Kolawole Ajao
- poems -

Publication Date:
2012

Publisher:
Poemhunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive
Kolawole Ajao()
1984

Symbolic year-
Orwell wrote a book and called it that
Then was when I was ten
Soyinka was two scores and ten
America was tricentenary minus ninety-two
A coup de grace was a year old in my country
Just one year and we had a coup d'etat
Three years earlier my father wore Army khaki
and helped save Chad
When the world's Olympians gathered in Los Angeles
70 years it was one war erupted
and two decades and five for Hitler to spring up another
My mother knew not she 'd chipped in a poet,
and a farmer, and an essayist like Emerson,
And a philosopher, and a thinker like SPA-
(Socrates Plato Aristotle)

1984: symbolic year!
1984: ten years after another Cicero reincarnated.

Kolawole Ajao
A.K.A

One beautiful man named Lawrence
and his bosom friend called Michael
Chose to re-christen me in 2009
They both slept and had one dream
All emphases placed on K
The first letter of the name
my parents gave to me
Lawrence baptised me K-Factor!
Michael confirmed me KAPITAL-K!

Kolawole Ajao
Ajangbila

Ajangbila!
I turn my back to you
I wouldn't dine with you
When I heard your name
I ran faster than the cheetah

Ajangbila!
You run cantankerous in heads
Devil's handiwork you are
You dance like the devil itself
You are too little to belittle

Ajangbila!
You would rather annihilate
You would bring down low
What you erected in a lifetime
In a jiffy and a fraction of seconds

Ajangbila!
You always blast like thunder
But more calamitous than it
Funnier than the strange rain
Which rocked Lagos on July 10

Ajangbila!
I call unto my creator
I call unto my head
To put between me and you
A gap unbrigdeable by any artisan.

Kolawole Ajao
Antitheses

I am a soldier!
Albeit I don't own an Army uniform
I belong to the Mafia!
Albeit I never saw Sicily
In my last incarnation,
I was a Greek
And I worshipped only Mnemosyne

Those who don't know my tale
Often say I am feisty
Unknown to them
I 'd wept more than I smiled
They only see my squirrel
When it is in the chips
Never knowing my squirrel
Ofttimes sleeps zero-bellied
The lizard's egg may be softer
But tougher than an ostrich's
If you climb Olumo successfully
Better call it your own Everest
The Catholic Order taps no blood from England
And the masquerade borrows no wares

My heart once made of stone
Now is of steel
Steel with the densest alloy
I flew without wings
I lived in the desert
Where there were no oases
I didn't do as Mao says
That through guns alone I gain might
But I did as he says
That my watchword be-
One against nine, nine against one
Kongi also exhorts me-
To set forth at dawn
So I can move as whirlwind
Epistemology plus logic is Philosophy
My talons are now stronger than an hawk's
Now I dance among foes unhurt!

Kolawole Ajao
As It Was

The wealth gathered by accretion
Quite better than that by quantum leap
The termitarium was not built in one day
The chick metamorphoses into a cock
but not within an eye's blink
Athens was once superior to Rome
And so did Rome to London
The egg of birds comes in variant
The weightier the bird, the heftier the egg
The first water I ate from my mother's bosom
is what science chooses to call colostrum
And it simply calls the remainder milk
Although I don't know how it tasted
I still value her for this sweet food.

Kolawole Ajao
Calamvs Gladio Fortior

Equip a thousand mighty men
Each with unbreakable sword
To face the wordsmith in battle
Him alone with an inkful of pen
The belligerent swordsmen
And their sanguinary swords
The single pint of blood spilled
Was used to write their destiny.

Kolawole Ajao
Caveat

The fatwa was issued on us
Amidst the darkest of nights
To move away from the coast
To the trajectory of our world
Which leads to the hinterland
One we never saw in dreams
Nor conceived in our thoughts
The owners of the elegant abode
Have bartered it out for dough
Seven days were all the grace
Till we get trashed out
As nothing but rotten tomatoes
We supplicated like never before
That God come to our aid
We chanted with a voice:
We want another coast!
And we got the shocker of our lives
When we got the heaviest news
That the succour provider just expired
We were like hopeless Jews
Who got trapped by Pharaoh
We looked forward and hindward
No birds seem to roam the sky
We heard no croaks from frogs
Where were the melodies
That we could dance to?
Where were our own Platos and Goethes?
On the sixth day we chose to excel
We displayed our own caveat
Against those who come to scare us

Caveat:
That we were rebels ourselves.

Kolawole Ajao
Code 46664

I decoded this code
I decrypted this crypt
Once written in Roman
And later put in hieroglyph
That was the code
That that rugged sage got

Code 46664:
Madiba’s penitentiary number.

(For Nelson Mandela who strained his nerves for South Africa.)

Kolawole Ajao
Dirge

Darkness descended at noon
Rain fell after it vowed never to fall again
Is there still honey in the hive?
Will we further see the epiphyte glued to the palm?
The largest star within the galaxy has dropped!
I am soaked amidst my own tears right now
Hard-hearted, strong-boned that I am
Tears flow like the river in my eyes
We sob even in our heart
The heavens themselves open their doors
And pour down fresh water
To assuage the drought that plague us
As the saint ceases to breathe
He looks as fresh as bitterleaf
Like a newly sprouted bitterleaf
Rich in life
But richer in death.

(Ode to Gani Fawehinmi, front-line human rights activist who ancestorized on the 5th of September, 2009.)

Kolawole Ajao
Fate

When next I come to earth
And if reincarnation were genuine
I'd like to come the way I came now
My mother will still be the she
My father still will be the one that run the engine
I'd bear the name I bear now
I'd still read Emerson as well as Whitman
I'd plant coconut in every house I build
I'd be an angler when in teenage
I'd read about Keats at a younger age
I'd be both a mystic and a prognosticator
I'd beat drum and phantoms will dance
I'd seek the Godhead more than I did now
I wouldn't default on philanthropism as of now
I'd be an inspirer of souls as of now

At the point of leaving the gate of heaven
I'd beg the Supreme Being
To bring in His avant-gardism
I'd raise my hand and raise a plea:
'Please make me an only child.

Kolawole Ajao
Hold On

All that glitters is not gold
But gold must surely glitter
Be as wise as gold
Put your lustre on hold

Kolawole Ajao
How May I Help You?

How may I help you?
The ten million-dollar question
Me and some souls dubbed reps
Take delight in asking by obligation
We make this our routine
Because to do so
Often gets us bacons in our soup
We took some proficiency exposure
Before moving afield
In the course of duty:
We talk to humans,
We talk to ghosts,
We talk to apparitions
And again in the course of duty:
We get praised to heavens,
We get worshipped to idols

What a funny world:
Where you see not those you dine with!

Kolawole Ajao
You and I are humans; for if we were angels
We wouldn't live on this plane called earth
But roam around our God in heaven
Humans are made, angels are created
And humans are made before they journeyed here
Gold may not lose its sheen
But it sure may lose its worth
Yoruba doesn't sell the privilege of age to wealth
What you don't want to forget
Just write it on your palm
I tell you it shall be there forever
No amount of cleansing dares rub it off
Birds don't love boughless trees
On which there are no rooms for perching
Look deepy into the past
But don't live slightly on it
Treasure never resides in open earth
It's in the places hidden.

Kolawole Ajao
I Pay Obeisance To The King

I stand up on my two feet
I bow till my head touches my navel
I prostrate and my forehead becomes glued to earth
And the king is Omo Oba Alade Ijero's uncle
We hail thee, The Ataoja of Oshogbo.

(For the monarch of the city of Oshogbo, Oba Iyiola Oyewole Matanmi, for his goodwill.)

Kolawole Ajao
If
He
Degenerated
Like
Roots
Of
Shrubs
Amidst
No
Sin
And
Guilt
Call
Him
A
Saint

If
When
In
His
Prime
He
Wined
And
Dined
With
Men
Of
Valour
Call
Him
A
Hero

If
He
Ever
Spoke
And
Sat
With
Sages
And
Poets
And
Etchers
Call
Him
A
Polyhistor

Kolawole Ajao
Longevity

The secret of longevity seems to be in Okinawa
Where women live for a century and ten
   in the least of it
But that of men is ninety and nine
Whether in Okinawa or Adelaide
Whether in Oslo or Ogbomoso or and in Minna
Whether in Okhlahoma or in Herefordshire
Whether in Hanoi or in Kumasi or The Hague
Whether in Dakar or in Dhaka
The womenfolk live longer than us.

Kolawole Ajao
Nature Talks

I've often wondered
Why the lizard prefers to stay
out of the cottage
And the gecko prevails indoor
I've seen many a child call
gecko lizard
And also call lizard gecko
All I say to such little ones
Is that they both live not
by their own volition
But by what nature wills for them.

Kolawole Ajao
Numerology

1 3 5 7 9: oddity
2 4 6 8 10: evenness
The best numerologist of you is you
Nobody knows your number like you
I know some are odd and some even
My only even joker is 4
When it’s 9 it hangs but hits it
3 and 7 ain't nothing but the joker's joker
I am definitely not in the hinterland anymore
I have emigrated to the coastal land
Leaving behind the life reminiscent of the swamp
To live in the coast suggests ebullience
My greens are now growing greener
My trees are blossoming robust fruits
The squirrel I find here are larger than the hedgehog
Achatina are three times stouter than I ever saw

Go read your number yourself
No other one reads it better.

Kolawole Ajao
October

October, even in my tropic Nigeria doth flourish
October, in you the heaviest of rains shall fall
October, why not you let me say:
You are the greenest of months?

Kolawole Ajao
Ogidimo

Ogidimo,
That was the splendour of my boyhood
In the southwestern divide of our land
Where my mother excreted me
And gave to me
The milk from her chest
Whence I also began to toddler
And sprout teeth and wing
Thence we rollicked in insectiviewing-
Our best kind of gaming,
We hunt,
We nurse,
And watch Ogidimo:
The largest species of beetles.

Kolawole Ajao
Plea

Plea:
To God,
For fossil fuel not to dry in our Delta

Plea:
To fellow Nigerians,
For babangida (sic) never to see Aso Rock again

Plea:
To PDP,
For obasanjo (sic) to continue to reign only in Ota

Plea:
To the ancestors,
For the wisdom teeth of our youth
to grow quick and strong

Plea:
To longevity,
For these folks never to tread again
the path of womb straight to tomb.

Kolawole Ajao
Pulpit

Ain't got no wings to fly
But got four mobile limbs
Two on the fore, two on the hind
Those on the hind steer me on
And those on the fore are a pulpit
Upon which I place books.

(Written on December the 24th, 2008.)

Kolawole Ajao
Taboo

The best woman to take to the altar
is one's own sister
She knows at least
The first two decades and five
of what you call your life
But nature does say no to that
So do many of religions
and belief systems and,
Ultimately the law of Jah
In something we call Sodomy
Or incestuousity if we like

Then we all have trodden one
major path which often wrings out of us
Blood and water and sweat
We go for the one we call wife
Unrelated to us, a stranger
In a union akin to go to gaol
In a prison where escape
is vague and virulent
The day the contract is signed
becomes the day you want to unsign
The deal you longed to settle.

Were it not for nature and God,
Men wouldn't marry outside of home.

Kolawole Ajao
Tentacles

I have set my clock ahead of GMT
So I can fly at a different pace
I don't need to acclimatize anywhere
I am bio-entrained for any climate
I can live and thrive in Siberia
among the extreme cold of the tundra
The Atacama is not too hot to sear me
Singing reggae, singing punk
Reverting to ska, rocksteady
Old, old highlife songs
From Ghana/Nigeria.
I claim all things good ever bequeathed mankind
I am a rastafarian
I am a Buddhist
I take from Ifa all truths it tells
I am not a hypocrite
I bend down low to Christ's info!
The world is changing!
My views are Socratic
I am everything but not atheistic.

Kolawole Ajao
The Lass Kanky!

Sleep seemed to have wished me au revoir
I was left to rollick amidst a strange euphoria
I saw mirage within a myopic distance
Then some poets diagnosed what my nausea was
What was the prognosis?
The prognosis they chanted:
My head contained nothing but the penchant
For dreaming about the lass Kanky!

(For Mercy Kankara a.k.a. Kanky, a lady who peculiarly found out that I am a poet)

Kolawole Ajao
The Oracle Lies Not

As if the angel of God visited me
The winds that blew toward me 're gold
Washing me off all entanglements
Separating me from all uncertainties
Showing me the way to Oberhausen
Where a three-hearted oracle lives
Which tells us who own the morrow
What it sings is what we dance
In the end Diego Forlan wasn't more illustrious than thou
The oracle lies not.

(For Paul, the oracle which helped reduce tension in us during the Mundial in South Africa.)

Kolawole Ajao
The Rich, The Poor

Even in the rich man's house
Poor man's food is being eaten
You had better eat rich man's food
In the poor man's house
Than eat poor man's food
In the rich man's house
Our world is mixed
Truly inseperable.

Kolawole Ajao
The Sunlight That Comes In Spring

The sunlight of spring comes amidst welcome
Why?
It brings refreshment and calmness
That you and I ever anticipated
And not like the hot sun
of a hot noon in summer
Come, oh come, sun, sunlight
In this our spring of camaraderie.

(All thanks go to Michael Brock. As I read his poem The)
(Sunlight of Spring, I got hooked up.)

Kolawole Ajao
The Wonders Of The Ages Past.

The wonders of the ages past,
The wit of the ancient sages,
The rare iguana of Galapagos,
The quadrucentenarian tortoise at the palace of Shoun,
The giant crocodile domesticated at Oje in Ibadan,
The turtle named Jakande that I found on Lagos archipelagoes,
Which Omo Oba Alade Ijero helped nurture till it expired
The many trips into the hidden worlds to search for the secret,
The coincidental collision with folks who showed me the way,
The wonderful merger of East and West of Germany,
The reasoning behind Michelangelo's David,
The artitude from which da Vinci etched Mona Lisa,

Enough for me to see the hugeness of our world.

Kolawole Ajao
Three Birds

Three birds perched
One flew away
Two remained perching
Another flew away
One remained perching
Another flew away
No bird remained
Three birds flew
They flew away
Out of sighting.

Kolawole Ajao
Tomfoolery

I met a nitwit
In his titbits
Talk tommyrot
In a manner hurt
Sing of Mobutu
And despise Tutu
His memory a wane
He was insane.

(Dedicated to Desmond Tutu, Nobel Peace laureate.)

Kolawole Ajao
Two Love Birds

Two love birds:
Singing together,  
Perching together,  
Roaming together.

Two love birds:  
Seeing each second,  
Floating each minute,  
Drooping each hour.

Two love birds:  
Nesting together,  
Slumbering together,  
Brooding together.

Two love birds:  
Eating each second,  
Drinking each minute,  
Chirping each hour.

Aye, two love birds! :  
Not dying together.

Kolawole Ajao
Unidentical Twins

Death and birth are one
One spits us into life
The other excretes us into eternity
Without one the other a disease.

Kolawole Ajao
When One Comet Fell.

One comet fell on Ikereku
An asteroid dropped on Ibadan
One whole galaxy of stars ruptured in Lagos
Which altogether coalesced, and
Made Hiroshima effect a miniature

Astronomical evidence revealed says
Ten and five solar eclipses came imminent
The sky opted for a colour change
The greenhouse effect dropped to 1million degree Fahrenheit
Dynamite's sound now inaudible

The mill of God grinds somehow...
Yea!
But grinds exceeding witty

And we were so flummoxed
We couldn't lay your wreath
Those you left as pillars
Don't take your own semblance
They could sketch Africa's map
And forget to dot Madagascar
Adieu to men whose...
Memories fade ad infinitum
And whose names...
We don't carve in gold
But non-adieu to the Abese!
He entered the ocean a shark
But came out a dolphin.

(For Emmanuel Oludele Idowu, Senior Advocate of Nigeria, whom I later chose to call THE SUCCOUR PROVIDER.)

Kolawole Ajao
Where's Your Own Poem?

Start by writing anything
and calling it your own poem
Fold your arms and eyes
and wait for people's critiques
Some will say you are a poetaster
That which carries the weight
that your poem isn't weighty
But let not that be the oil
With which your engine is lubricated
Tighten the floor of your heart
by making it reminiscent of Gani's
Then continue in that phantasmagoria
and make many more writes
Remember that the bat isn't a bird
Yet only the owl can raise its hand
In any nocturnal flying
Just wait till the day
When we shall ask you
That golden question up above
By then you are already a P
And they now the p*****r
This will be the day when
you will see by yourself
That both your critics and attackers
Both slept and had their heads
face the same horizon.

Kolawole Ajao
Wisdom Of The Ancient

True gaiety moves you close to tears
When happiness is cloned you 're moved to tear
Where I am, I am with my angels
When I vamoose, I vamoose with them all
Orange and lime's trees sprout same leaves
In taste they are farther apart than day and night.

Kolawole Ajao
Woe Unto Thee!

Woe unto thee
Thou wicked ones
Of this world

Thou doeth destroy
No, no, no
Thou try destroyeth

The very handiwork
God Almighty carved
Swiftly, purely, beautifully

Woe unto thee
Thou who tryeth
Get soap filthy!

(Written on March the 21st, 2008, to commemorate my birthday).

Kolawole Ajao