

Long
her
Thighs
Sing

MIK KUOL

song her thighs sing

MK Kuol

INKspiredng

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to/for:

Nyannok Bol Ayual (d. 2013)

Ajah Monyluk Ngor (d. 2019)

comely flowers time's feral fingers plucked. so soon.

My girl is magnetic.

When I see her I want to hold her hand

I know that will not be enough...

I want to gather her full on my chest

And let our thighs and midriffs meet

And greet each other

— **Taban Lo Liyong**

Each day, I dress you in songs

Unknown to tongues

With words, I drum to you

Echoes of roots from ancient drums...

Even home will be more homely

When I shall behold you

Even in the darkness of the world

— **John Chinaka Onyeché**

if you want to bury people,

always bury them in a manuscript.

— **Yom Deng Garang**

I spill a smile on your thighs,
look into your eyes for consent
& light sucks me into quicksand lust

— **Jide Badmus**

Table of Contents

In Lieu of a Preface: Against the Speculative ‘Dearth’ of Love Poems in Contemporary African Literature..... 9

i.....	13
ii.....	15
iii.....	16
iv.....	18
v.....	19
vi.....	20
vii.....	21
viii.....	22
ix.....	23
x.....	24
xi.....	25
xii.....	26
xiii.....	28
xiv.....	29
xv.....	30
xvi.....	33
xvii.....	34
xviii.....	35
xix.....	36
xx.....	37
xxi.....	38
xxii.....	40
xxiii.....	42
xxiv.....	43
xxv.....	44
xxvi.....	45

xxvii 47

xxviii 48

Acknowledgments..... 49

In Lieu of a Preface: Against the Speculative ‘Dearth’ of Love Poems in Contemporary African Literature

Prefacing MK Kuol’s *song her thighs sing* is an attempt to do either of two things (maybe both): a counter-narrative to the speculative dearth of love poems in contemporary African literature, such as Ainehi Edoro, extolling Kwesi Brew’s classic, “The Mesh”, decries in 2013, noting that, “there aren’t that many love poems in classic African poetry anthologies.” A fact that Ancci, in a critical review of Michael Chiedoziem Chukwudera’s *Painter of Love* (2023), accentuates quite vehemently, adding that where an attempt is made (although rationed) to recreate love poetry, its language usually lacks (much to the redundancy of cliché and/or stifled logic in Chukwudera’s poetry) the stylistic and symbolic nuance evident in other forms of poetry, especially the socio-politically conscious kinds of poetry.

While one can say (as such, agree marginally with Ancci) that love poetry does not have the same documentary propensity as other forms of poetry (like the form mentioned above), it is sheer misleading to say that there’s no love poetry any more in contemporary African (even if he cites Nigerian) literature, for me, in the manner opposed to his total disavowal. While such critics as Ancci, still glued to the sonnets of Shakespeare as what love poetry is (or should be), are incapable of providing evidence in contemporary African oeuvre of love poetry to enhance their claims, it’s important to bring to mind such works as Niyi Osundare’s *Tender Moments: Love Poems* (2006), Amu Nnadi’s *Love Canticles* (2022), Moyosore Orimoloye’s chapbook, *Love Is a Plot Device* (2019), Ade-Ola Juwon’s *Songs of Ori* (2024), Jide Badmus’ *Scripture* (2018) and *What Do I Call my Love for your Body* (2022). It seems, then, that the “speculative dearth” of love poetry, in Ancci’s assertion, is informed by his examined flaws in Chukwudera’s *Painter of Love*.

However, his impulsive generalization results in the shortcoming of his essay, because, contrary to his claim, there's been love poems in contemporary African poetry, a fact reaffirmed by MK Kuol's ***song her thighs sing***. Although, preoccupied with what seems like the more saleable ilk of poetry in a heightened capitalist era, we tend to ignore these love poems that are constantly being churned out (almost) every year.

Even Frank Chipasula curated what could be considered the most of traditional to modern love poems from Africa, titled *Bending the Bows: An Anthology of Love Poems from Africa* (2009). In this anthology, Chipasula, although laments the sheer neglect and marginalisation of love poetry, notes that the anthology is intended to show that the whole gamut of African poetry is borne out of the need to express, among others, feelings of affection to loved ones, family, society, etc, hence, love poetry. This is equally evident in Okot p'Bitek's *Horn of my Love* (1974), which explores the subject of love as a major poetic staple among the Acoli people of Uganda, cued from his more socio-culturally nuanced translation of traditional Ugandan poetry in *Song of Lawino* (1966), and the sequel, *Song of Ocol* (1970), works that explore the language of love (peculiar to traditional poetry) to express socio-cultural issues confronting Africa.

Also, it is another task, here, to show, as evident in MK Kuol's *Song Thighs Sing*, the rapid rise of love poems in contemporary African poetry—love poems that are more nuanced in their in-depth exploration of the symbiosis between love and such aspects of being as the spiritual, metaphysical, cultural, political, etc. MK Kuol's exploration of love in this book shows the persistence of 'love' as a major subject matter in contemporary poetry.

Much more than a journey of love in poetry, or poetry in love, ***song her thighs sing*** further re-enacts the multifarious significations of love in contemporary African poetry. While critics like Ancei laments the prevalence of cliché language of love poetry, as well as the relative mundane thematic evocativeness, MK Kuol's chapbook shows that

the subject of love, eternal in literary and existential discourse, can be interpreted in relation to the spiritual, cultural, existential, even socio-economic aspects of social constructs, reflective of the inherent subtle evocativeness of such subject. For instance, in “IX” MK Kuol writes not only love into the spiritual, but the spiritual into love, as depicted in the following lines:

*if god is a poet
and the moon and the sun
and the stars and the seas
and i, his poems,
then you're his
chef d'oeuvre:
a showpiece he composed
to showcase
his ineffable flair;
you, oh, you!
fair
as a child's wish.*

This poem not only reflects the poet's exaltation of the lover's beauty, but a romanticization of nature, as well as how it (including, his lover) is a display of God's creative “flair.” In God's feminine creation is the embodiment of the spiritual, as captured in “*you're fair/as a child's wish.*” A “wish” is not just expression of ‘desire’, but prayers, the language of the spiritual.

Written with just one title (which is also the title of the chapbook), and subdivided by numerals, the collection runs on a lyrical wheel enhanced by the organic structuring, where one poem is a projection of the other. One learns from his previous chapbook, *Twice the Size of Sun* (Pengician, 2024), that this style of structuring is peculiar to his poetry; much more than mere structuring, it captures the chronology of thematic movements in his works. The poems in ***song her thighs sing*** are numbered “i—xxviii”, both short poems (like those

numbered “iv”, “ix”, “xvi”, “xviii”, “xix”, etc.) and longer poems, like “i”, “iii”, “xii”, “xv”, etc., without any overt titles. The varied themes—love, lust, metaphysics of sex and sensuality, existential insignias of coitus, moral limitations and delimitations of sex, religio-cultural peculiarities of romances, etc—run from one poem to the other, exemplifying the fluidity of the subject of love explored not only in traditional love poetry, as Frank Chipasula notes among traditional Egyptian love poetry, but extended by the ero-subgenre of the contemporary time, which is a trademark of this chapbook.

In order to exercise consciousness not to haul our critical selves into the same pool as Ancci’s, it’s important we pay objective critical attention to the place of love poetry in the canon of contemporary poetry tradition. Much as the collections and chapbooks mentioned above, we can as well start from here—with MK Kuol’s *song her thighs sing*.

Nket Godwin, Poet, Literary Critic/Essayist, Book reviewer

for daami

quondam, grief used to be an analogy for the myth—
toothed with mother's stares—that a scar's width
tells its mother-wound's depth.

this is the twelfth time i have wished i knew how to vacate
this body, imbued with the fragrance of your unblemished breath,
without profaning the sanctity of your deathless memory.

a fable in the orature of a people yet to be
that affirms: *women's thighs are staircases to heaven*
is the secret scribbled—a tingling bliss—into the hearts
of men that hallowed moment they hold their children
for the first time.

still, i cannot forget the song the wind sang to the high hills
the last time i strummed your nipples, in a trance, with a wish
to see you naked again on this bed made of all the lost poems
i wrote thinking of you.

in this hallucination i am stranded in, my shadow walks past me
with all i am. a waft of silence, whispered: *the beauty of a flower*
doesn't stop it from withering. i sailed out of sleep: a wrecked
boat floating out of a moated dream, a glutinous nightmare.

a day ago, my mother remarked: *the only way a wise mouth*
can lie to daft ears is to spew the truth in appealing melodies.
so, in this poem, i ask: *is repudiated truth a lie too?*

sometimes i wonder. if i were to grab the sun by its ankle,
shroud its face in the palms of my grief-scarred skin & lower it
into the dank belly of my daunted heart, will it light it?

yesterday, an adage— worn of wisdom—unfurled from a sage's
tongue.

lodged a comma in the heart of a raw poem a poet enwrapped: *a
flower*

must first summon her death with her fragrance for a fruit to be born.

i, with the dangling scrotum of an odd god, swung
out of my own grief's groove by letting go of all i had wished

this would become

cognizant there's but one way to one's peace of mind:

to let things be as they are.

daami...
i still recall,

vividly recall
how you let go of me
and forgot about me
the same way
a sound let go of its echoes

in my veins
is a lost city sailing
off a map
and a god breathing
his last on the lap
of lost honour.

still,
there's no metaphor
in the language of angels
and the languages of men
that render heartbreak
a song.

a weightless feather of reminiscence
sailing beyond the clench of memory—
our first meeting.

i rummage in the meniscus of your ribcage
the encryption of our cord
inscribed, then, at the cradle upon parting
and smile.

how many lifetimes have we traversed
seeking each other?

in one, i coalesced into an ancient tale my mother,
in her second last lifetime, wove into a folklore of stars
sparkling unsparingly at noon times.

in that lifetime, i heard you had transfigured
into an unquenchable fire, tended with the untold secrets
of my family, hunched around it telling stories:
a way you would be closer to me even as a mere warmth.

in another, where you had evolved into enigmatic shadows
of a perpetual eclipse, i had blossomed into luminous hues
of a fleeting glow before we both withered into plectrums
wrenching tales from lachesis' tongue.

a mystic mutters: *each of your thousand births
was a search warrant for each other. and deaths:
your souls' swings on gods' stretched lips to service areas
for refreshments before next expeditions.*

in this lifetime, where you're kneaded into a purple patch

in the unedited poem your mother is, my father
threatens to rinse me—a mélange of forgotten lineages—
out of his veins. i threaten to jump out of his bones, a libido.

the decrypted cipher reads: *as long as thighs sing,*
you'll find one another one lifetime.

*silence:
a homecoming to a home
you always been at,
unaware.*

once—
before the song thighs sing
enticed you out of void's womb—
you were a vague echo of fleshless silence
like you shall be again
when void, to its womb, recalls you.

31st december. the last day of the year. and
the first day this has lasted beyond the moment.

we are corseted in an embrace. a duet of warmth,
a melody rippling in our veins. this is the farthest
we've eluded hell in years as each kiss
pushes us closer into the warm arms of caroling
cherubim.

beyond our sanctuary, a vagrant bastard screamed:
each time you use a condom, you postpone
your own homecoming. we chuckled at the double entendre,
ascending from the abyss of despair on a ladder
runged with thighs for sex is the only language
a heart deaf to love hears.

that day, we had turned the bed into a pyre
to burn the decayed bones of our lost love
transmuting them into acrostics etching our untranslatable names
on their fresh breaths.

i have heard with my eyes the secrets harbored
in each of your moans: how each is a caesura in the silent pleas
of gods yearning to be men.

31st december. at that bar, as i suckled your nipples like a sachet;
at that bar, as i sniffed your bra like a narcotic, i kept wondering
if our hearts would keep the soothing sanctity of those moments
like bones keep marrows when finally, when finally, they became
rancid memories simmering in the viscid bubbles of boundless
regrets birthed in the pus of lust.

this poem, nestled in stentorian silence,
is a staircase leading men out of an abyss
drowning them in distress.

sometimes, i sit on the hump of another
dying doctrine and listen to sinners
eloquently lecturing saints on holiness.

lang syne, i saw herod—hinged to christ's
dim-rimmed halo—swinging, aloft a drowning
peter, to the shores.

a sophist who once said: *the only way a man
can know an unfamiliar god is to know a man
acquainted with that god*, says, *a poem—
a personification for elixir vitae—is the only instrument
a man can mutilate his own mortality with.*

this is the ninth lifetime i am scribbling
myself on the smooth canvas of your thighs:
a soft sonnet of ancient secrets stashed
under the sun-singed tongue of sphinx, sprawling
on the slanted shoulders of soulless ghosts;
perched on the parched lips of deserts
brimming with cactuses of dead gods.

another sophist exclaims: *until we conceive death
as a retrocede to where-come-we-from at birth,*
nothing will salve its sting. he deems death a soul's return
to a realm birth banished it from.

in these aubades
unfurling
from our tongues
in farrago of forgotten languages,
the wind gently reminds us
we're mosaics
patterning our own infinitude;
each of us
a fragment of eternity—
sequestered
in the femurs of amaranthine gods
perched beyond time's rim—
summoned into a womb
sporadically
by the alluring song thighs sing.

i don't speak the language of angels.
i only sing like them
when your lips find mine.

you, the story time tells of glories
precedent of it; glories
you're a sparkling pixel of.

you, the pierian spring
i, like poets of old, drink
from its blessed bosom—inspiration

i, who, with tales my bones tell
of the flesh they no longer wear
amaze the wise
and the fools alike

i, who, with honey-dewed tongue
recite unrhymed rondeaux
wishing their cadence touch
those parts of you my hands barely touch.

¹nyan cit wei,
if you do not mind,
let me dress the bareness of your soul
with the icy-warmth of my nakedness.

¹ An endearment in Jieeng

if god is a poet
 and the moon and the sun
and the stars and the seas
 and i, his poems,
then you're his
 chef d'oeuvre:
a showpiece he composed
 to showcase
 his ineffable flair;
you, oh, you!
 fair
 as a child's wish.

the soft shell of a dying night
with its rugged jaws of feeble light
or the nostalgic petrichor, noses—
the day rains return—
drink in marble chalices of wind?

with what shall i compare you:

the mellifluous song of a fervent lover
returning from war
or the sweet words trapped
in the silent stares of a shy lover?

with what shall i compare you:

you
whose scintillant smile is the intricate
sonnet
stars recite when they shine?

what deity shall i again bow before
when your bosom is a sufficient altar?

if this sincerity—gushing
from your innocent eyes like light
from a mellow moon—isn't
a sanctuary, then what is?

my father avows: *even if one tithes
all his lexicons to the gods to ransom
himself from the gnashing maw of oblivion,
there's but a solitary way to eternity:
a woman's thighs.*

he believes we're but lines in stanzas
cobbled in an epic with that holy sin
god bribed eden with, then—
turning, in a wink, a bethel into a brothel—
to save his expendable breath.

we've walked a mile,
through the winding length
of your dilated cervix,
towards a home untraceable
on this map encrusted on our tongues.

in the heart of a decaying poem
we lounge, kissing our souls with cajolery.
a man must sing the song he wants to hear.
this is the first time we hear
the voice of god.

zephyr sighs. lustfully, a guilty gabriel
kisses a meek mary. in this
lifetime, we're two silver droplets of dew
hunched on a paper-tender leaf.
the sun smiles. we diffuse into a simile.

your smile unfurls into a question mark.
i whittle it into an exclamation mark with a kiss.

zephyr sighs. an amateurish adam
& a naïve eve indulge in the act
without the preface of foreplay.
zephyr sighs: guilt gulps its voice.
in this lifetime, we're two silent syllables
trapped on a mute's tongue. god rebukes.
we fade into his tirade, a dead breath.

your silence unfurls into a song.
i chisel it into a sublime sonnet with a wink.

zephyr sighs. an inebriated lot's
debauched daughter grips his flaccid duct.
unceremoniously thrusts it into hers.
be ye shameless. this is the only way,
a gene is preserved. she urges her reserved sister
to share in her dreamy reverie.
in this lifetime, we're two mermaids
swimming into the depth of our souls
with the soft fins of our honeyed lips.

zephyr sighs. outside the decaying
poem, we kiss frantically
under a deluge of moon's effulgence.
a sin for perpetuity's sake is a sin pardoned.
this is the second time we hear
the voice of god. we looked up.
he had mary in his arm. in this lifetime,
we're on bed, ~~coming~~-cumming home...

here, where the sun is but a band
of stars smiling all at once, there are more graves
than gaps on my grandmother's rotula.

once again, i've risen where i didn't go to sleep;
scraping off my tongue, with a blunt misnomer,
this formless silence breathing life
into my foamless screams.

it's another week of sunless sundays.
and the "holier-than-thou" pulpiteer is preaching:
a prenuptial sex is a rehearsal: a practice session
on how to beat death. somewhat he believes a body
is a bible riddled with instructions of immortality:

a myth—trapped in the bones of our tradition—that affirms:
death doesn't crack homes where beds creak for life kindles
on rubbed thighs, voluntarily seeps onto my tongue's surface.
i—despite my parent's plain disapproval—broke
into a quaint song burgeoning from the veins of my soul's
religious allegiance to survival.

the "holier-than-thou" pulpiteer is still preaching:
a prenuptial sex is a rehearsal: a practice session
on how to beat death. somewhat he believes each moan,
sautéing in a woman's throat, is an offering to gods
fashioning forms out of formlessness...

a naked woman is an incantation

a priest pauses in this poem
to persuade you to break the bed
or break the bond

a naked woman is a metaphor

a bed is a shrine
sanctified with the sacred sighs:
laudation to it that is god

a naked woman is a word

her breasts: synonyms for the seventh heaven
her thighs: plesionym
for perpetuity's solitary path

a naked woman is a song

a childhood song
no elder teaches a child
yet when children sing it, elders applaud.

my friends tell me to marry her.
they tell me she's the fairest
of all they've ever set their eyes on.
they tell me her eyes are summer stars;
that her face is more gracious than those
that grace the pages of magazines.
they tell me her skin is as smooth
as the face of an old grinding stone;
that her allure can make a dead man erect.

my friends tell me to marry her.
they tell me a woman like her—
a woman whose name
does not depart from the lips of balladeers;
a woman who does not return
from the village-dance unaccompanied—
is what a man trades his cherished bull for.

my friends tell me to marry her.
they tell me to marry her
even if she is whispered about.
they tell me to marry her
even if suitors are told to shun her;
that her pulchritude is enough to make up
for everything that might be amiss.

my friends tell me to marry her.
they tell me to marry her now
before other suitors notice her
if, at all, they have not yet noticed her;
that if i do not marry her now,
i might have to compete for her tomorrow

with suitors wealthier than a tried merchant:
the kind my people call *aknetweng*.

ha! i laugh and tell my friends:

*thon, son of ng'neu de mayau;
ngor, son of kon-gutbek;
aleer, son of agutnyang;
aluel, daughter of agany-adol;
makuei, son of jiet-manyangdit,
jiet whose fathers totem the snail,
my father, gutabor, son of kumjier,
once told me there's more to a wife
than a face gracious enough to grace
the pages of magazines
or a body sexy enough to make
a dead man erect
or a name that departs not
from the lips of balladeers
or a woman who returns not
unaccompanied from the village dance.*

ha! i laugh and tell my friends:

*my father, gutabor, son of kumjier—
a scion of the storied mayen-agier
who speared dead an elephant
long before his first teeth fell—told me
not to take for a wife a woman
on whose back whispers are hurled
or a woman suitors are told to shun.*

ha! i laugh and tell my friends:

*only a woman proper
in the old ways of our women,
a woman her mother molded
in her near-perfect image
like most mothers mold their daughters;
only such a woman can i trade
my cherished bull for.
only a woman proper
in the old ways of our women...
and when it is time, we shall go—
thon, son of ng'neu de mayau;
ngor, son of keon-gutbek;
aleer, son of agutnyang;
aluel, daughter of agany-adol;
makuei , son of jiet-manyangdit,
jiet whose fathers totem the snail—
we shall go to patuel
where patiently she waits for me
and settle the score the way it must be
with feasts and songs and dances.
when it is time, my friends, when it is time,
we shall go to patuel where she waits
for me patiently. patiently
when it is time, my friends, when it is time,
we shall go to patuel...*

a half-drunk bottle of gin
hunkers under the table.
under the bed—juxtaposed
with gorged condoms— repose
on shrivelled bellies, ripped packets.
at the extreme end, on worn couches,
slouches a rumpled pile of clothes.
and on the bed, two strangers— pondering
if, once more, they would prowl pleasures
or part ways without knowing a thing
about themselves beyond things felt,
n o t e v e n t h e i r n a m e s—
wobble in shame.

even long, long after i am gone,
i will still be writing poems.
i will still be writing poems for you.
i will still be writing poems about you.
so, if you see a flower—a flower
the colour of your favourite shirt of mine—
growing on my grave one winter,
pluck it and hold it close to your heart.
that will be one of my poems
written to you in a language
neither of us ever spoke.
i will still be writing poems.
i will still be writing poems for you.
i will still be writing poems about you.
even long, long after i am gone.
poems with rhymes that will stun time
like you stun time every time you smile.

homage to ²adun cin dam:
out of condoms runs ³sherikat;
to sand's size shrink the clans.

² A diminutive title of the then popular, now a classic, song: Aca pieng man nong adun cin dam by the late singer-rapper Garang Deng Aguer

³ A slum-like suburban of Juba

why her? i asked my heart.
don't act like you don't know he said
isn't it only her that makes every moment
a song worth singing?

the girl i once swore
i needed not
has grown into a gem.

in a poem i wrote yesterday—
on the third anniversary
of our break up, a poem,
whose piquant persona
through a tongueless analogy
whittled from the ribs
of a dead vernacular, exclaimed:

*the fault with the eyes of memory
is that they tend to see things lost
more beautiful*

than they truly were—

a startled simile cited the sun
returns religiously from its respite
each passing day just to behold
her flawless face and i wondered,
wondered, if the sun was merely a metaphor
for me, who, through the all-seeing eyes of memory,
keeps beholding her bewitching face.

the girl i once swore
i needed not
has grown into a gem,
a gem second to none...
and now. and now,
i think of her in a second
more times
than my heart beats a day?

there isn't a tale to tell about love.
the last time i was in love, beauty
was still in the beholder's eyes. not
anyone's one crosses paths with.

a confession: i still keep in my phone
pictures of my exes. yesterday, i eyed
a particular wondering how her unseemly
smile was once the shape of my world.

*even if the "o" in love is for love's woes,
shouldn't a dancer dance because he fears his soles
might be blistered?* inquired a friend once.
today when he posted on facebook: *love
is no longer the smooth diction drooling
from the lips of lovers cooing each other to sleep.
it's the humiliating crucifixion on the cross
of doubt with the sharp nails of unreturned calls,*
i commented with a smiley.

my last love taught me you'd be sharing a bed
but not the moment; that a moment isn't shared
unless it's shared on social media.

and thanks to my exes, now i know every sweet hello
is a betrothal with another bitter bye-bye.

once, i journaled: *lust, in soul's language, might be
synonymous with love especially if both are lost.*

yesterday, i eyed a particular ex's pictures again.
all we'd lost—be it love; be it lust—

has lasted with me.

so i in this poem, i confess: *whether the flames of lust
leaves in their wake ashes of love, i'm not certain,
but this i know: love departs not when lovers part*

daami, i knew poetry was my vocation the day
i saw the sun fluttering out of your mouth
into my fractured heart; a keen beam extirpating
the genealogy of infatuation.

i only didn't imagine my first poem
would be an offshoot of shame for forgetting
your name before moving on.

more than once, i was told the despicable
is the plume folklore wears. and now, you're my mother's
metaphor for all a woman isn't: you, a lorelei
luring men into ruin with the enchanting chants
of your blunt gasps.

in this poem, before fading into an ellipsis
in the prolix epics our broken vows are,
i must concede the billet-doux
i baptized our lustful love with was plagiarized:
a medley of minds.

still, the *obtus*est bee knows a flower's exquisiteness
isn't its promise of nectar, the same way a body
isn't the measure of a soul in this mythos where wishes
are only contemptible memos of things yet to be lost.

daami, the fragments of our ruptured betrothal
have frozen in the eyes of angels distressed
by this betrayal.

and in this instant. in this instant, i stand a hollow chest
of a sore job, channelling better days with pain-chipped lips,

asking: *how sane is it to worship a deity, of divinity, disrobed?*

daami,

before i became this sorrowful poet they know me as;
before you became the story behind this sorrow they know me for,
we were both ballads end-rhymed with a wish to be happy.

once, i was told
time ripens sweet moments
into bitter memories.

and now, i'm willingly
learning how to joyfully live

with this grief i'm becoming.

in this villanelle, painted
on the pale canvas of your smile,
a part of me is a pearl i must lose to keep;

the other, a bridge of boneless wishes
stretching into an unroofed dream
where we reunite even when apart, you and i.

daami,

how i wish you'd lingered
a little longer in my life
like you have in my thoughts!

i always lie to my friends.
that this raw sadness spurting from my eyes
has nothing to do with you.

that we have broken up. that i have moved on.

then i write a poem. a poem reeking with a wish
to hold you again. hold you again
even if for a second.

and then another. and another. and another.
until the poems pile up in my journal;
until my friends see through the lie.

daami, what was i thinking to think
i can swat off our memories like flies?

three years later, i'm still trapped in this dark room
still perplexed
still unconvinced
it was you who hurt me,
you who once healed me.

a ritual: i repeatedly call your name daily
hoping i understand why
the mention of it reminds me of the last time
i masturbated.

i know what is wished to sink, floats
and what is wished to float, sinks.

three years later, i'm still trapped in this dark room
still perplexed
still unconvinced
that you who once healed me now hurt me
but isn't that the paradox of love?

daami, eventually,
i am moving on...moving on
dragging the weight of our last snuggle.

yesterday, i called your name
over and over and over again,
until its poetic euphony sucked six gallons
of grief from my weary heart,
before frying my tongue in the sizzling oil
of *ashened* happiness.

sex is the only way a man
can rephrase himself
exclaimed excitedly a vile vicar.
he believes every birthmark
on your body is a monogram
depicting the face of a goddess
you once were before you strayed here.

sometimes, i hold my breath
and measure the weight of my loss
with the number of times i check
your facebook profile with my anonymous account.

daami, this year alone,
i've perused thousands of adjectives
in the cyclopedia but none
comes close to describing what you
meant to me.

still, i'm moving on.
moving on the only way i can:

*to imagine every girl i meet as you,
you wearing a mask time will eventually wear.*

daami,

can a sea be
without the rivers that feed it?

can a poem be
without the words that actualize it?

can a rainbow be
without the colours that shade it?

can i, can i, be
without you?

can i be?
can i be?

2017. we promised we would be together forever.
little did i know then
forever was until you found someone better.

2019. it came, that cloudy day
leading in a moonless, starless night.

2023. i wrote this poem to keep the promise—
the promise you could not keep—
the promise we would be together forever
 although
 sadly
 as mere characters
 on this page

i wrote this poem to keep the promise
we would be together forever
you and i, daami, you and i.

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Other books by the Author

1. A Decade of Decay (El'tablazz Books, 2022)
2. Twice the Size of Sun (Poemify Publishers, 2024)

MK Kuol's *Song Her Thighs Sing* is a poetry chapbook of twenty-eight poems with the predominant theme of heartbreak. But the twenty-eight are not your ordinary heartbreak poems. Instead of crying, the narrator presents his sadness in sweet metaphor-filled melodies sprinkled with wit beyond measure.

— **Lino Arop, Fiction and Short Story Writer**

Comprising a collection of twenty-eight evocative poems, "*Song Her Thighs Sing*" is more than a mere compilation; it's an exploration, a journey that unravels from the first poem to the last in a seamless thread of emotions. The lyrics are interwoven, much like the complex layers of human relationships. Each piece serves as a stepping stone, guiding readers through the labyrinth of emotions, leading from the tender beginnings of longing and desire to the bittersweet reflections of endings. The first poem initiates an enigmatic dance with grief and memory, as evidenced by the poignant line, "that a scar's width tells its mother-wound's depth." This sets the tone for the following introspection, inviting readers to plunge into the depths of the poet's contemplations.

— **Sir Akuei M. Adol, Poet and Literary Critic**

If you have been contemplating on contemporary literature books that undertake to talk over countenance of romance, look no further. Here is a philosophical masterpiece that leaves audience in want. MK bends to bring to shape a viaduct that most philosophers fail to dispense a substantial bottom line. In this collection, he provides a sure-enough nature of the affairs of the heart, anguishing of the souls when the idiosyncratic reality is realized-and the going to bed with; that serves as a contrivance and a genuine substitute for the entire; but presently subtle impartial reality of the mad for. The language used in this anthology has its depth of originality.

— **Jose Omani AKA Akech Chagai, Poet and Literary Critic**

Song Her Thighs Sing is a passionate prose poetry transmuted by the sheer glow of distinctive, delicate craftsmanship. With heart-wrenching vulnerability, MK unmask with words the face of maimed love-past .Broken? Find out!

— **Yom Deng Garang, Author of Arrow of Death**

In ‘Songs her thighs sing,’ Kuol orchestrates a symphony of emotions, a poetic journey that delves deep into the realms of love, loss, desire, and self-discovery. With a narrative that intertwines sensuality and vulnerability, these poems offer a critical exploration of human connections, transcending the ordinary and venturing into the intricate territories of memory and longing.

— **John Ngong, Author of Truth Crisis**

Love is the most explored theme in poetry but Kuol's ‘Song Her Thighs Sings’ rake up the memory of becoming and unbecoming a lover. Kuol wrote about me without having known me. The language is simple, direct and rich with poetic devices, elevating this chapbook to a must-read.

— **Oletu Oghenenyore C. (author: Because We Are Stateless and other works)**

Kuol, in this chapbook, has offered us his reader another poignant piece of art that you would go through all-day reflecting on and giggling.

—**John Chinaka Onyeché (Author: 25 atonements and other works)**

Love as sweet as it is, has the power to drag you to the ground and put you into an open grave of hurt. but who stays away from it? You either search for it or it searches for you. And what is love without lust? The author stylishly and figuratively stretches the two into one.

—**Ajang DA Duot (Dee Jong), Poet and Spoken Word Artist**

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