
To Munachukwu

Is kinship by force
When you want me dead
Is kinship by force
With God on my side?

I was a free man
Now so for three years
I left them for good
Never to return

I did suffer much

I wept and I pained
I tried everything
To eke out a life

Am I not to live
In my own country
Am I not to live
In my fatherland?

But I didn't lose
See how much I've grown
My chest fends the wind
O stay back, I say!

Assurance increased
I face the wild west
Ready for all things
Because I'm a man

Am I not negroid
The eye of the sun
Am I not negroid
The hope of the world?

samuel nze

Your Envious Brother

Ascribe him a name
And say it aloud
So that Sekere may be ashamed
And the samba remorseful
Dance in the eves
Under the cover of leaves
You and her beady eyes.
She says she loves you
And you swoon
But she has told him the same
Your envious brother
He wants to lick your soup
He wants to woo your lover
He wants to loot your store.
His eyes water for your rise
And his lips turn down
Slowly slowly
Like Anini of Benin
He stalks you with flashes of hate
The growing malice of rivalry
The curt reply to your good mornings.
You should have seen the symbols
Long before Harmattan
Rain may wash you away
The man dipping the hand
In your pounded yam
Is really after your blood
And not just your meal.

samuel nze

Your Gift

The smile on my face
The joy in my heart
The hope you inspire -
All products of your gift.

The passion of our love
The grace of our friendship
The truth of our brotherhood -
All signs of your gift.

The will to love
The strength to impart
The zeal to sacrifice -
All dimensions of your gift.

You and I are one
You and are are loved
You and I are beloved -
All sequences of your gift.

samuel nze