

ANNUAL PUBLICATION OF THE STUDENTS' UNION,
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, NAIROBI.

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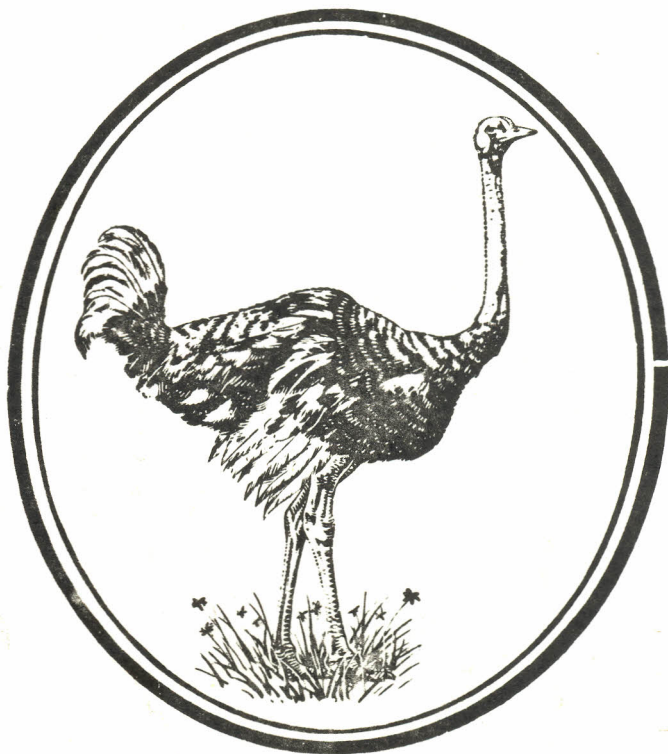
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Foreword

THIS is our tradition. Each year in February, we publish a students' magazine known as Rag-Mag. The students are supposed to be in rags as from the 24th February to the 27th February, 1966. The occasion is not meant to be funny, but to contribute something to the destitute young ones, so that their future happiness is ensured. For example, we support two boys at the Starehe Boys' Centre and we hope, if we can raise enough funds this year, to extend our scope to other charitable institutions.

I wish to thank all those who have contributed to our success, both students and members of the public. We should all realize that our scope in helping the unfortunates is unlimited as long as the spirit of cooperation is with us.

Once again, we wish to express our heart-felt gratitude to every contributor. Many of them have expressed opinions which should be a great source of inspiration to all of us. Only to mention that these opinions are not the responsibility of the Editorial Committee.

JAMES MWIRICIA

Director of Publications and Information, Students' Union

Editorial

THE basic idea underlying the Rag Week is to rededicate ourselves each year to the cause of our brothers and sisters who, through no fault of their own, are not fortunate enough to earn their own bread and butter. To many of us, contributing to the handicapped a morsel of what we have is a duty and a source of extraordinary satisfaction. However, there are many of us who look forward to the Rag Week merely because of some of its features, such as the ball or the barbecue; whereas many a coed may aspire to be elected Rag Queen only so as to capture the imagination of men; and the Rag Week, like Christmas, is in danger of losing its real meaning. Let us by all means enjoy ourselves during it, but let the feeling that we have been generous to the poor people, who should otherwise cause only sorrow in us, be the principal source of our mirth.

But, nor should generosity be occasional only. For, those to whom we must extend our hand need us all the time. It is gratifying to note that our Governments are making appreciable efforts to ensure that the destitute are fed. What do we, the students of the University College, do, other than the seasonal Rag proceeds plus meagre tokens once in a blue moon, to assist our Governments in solving these enduring problems? Nothing! We are a group of self-important young-know-it-alls, whose chief preoccupation, apart from the books, is to criticise every little effort that our Governments may be making to uplift the living standards of our poor masses. The demands we make for the amelioration of our own conditions at a time when people are starving to death must sound extremely selfish to them. One recalls with utter shame that a former Vice-President for Campus and National Affairs had to resign his post because he had given away some of our bread to the famine-stricken people at Machakos without consulting with the Students' Representative Council, or ultimately with the General Assembly. We do not know the exact circumstances; but they are immaterial here. What must be said at once is that here was an emergency which called for initiative and a quick sense of leadership. But a procedure must be tenaciously adhered to when people are

perishing! We were at the zenith of selfishness: God forgive us for it.

The problems of hunger, ignorance and disease are everybody's problems. But the study of these problems and the formulation of their solution is properly the duty of the University students. We must show our concern by organising social studies and seminars, and producing literature based on these studies and containing constructive suggestions as to what should be done. Our selflessness could be manifested by organising work-camps or self-help schemes to better our own conditions, thus saving some public money, which must then go to the poor. The trouble is that while we ourselves have had some genuine grievances, our method of alleviating them has only won for us a host of enemies. Our movements have been bull-dozing; our language has been far from engaging, and our attitude calculated to embarrass those from whom we seek service. How then will the authorities believe us when our tone is haughty, our manners rowdy and our concern for people in worse conditions than we are next to nil? If our ideas are to ooze through the authorities and fructify, our criticisms, though stern, must be friendly and respectful, and we must give the first contribution to the ideas that we put forth.

That is the true note of impersonal care for our national problems, namely, to join up with those institutions which are already engaged in stamping out the maladies of under-development, and contribute to that noble task everything that is in our power. The Rag celebrations are in that spirit. This year's collections will go partly to Daniel and Njoroge, the two boys at Starehe whom, good to say, we have adopted, and whose report appear herein, and partly to Dr. Barnardo's Home, where orphans, who but for human compassion would not have survived, expect our daily services. Our gratitude is due to everybody that has put in every little token to the success of the Rag Week, and our congratulations to the Rag Queen, for she is the symbol of inner beauty, human loving kindness and good will to all men.

PHILIP N. OCHIENG
Editor, Rag Magazine, 1966

Message

from the Chairman, Rag Committee

TRADITIONS are the backbone of every University, but these traditions can only be encouraged by the public after being initiated and given good foundation and drive by the students. The foundation and backing necessary have already been laid, at least in my opinion, by the students, through relentless and untiring efforts to make Rag Week an annual event. It now therefore remains to the people of the Republic of Kenya at large and the citizens of Nairobi in particular to demonstrate their approval. It is their duty to nurse, encourage, and support it, so that it will grow and change to suit the environments, for the benefit of many other intellectual generations to come.

Once more the streets of Nairobi will, as annually, spring into new life with the colour of floats, the insight of jubilantly 'clad' students, and the clatter of tins. All, not only for fun and the spectacle of it, but in the main for raising funds for some youths of this our nation, at Dr. Barnardo's Home and Starehe Youth Centre whom fate has chosen to treat rather bitterly differently. This is indeed a grand gesture, and one worth the sweat that will be dripping down many a student's face; and the hours of private study lost while building the floats and accompanying them on the streets.

My sincere thanks are directed first to the B.A.T. Ltd., who have helped in financing some of the Rag projects especially the Rag Ball. I can only wish them more commercial success in this our homeland of Kenya. Secondly my undiluted gratitude go to the Rag Committee members, who have indeed sacrificed more than enough to organise the functions; and of course I cannot forget that without the cooperation of the student body, nothing would have been possible.

Lastly, I sincerely hope that as the students go out to 'collect', the public will do all it can to support us.

GEORGE SSEBOWA

Message

from Acting President of the Students' Union

WE call it "Rag Week". Other Universities and Colleges the world over call it "carvals" or even "fiestas". It is the same. It is that week in a year when students put a break to the monotonous and strenuous academic work, the tyranny of lectures and the discipline that go with it and simply go gay or "crazy" as one Nairobi resident put it the other day. To manifest the joy and gaiety, students take procession of floats, which are a token revelation of what goes on within the confines of the gloomy lecture halls, laboratories and workshops. The men and women (and clowns too) accompanying these floats in scanty and fancy dresses and extra attraction to the whole jovial mood.

Rag week, however, is not entirely that particular day when the year uncoils itself into a crazy man's paradise. It has other implications. It is at this time that every student is called upon to stop and remember swelling numbers of helpless, homeless and the starving; to remember those who through no fault of theirs find themselves less fortunate than us. To us this is the most cardinal meaning of the "Rag Week".

With this in mind it has been decided that the few cents we are able to collect will go to support the two boys we sponsor at Starehe Boys Centre, and we hope to turn what remains in our wallet to the Dr. Barnardo's Home. Go gay with this in mind; for every penny you lay your hands on will go to make someone somewhere in Kenya very much happier than he or she is now.

I would like lastly to thank the Chairman and the members on the Rag Committee and those on the Platform Editorial Board whose untiring efforts at the expense of their very valuable leisure and time, particularly at this hour in the year when exam monsters are around the corner, have made it possible for us all to see yet another successful Rag week and to read this Rag Magazine. To numerous companies and firms in Nairobi, especially M/s. B.A.T. (Kenya) Ltd., my heartfelt thanks are due for their assistance — financial and otherwise. I should not like to leave the students generally unthanked for their moral support!

EDISON K. TIBESEGWA

LETTERS

Dear Sir,

The work of Dr. Barnardo's started many years ago in England and was a result of one man's vision. It was at the age of twenty-one that Thomas John Barnardo started the work of caring for children in need. He was then a young student at the London Hospital in the East End, where he was training to become a medical missionary to China. One night, at the end of a Bible Class, held in a converted donkey stable, the young student was confronted with the problem of a boy who wished to spend the night there because he had no parents and no one to care for him. Barnardo coped with this problem by placing the child with friends who acted as foster parents, but more and more became aware of the tremendous problem of the uncared for, unwanted, homeless child and he started taking in and looking after boys in a Home in Stepney.

Children come into the care of Dr. Barnardo's Homes for a variety of reasons. One of the most common is the broken home due to the separation of the parents, or the desertion of one of them. Sickness in the family or the death of one or other of the parents is often another cause of admission, and children also come to us on account of cruelty or neglect — sometimes through the Courts.

We are now seeking to care for more than 50 needy children and depend on your support at Thomas Barnardo's House opposite Wilson Airport.

The Main Building of our Home was opened in October 1961 by Sir Alfred Owen, C.B.E., Chairman of the Council of Dr. Barnardo's Homes, United Kingdom.

The Nursery Wing was opened in October 1963 by His Excellency The President of the Republic of Kenya, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta, M.P. During the course of his address he said, "Here in this Home today are the citizens of tomorrow". Speaking of the voluntary organizations he said, "They deserve the active encouragement and support of every member of the community".

There is a growing realisation that wise training is of vital importance to the young child, and that the foundations laid in the early years will be of influence throughout the child's life. Children brought up by their own parents normally have this wise training but children deprived of home care at an early age need very special care and management and a great deal of love and help from those responsible for their welfare.

To meet this need for training in Nursery work Dr. Barnardo's have arranged for a course of training to be given at their Home which will enable the students to enter for the National Nursery Examination Board Certificate as well as for the Kenya Certificate in Child Care Nursing.

Will you help us? Our greatest need is for money, but we are also grateful for gifts of food, toys and clothing, and any other items. Visitors are always welcome. You will find our Home in Langata Road, almost opposite Wilson Airport.

G. A. FARRELL,

Superintendent, Dr. Barnardo's Homes (Kenya)

Dear Sir,

Very many thanks for your most generous contribution of Shs. 1,000/-. Please convey my sincere gratitude to all who participated in the collection of this money.

I am enclosing reports on your two boys — Njoroge Kamau and Daniel Omondi. From these, you will see that both are making progress, and are justifying the money you are so kindly providing. The only photographs we have of them are those we sent you at the commencement of the sponsorship, but I will arrange for another picture to be taken of both boys together, and I will forward this in due course.

I am afraid that £50 is insufficient to meet their expenses for a full year (each boy here costs £36 per annum); but it will see them safely through the next nine months.

Thank you very much indeed.

G. W. GRIFFIN,

Director, Starehe Boys' Centre

Dear Sir,

I am very happy to write a letter to you. I am Daniel Omondi. This term I was number two in the classroom. This term we want to come to see your school. I am working at my school very hard. We want to know your names. Even you, I want you to come to see our school now that I am in the school.

This term I am going to see my mother in Dar-es-Salaam when we shut our school. I am doing study in the school, so we don't like to work in the town.

Yours sincerely,

*DANIEL OMONDI,
Starehe Boys' Centre*

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Starehe Boys' Centre

Report on the Progress of Daniel and Njoroge

DANIEL OMONDI:

The above mentioned boy is a very good boy. Since he joined in my dormitory he has been invariably kind to everybody and always smart. Last term his classwork was impressive as the table below shows:—

English	-	-	-	62
Maths.	-	-	-	96
Science	-	-	-	62
Geography	-	-	-	72
History	-	-	-	46
Swahili	-	-	-	58

He was Number 5 out of a class of 35 pupils, and thus a clever boy. (I am a teacher as well as a class master.)

SIMON K. RUO
Class Master

NJOROGE KAMAU

This boy is one of the best in the dormitory. His conduct is good. He has proved to be intelligent and accurate and very diligent. He likes all kinds of games, especially football. He is always happy and boys of his age group like him. His work shows a daily improvement.

J. M. KAGORI
House Master

LITERATURE

A Writer's Workshop at U.C.N.

SURELY, it is ridiculous to even consider the possibility of teaching someone how to be a creative writer. A piece of creative writing is of its nature something original; something that emerges in a seemingly miraculous way from the imagination of a very special kind of person. How can someone be shown how to be original? How can he be taught to produce something that seems to arise miraculously? Some people are writers and others are not, and trying to get the latter to write would be like trying to get a goat to talk. There is a dearth of creative writing in East Africa simply because there are no people in East Africa who have the talent to write. And I am afraid we must leave it at that.

There is an element of truth in the belief that lies behind the above sentiments — the great literary artist is exceptional, and his presence and the nature of his art cannot be adequately explained in terms of his environment — but it is an escapist type of belief that by no means contains the whole truth.

We all, I think, in some way and to some degree, possess creative powers, and as soon as we learn to write are able to give expression to these powers; to produce a piece of creative writing. This ability is then promoted or inhibited according to the temperament of the individual by the education (in the widest sense of the word) he receives. Kenya's colonial experience, for example, might act as a spur for one, while for another it might have a terrible stifling effect. So, although it cannot be considered as the only factor that does so, education does affect the quantity (we are not dealing with quality at the moment) of creative writing, and all those concerned must take this into account; seeing how best the stimuli faced by a student can be geared to promote literary creativity.

No, we cannot say that there is a shortage of significant writing coming from East Africa because East Africans are not talented. Not enough people are writing here because,

not enough has been exposed to the appropriate kind of stimuli (with many present day teaching methods being used in East African schools creative ability is in fact being destroyed), not enough are aware of what they are capable of, and not enough are sufficiently familiar with the literary tools at their disposal.

It is with this in mind then that a writer's workshop has been set up on the campus. Here, we hope, students will be provided with what, as I have noted above, is lacking. It is important to notice that no facile attempt will be made by a 'teacher' to provide this. It is the students themselves who will do so by coming together with a set purpose in view.

All interested in writing — including the but-I-can't-write ones — will meet once a week. Simply being among others with this similar interest will encourage those who have to date felt lonely and unenthusiastic about writing in their rooms without any bearings. The work of relevant established writers will be discussed appreciatively and critically as a source of inspiration. In these discussions, references will be made to literary techniques and conventions, and students will imitate and experiment to help them find the mode that suits them best.

With the co-operation of Mr. Mphahlele — there is no need to show why he is pre-eminently fitted to assume this task, if task it can be called — students will discuss their own work honestly and humbly. Work will be kept up with the idea of publication in mind.

We hope that in the workshop there will be none of the solemnity and formality of the lecture theatre, and that everyone will enjoy themselves with the truly humanising satisfaction that is derived from creation. In writing they will be made more aware of the fulness and complexity of the situations in which they find themselves — writing as well as critical reading helps to sharpen sensitivity — and some will eventually produce the kind of work which will make not only themselves, but also the world, richer, in that it will give insights into the particular situation in East Africa at the moment, and the universal implications to be found in these.

BREN HUGHES,

Lecturer, Department of English

Bewitched

Short Story by Leonard Kibera

THROUGH the twigs and leaves of the bamboo and blue-gum trees stole the silver rays of the fresh, full moon, caressing Njeri's hair and the beads of wood and copper around her neck and waist. She sat still save for the occasional lift of her hand to brush off a tear-drop, brooding as she stared pensively into the river. She was twenty-eight and looked every bit a mother of two — which she wasn't but had always wanted to be. From arm-length distance she coolly regarded the water which flowed silently except for lightly splashing sounds, as it whirled softly round, now and then, to curve shallow ripples.

Once in a while the bubbling resentment within her would burst, and then she plunged pebbles into the river with the unconscious desire to break the reflection of the moon. Break, and if possible annihilate the moon itself; for it seemingly mocked her as it stole sparkling reflections everywhere. On her oily ornamented legs. On the bangles around her hands and ankles; and on the tear-drops quietly but steadily rolling down her cheeks which, when otherwise provoked into a smile, curved beautiful dimples.

It made her feel she was young and in love, the first of which she no longer was, and the best that could be said of the latter was that she had been in love with love all along but had never found it. True Ngumi had loved her and wanted to marry her, but he had been long gone back to his people and clan and had probably forgotten her.

“Within three years,” he had promised, “I'll be back for you”. But the third year was swiftly drifting away and would be out in seven days' time.

It was when she had sat there by the river for sometime that she resolved to ignore her father's warning. She would go ahead secretly and see the medicine man.

★ ★ ★ ★

He was famous and popularly nicknamed Mwara. For he was clever, if also quite often cunning, and there wasn't a herb in the medicine world that he could not, it was

widely said, lecture to you on from daybreak to mid-day if you had that much patience. He knew your ills as soon as you stepped into his hut. Hardly had you sat down on the 'sick man's stool' than he shot a few spots of the correct *muthaiga* down you throat. Then rubbing his small, tricky and formidably thin hands together, he shot you one look from behind long eyelashes which warned you that the only thing remaining was a small goat for the witch-doctor's pains. This no one dared forget.

Old men saw him about their ailing sight. Superstitious characters consulted him on how best they could side-step *thahu* and the misfortunes in store for them as a result of tempting the wheels of fortune through acts of bad omen like passing under the long stick supporting the banana plant; or being careless enough, as Mwara put it, to have a continuously twitching eye. Mothers took their toddlers along for prescriptions and blessings. Thieves, scoundrels, expectant mothers, honest men and treacherous, all paid heed to his word. And when the day for a religious rite under the revered fig-tree came round, they all saw in his ageing, hard, bloodshot eyes, moral inspiration for the eternal combat everyone waged against the evil spirits.

It was, of course, in matters of love that Mwara's esteem rang far and wide. Young men consulted him on whether the neatest way to make good riddance of their false lovers was to forget, poison, or strangle them; or to commit suicide themselves. Newly married girls walked to his omniscient hut to find out how they had deserved a cold indifferent eye from their roving husbands so suddenly after marriage — or had they suddenly gone stale ?

And of course there was always the occasional tide and torrent of sobs of the self-pitying, despairing old maids who had been on a perpetual hunt for husbands, and seemed to end up each time with frivorous, touch-and-go, happy-go-lucky boy-friends. It was in this latter respect, Njeri sadly observed, that her cap fitted.

★ ★ ★ ★

"So you've come at last?" asked Mwara, very white-haired and diminutive, almost unworldly. "Your father is

naturally a domineering, sceptical and stingy cock-eyed fool in whose company I've enjoyed nothing but malignant spite but I, I never cast up oh no, not old Mwara."

"Father did not know about this," Njeri said.

"In and out they still come to Mwara's hut despite your father's scandalising tongue", Mwara sang. "In and out, in and out even you now".

"I said father did not know I was coming here," Njeri repeated. She clenched her hands together and fixed her eyes on the ground, almost ashamed.

"He didn't? Oh, well, never mind. To business at hand a matter I knew would come up to business, to bu-si-n-e-s-s!" The repetition had culminated in a sarcastic, unpleasant, shrilling tune. It gave Njeri a queer feeling inside, especially coming from a toothless mouth. It was as if she was offering herself for sacrifice. She had heard the tune before. The goat killer always sang it during rites.

Mwara went into the hut and she silently followed. At first she could see nothing. All was so dark inside, so coldly strange.

"Sick man's stool", Mwara said indifferently from an inner chamber. She looked round and at last she found it. There was utter silence as between two sworn enemies, none of whom wanted to start a quarrel.

Then from the inner room there came a clatter of metals, then a sound as that of two knives grinding in cruel roughness against each other. Shivering, Njeri almost fled outside. After a still longer and even colder silence Mwara emerged with a small round goat-skin bag the size of the thumb, to which was attached a leather string.

He was smiling so warmly and kindly, in fact, that after a few undecided moments she was soon smiling back.

"Take this good-luck charm and wear it around your waist. When you see the man you want, quickly take it off and hang it around your neck. You will find he will come sweeping you into his arms faster than a whirlpool. And this time," he added, "he won't slip through your fingers." Mwara rubbed his small hands.

Farther down the path leading away from the low, dilapidated hut, Njeri stopped to admire her tightly-packed talisman. It had a rare, pungent, bitter-sweet smell and was a bit too heavy for its size. It seemed all so potent and powerful, as if on the verge of bursting to fill the air with its rich odour. Njeri looked at it seriously. Did not Ngugi's daughter find a husband after seeing Mwara? And how about her friend Njambi whom everyone said was too tied to her mother's old rags to extricate herself?

"This either does it", Njeri confidently concluded to herself, "or else nothing will".



Indeed it worked. Exactly six days after, she brought Mwangi to her father's house to introduce him to the family. The sun was already burying its hard gold of twilight in the horizon, to make way for a big lovers' moon sailing a silverly way softly in the east. She left her father with her lover while, excitedly, she strolled away in optimistic restlessness. She was sure her father would like Mwangi, for he was strong, muscular and intelligent; and that was her father's idea of a man. He himself proudly regarded himself as that kind of a man — with toughness added.

"Njeri! I've something to tell you". It was her mother coming from another of their huts.

"No. Not now." Njeri was almost angry that her mother had interrupted her thoughts. For she had just been thinking that if that liar Ngumi had failed to keep his promise, at least here was her Mwangi who would.

Then it happened. Inside her father's hut there arose sounds of heavy pounding and thundering, and of stools crashing and pots smashing. Somebody was being repeatedly knocked against the wall, for large lumps of the earthen wall were disintegrating on the outside.

Njeri rushed towards the hut in time to behold her suitor ejected through the small door. She was about to raise cries of protest when she was stunned to see Mwara's small mass shoot outside as well. Her father followed in

angry pursuit, breathing hard. He carried a large stick which he duly landed on Mwangi.

"Don't kill us", pleaded Mwara, "Don't kill my son!"

"Get going, you double-crossing scare-crow!" Njeri's father shouted. He did not need to say it again. They were up and away immediately.

Nganga dropped the stick and moved towards his daughter.

"Don't hit me father . . . he lied to me . . . not I know he was his son. I've bewitched; please don't . . ."

But he was not going to hit her. He tilted her chin upwards and she saw he was smiling.

"It is all right. Come with me, I must tell you about this life-long dispute, and why they wanted to trick you so as to rob me. Meanwhile, girl, where is your patience, tell me?"

He turned her round as he spoke. There standing with her mother was Ngumi. Then she remembered. Twice that evening her mother had wanted to tell her something. And each time she had replied, "No mother, not now. It can wait."

She smiled and dug her hands under the soft cloth around her waist. She found it; its smell still pungent, powerful and potent. And yet so powerless and impotent.

Then furiously, she sent it flying away.

By *LEONARD KIBERA*

Birth — Poem

With a word the wind invokes
The branches to speak from secret lips
— With a glint the dew trembles into presence!
And now is born secret, a motive
Here and there between somewhere and nowhere —

Otherwise I have praised, and
In the wet comfort of a dry shade

I have cursed and cried: 'Where?'
I have knelt too in ideal worship
Of precious images, and where stands
The palm-tree I too have stood
And cried: 'What now?'

Now is the passion of sun
Turned to anger — now is turned
Barren the earth in my groins.
Day suffocating night now, the sprouting seed
Whispers in earnest quest: 'What next?'

— Strange language this
Of lock and cramp that rakes the soul
And clutches the throat with silence!
— Pagan birth this of lust and youth
That breeds hope, and a strange love of death!

By K. A. KASSAM

The Wayward Soul

From the niche
The nebulous distance
Seduces.
The soul blunders
To the abstruse.

The narrow confines of this self,
This life — yelping,
Smothers the natural.
With the twang of brittle talk,
The groveling paws.
Bed.
I yearn for thee
The unknown.

By HAMIDA MOHAMEDALI

POEMS

Elizabeth

I saw a girl one day,
With skin the colour of Limuru tomatoes under a
roasting sun;
Whose eyes, brown and full of laughter, smiled at me.
Unpainted lips, so like the crystal ruby-ripe
pomegranate,
Smiled too, I thought, real to me —
such as her wrath.

I was elated
My mind danced
 Flashing skirt,
 Crackling crinolines
 Staccato tapping shoes.
I remember that girl today
Still aching to hold in my arms
 her golden body,
To kiss her sweet lips
To lose myself in the cocoa-joy
 of her laughing eyes
Buried under her hillocks
Which are ever pointing forwards.

S.H. MUNGAI

★ ★ ★ ★

NOTES TOWARDS A POEM

She
 Fire
I
 Desire
Denied
 Died.

S.H. Mungai

Apology

If you want to hear
A song of sadness
Of love and madness,
In words skillfully employed,
Then please understand
It is hard for beginners
To try to be singers
Of songs
So painfully
Learned.

S. H. Mungai

Of my solitude

I am he who knows
What none other knows,
For I am alone.

I am he who has strength
As none other has strength,
For there is none other like me.

I am he who has insight,
Which is to say — wisdom
Or insanity
depending on your degree of similarity;

Which for me is to say,
Insanity

For I am alone
And like none other.

S. H. Mungai

The Unconcerned

A Luo woman down the road
On her head firewood of a load
Twice her weight and at sonic rate
Beat the soil as she strode

Two young men both Luo and strong
Laughed and sang as they passed along
The sandy walk they didn't care
To soothe the next event with their song

For presently the woman lost ground
And with a mighty thump of a sound
She there lay her load away
Far too remote to be found

Anyango rolled her mass of flesh
Together and sans care began afresh
The onward motion needing no potion
To smooth the cuts that must have been.

By PHILIP N. OCHIENG

Down the Rag Procession

The sophisticated bearing
So stiffly boring
For once to pieces breaks
And down to earth comes.

Away from euridite times,
O'er the centuries by-gone
To the age of their fancy go
And be that they will.

The logical scientist
Becomes a cunning alchemist.
The shrewd economist
Becomes a complete lunatic.
The imaginative artist
Becomes a macabre mummy.
The angular architect
Becomes a brave Aztec.
The practical engineer
Becomes a blood-thirst buccaneer.

The voluptuous curves
That a strained heart ease
And the imagination sting,
Emerge from their hiding
Like the smiling face of the moon
From its gloomy veiling.
The kerosene-consumers !
Vehicles long over-due
At the scrape dealer's,
Bedecked with balloons
And colourful treamers
Like sacrifice-expecting monsters,
The procession join with vigour.

From the precious hunch-backed penny-farthing
With a "monkey" perched aloft,
To the decorated mighty lorry
With a load of gay floats,
The frolicsome procession down the streets flows
And from the flanking spectators money erodes.

By *ISSA A. ABDUFARAJ*

Successful Rag !

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DIVERSE REFLECTIONS

Happiness

ALMOST every human being on earth is seeking happiness. But, what is this elusive quality that defies capture? A dictionary defines it as 'felicity or content with one's lot.' But happiness must be more than a mere animal acceptance of the inevitable. It is in one's heart, and a feeling of love towards the whole world. It is a joy in living and a compassion towards those unfortunates who do not have it.

What is it that causes people to turn, stare at someone, and think enviously that he is happy? Is it his gay smile and bright eyes; his erect bearing and light step? Or, is it his friendly greeting and considerate courtesy? A happy person seems always ready to help others or sacrifice himself for them.

Many people have tried to find happiness in almost as many different ways. The followers of the philosopher Epicurus, believed that one could find happiness by an intelligent quest for pleasure and a conscientious avoidance of pain. One should try to do good, but never become personally involved.

I feel that the true happiness and a lasting one comes only in of oneself up. When someone is in trouble, ready sympathy and understanding aid can help the donor as much as the recipient. Love and compassion displayed towards can bring themselves ten-fold. In short, happiness finds you when you try to bring it to others.

By *SAM H. MUNGAI*

The Casanova Complex

AFRIEND of mine, after reading the Memoirs of Casanova, expressed his envy over the exploits of this

fabulous character. He told me he would want nothing more than to be exactly like his hero of the moment. Actually, my friend's desire was not too unusual. What man wouldn't like to be a Casanova? What man does not dream of having a hundred women panting in his wake while dashing swath through the sea of femininity that lies before him?

Of course it sounds good, a goal dearly to be desired by any normal, healthy re-blooded male. But my friend, like most men, felt that this was an unobtainable dream. Well, I have news for him and all others who have harboured a similar desire somewhere in their subconscious minds.

Take heart, because you too can be a Casanova. With a little application and dedication to the task, any man can become the scourge of bucbonds and bone of faithful wives; strike terrors into the heart of every male while bringing smiles of ecstatic acceptance to the face of every woman he meets. In short you can be a Casanova if that's what you really want.

Of course it won't be easy. Nothing really worthwhile ever is. Oddly enough, your physical endowments are not too important in this particular calling. Indeed, very few of the great Casanovas of history were particularly distinguished by their physical appearance. Casanova, himself, has hardly what we would call an Adonis, but he overcomes the shortcomings brilliantly.

Here, then, is the first lesson you must hear if you really want to be a Casanova. When you meet a woman, you must give her your complete and undivided attention. Forget about yourself. Your personal preferences are not important. Think only about her. Try to figure out what she wants, what she likes, what will please her the most. **If she is adventurous, be bold; if she's a striking violet, be gentle; if she is a masochistic, be cruel.** On any case, she is the object of your desire and you must use any means at your command to win her.

Disregard your own feelings. They are not important, now. If she insults you ignore it. Pride has no place in your

fabulous character. He told me he would want nothing more than to be exactly like his hero of the moment. Actually, my friend's desire was not too unusual. What man wouldn't like to be a Casanova? What man does not dream of having a hundred women panting in his wake while dashing swath through the sea of femininity that lies before him?

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Disregard your own feelings. They are not important, now. If she insults you ignore it. Pride has no place in your

scheme of things. You must win her over. That is the goal. If you do this you are prepared to crawl, plead, grovel, lie . . . anything. Remember, she is the most important thing in your life for the moment.

Sound a bit difficult and sticky? Well, you are the one who wanted to be a Casanova. This is just part of the price you will have to pay. If you're sincere in your desire, it's worth it.

Still want to be a Casanova? If you still do, there is another price you will have to pay. Part of the boy in most men's lives is offered by the camaraderie of people of their own sex. No one can deny the pleasure obtained from our ordinary stage game of poker, or a fishing trip with a close friend, or just a bull-session with a few of the boys. Well, if you're planning to embark on a career of a Casanova, forget them.

Women are now the central facet of your life. You have to live, breathe and dream of them from now on. Their interests have to become your interests; their past times your past times; their talk your talk. Most important of all you have to become completely sincere. Women, as you have probably already learned for yourself are devilishly shrewd when it comes to their relation with men. Any girl is worth her salt would be able to pick out your honey line as fast as you could feed it to her.

There is one other important sacrifice you'll have to make: your sensual pleasure. No longer will you be able to delight in the physical comingling with a woman, this kind of pleasure will be lost for ever. The same thing hold true for the Casanova. He cannot love women for the simple reason that he is obsessed with them. His desire does not well up from some deep spring of physical need, he cannot afford the luxury of taking delight in the warmth of woman's cries or take any consolation from her yielding softness. The more he conquers, the more he finds he has to conquer.

Actually, not every man can be a Casanova. It takes a very special breed to be able to do all that is necessary to be successful at this particular vocation.

No, not every man can be a Casanova — and this is a good thing, because few men really want to be one.

By KEISHAN SHARMA

The Wedding Sari

DARLING," thrills the wife melodiously. There is music in her voice.

The husband pricks his ears. He has lived with her too long not to be able to distinguish between the subtleties of the spoken word. "Uh, huh," he replies guardedly.

"Darling", she sings. "We have to attend Krishan's wedding this evening and . . . I have simply nothing to wear."

"So that's it," he muses. "If this my dear, is any suggestion that I buy you a new sari for the occasion you are sadly mistaken," he replies with finality. "Why don't you wear your wedding sari?" he asks with naive innocence.

"Ha!"

"Ha yourself".

"That's not very funny. I am not amused," she cocks up an eyebrow, that's heavily pencilled. "It is not my wedding. Besides," she adds as an after thought, "it is four years old."

"What the wedding?" quips the husband.

"And the sari," retorts the little woman hotly.

"What about the new olive Green Nylon sari which you purchased last week from Sethi's Sari Store, why don't you wear that?"

"But I have already worn it once. You really are not suggesting that I wear the same sari again in the course of one week. And that colour is simply awful."

"Is it necessary to attend the wedding?"

"Darling! But of course! Remember Krishan did come to ours."

"I don't."

"But I do!"

"Well, you can do what you want, but one thing is certain. I am not paying for a new sari. Not a cent." He crosses his arms in fierce determination.

Here the little woman can contain herself no longer; she bursts into genuine crocodile tears.

"Boo, boo, boo . . . and is this (sob) how you expect me (sob) to attend weddings in rags? (sob, sob) what will all the people say, 'doesn't she have enough clothes to wear', or must she keep on parading in her rags?" (a long Sob).

He is embarrassed. He knows he cannot hold for any longer. He maintains a diplomatic silence.

Further howls accompanied by righteous tears.

The husband feels a worm; he squirms uneasily.

"You always never buy anything when I ask you. You always grudge me the little things I want. I never complain about those stupid cigars that you keep smoking," she complains with precise feminine logic.

He's in a fix now. He should have handled the situation more prudently. He envisages four hundred shillings going down the drain. He shudders. Oh, he could strangle this woman now. Instinctively, he looks at her thin white neck. Further defence is futile. His resistance has been broken. He yields. "There, there, dear . . . stop crying"

"Don't touch me, you brute! Go away."

". . . Okey, dammit, you can go and buy your sari," he speaks with intense irritation. "I don't seem to wear the pants in the house any more."

"But of course you do darling," she replies wiping her tears. "Will even press your blue suit for you."

"Do that." He leaves the house for office, a confirmed misogynist.

When the husband, tired and weary, returns from office, the wife displays a beautiful, pink silk sari. "Isn't gorgeous!" she cooes sweetly, "oh darling, you don't know what a tough time I had in. . . ."

"Yes but why haven't you worn it, why aren't you ready. Aren't we going to the wedding?" he inquires puzzledly.

"The wedding? Oh, I just remembered it was yesterday!"

"Oh, Jesus!" the husband collapses on the sofa.

"But you can still take me out to dinner, darling!"

By J. K. VARMA

What do we do during the Rag Season ?

In seven words we **"Collect Money, Wear Rags and Make Fun."**

I KNOW some enthusiasts may have been discouraged due to "That car — that Mayoral Rolls Royce," and although a Presidential Decree has been issued to the effect that the purchase is now cancelled, critics will argue, "there is a lot of money in Kenya after all, why help people who don't want to be helped?" People have a right to their beliefs, but it is true that the "Rolls Royce business" was a misappropriation of public funds. The country is not as rich as the city councillors think it is. So, we must collect money for the poor — for the hungry; that is why we shall be in rags.

If you Mr. X, ask for a necklace from a Miss Y for Rag purposes — possibly for the Rag Ball — and the Miss refuses for sound reason report the matter to "Chief Dean" — Complex Affairs, "that's me. That is my rank just as Hon. Mr. Shikukuis". The President for the Poor." She will get her reward, which might range from "over-taking" a

shower in the College fountain of wisdom to shading some long tough beards. No questions. Make fun on Rag Day! Have Fun!

If it is a "she" who asks for a pair of long trousers from a "he" for the Rag, give her one; otherwise the "Chief Dean" will never be scared — he will still exercise his powers and the offending chap will get his dues — he may have to go without bread for some time — Oh!! sorry. Ladies and gentlemen. There is no bread in the College these days. I was forgetting that we are sacrificing. In any case, the offender must be punished, for his behaviour is inconsistent with Sessional Paper No. 10 — African Socialism. This is serious.

By MKIZUNGO, T. H.

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ALL IN THE RAG SPIRIT

Touche

A SMALL girl came out of the house to where her mother was relaxing watching the lights. The young thing was greatly puzzled and asked:

"Mami, can our maid see in the dark?"

The mother, not quite sure of such a silly question, said:

"No honey. But why?"

The girl, casually said: "But I just heard her tell Dad that he needs a shave."

★ ★ ★ ★

FOLLOWING a bash that lasted until the small hours of the morning, David decided against work that day. His hangover was sickening. At 8.30 a.m., he was awakened by the telephone ringing, and went to answer it.

David: "Mmmmm".

Voice: "."

David: "How the hell should I know. Why don't you ask the weather bureau?"

When David joined his wife in bed, she wanted to know who it was. David said: "It was some kind of a fool wanting to know whether the cost is clear."

★ ★ ★ ★

AN executive was having an argument in the office with his boss, on the question of unfaithfulness of brown-eyed women. He felt uneasy, and wanted to check on his wife's eyes. He dashed off to his house. On arrival, he grabbed his wife and sternly looked into her eyes. They were truly brown. He exclaimed, "Ah Brown". A man walked out of the closet and said, "How the hell did you know that I was here?"

John: "Dick, come with me to see the 'Two Women'".

Dick: "No, not to-night. Mr. Robinson is playing at the Sombbrero".

Another evening.

John: "Dick, I have two tickets to the National Theatre, coming with me?"

Dick: "Please, not tonight. Mr. Robinson is playing at the Starlight."

After two more refusals, John could not help wondering about Mr. Robinson's playing. Dick answered: "I don't give a damn how he plays. It is only that when he plays,, I play with his wife."

By *SAM H. MUNGAI*

The Chapel in the Woods

ONCE, an English lady wanted to rent a furnished house in a small German village in the mountains and not knowing any German, she asked the village School-master to help her (he knew a little English). On her return she remembered that she had not asked if a W.C. was attached to the house or not. So she wrote to the German School-master for particulars as to W.C., but he did not understand the abbreviations W.C. and asked the village pastor. The pastor came to the conclusion that the lady was a devoted Church-goer and wished to know where the Weslean Church was. He replied as follows:—

'Dear Ladyship,

The W.C. is situated about 7 miles from your lodgings in the middle of a pine forest in beautiful surroundings. It is open on Tuesdays, Fridays and Sundays. This is unfortunate if you are in the habit of going regularly but you will no doubt be glad to know that a number of people make a day of it and take their lunch. As there are many visitors in Summer, I would advise your ladyship to go early.

A bell is rung about 10 minutes before the W.C. is open. The accommodation is grand and there are about 80 seats. Should you be late, there's plenty of standing room. I would advise your ladyship to pay a visit on Fridays as there's an organ accompaniment on that day, acoustics on the premises are excellent, the most *delicate* sounds being heard all over the building. I should be most delighted to serve your ladyship the best seats and have the honour, being sincerely yours,

P.S. My wife and I have been unable to go for the last 8 months. This pains us very much but it is such a long way to go.'

By SHAFIQ NASSER,
Bristol University

Gossip

My boyfriend and I came out of the cinema and it was wet, dark and windy, saying "Hang on a minute." He disappeared into a nearby cafe. I thought he had gone for cigarettes, waiting, shivering for fifteen minutes, I also went in to see why he was taking so long.

And there he was at a table stuffing steak pudding, chips and peas.

★ ★ ★

Out shopping with small daughter and young nephew in town, I casually asked the boy what he wanted for Christmas. Pointing to four tiny cars in a display of about fifty, he said, "see those?" I nodded "well" he said, I have those — it is the rest I want."

★ ★ ★

Help! Help!

We love those macaroon biscuits with the hole in the centre, but each time we have them, there is a sobbing

set-to-from my three-year old. He wants us to show him how to cut the hole first and the biscuit last. I am at the end of my tether any advice?

★ ★ ★

Will someone answer?

Why do, grown ups always say that they had this or that and were always hard up, and yet talk about the "Good old days"?

★ ★ ★

Store Story

When my husband asked his firm's storekeeper for a certain bit of equipment, he was told; I'll have to order it, Sir. There is only one left and someone might need it.

★ ★ ★

Asking for it:—

On hearing that bank robbers had got away with £25,000, mum said, "why do the fools have all that much money in the bank at weekends!"

★ ★ ★

Of One Mind

My husband had been hanging a couple of pictures in our daughter's bedroom. When he'd finished I thought I'd go in and inspect them when I'd done so I decided to switch their positions. Lifting one off its hooks I discovered a piece of paper also hanging there, and on it was written, "I knew you would change them".

★ ★ ★

It doesn't follow

An old lady from our village was able to go for a walk in the hospital grounds after an operation.

That evening her daughter came to pay her a visit, "I hope you have not caught cold," she said.

The old lady replied indignantly, "You can't catch cold there private grounds."

The Rat Menace in India

I UNDERSTAND there are approximately 2½ billion rats in India consuming about 26 billion tons of grain yearly. Simple Arithmetic will show that each rat's ration is about 10 tons of grain, i.e. 61 lbs. of grain per day.

The story is unbelievable, unless an Indian rat is as big as an elephant.

From the above statistics you will see that the rats in India are feasting. What about the people in Kerala State? 100 grams of rice per day.

The Indian Government now, I hear, attributed as one of the causes of the acute famine to this army of rats.

I suggest two or three solutions:

1. The Indian people should get down to eating rats which are obviously very fat.
2. The people in Kerala State, instead of strikes and demonstrations declare a war on these rats, and further,
3. The U.S.A. army be stationed in India to fight these people's enemies.

By JAMES MWIRICIA

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Subtract b^2 from each side, $a^2-b^2=ba-b^2$

Factorise each side, $(a-b)(a+b)=b(a-b)$

Divide each side by $(a-b)$, $a+b=b$

But $a=b$ (given) therefore $2b=b$

Divide both sides by b , therefore $2=1$!!;
then what !!!

By JAMES MWIRICIA

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POLITICS

The Innocent Victim

IF there was anyone who was against the strike, then it was the President of the Students' Union himself. But what could he do when we were all crying for an indefinite strike if our demands were not met?

The President had either to resign or to accept our resolution. To resign would mean that either he did not see any justification for the strike or he was a coward; and it was none of the two. The President foresaw the consequences of an indefinite strike and he therefore wisely and intelligently persuaded us to accept a two-day strike and demonstration. To his relief we accepted this less tough measure against the administration and we carried it out successfully.

We all knew that the possible consequences of the strike were either for the administration to yield to some of our demands or to close the College. We expected to be asked to sign the memorandum and we signed it very willingly to the surprise of the administration and the so-called public. Furthermore we expected all of us to be re-admitted because we had done nothing very serious that we deserved suspension or expulsion and we regarded the closure of the College as the means of making us sign never to strike again, a bond we had not made before. But to our amazement the innocent was picked out! Although the advisers of the Principal be blamed for punishing the wrong person, the ultimate blame may fall on us all.

Although we had at a meeting decided to boycott the university games, a good number of us under the cover of sportsmanship decided to go. They might not have realized what effect this could have on the administration, but the latter could in such circumstances be justified to think that someone was just inciting us to disobey against our will. Again when we decided not to attend the Opening Cere-

mony to show our dissatisfaction with the suspension of our President. A new group of cowards, probably swayed by the "college's wise counsels" decided to attend. This group had a great following of the excited mass including most of the women students. This new treacherous group went under another cover deductable from the cheap arguments put forward by some of the 'excited mass', such as "I am an individual!" They forgot, or better say, they were ignorant of the fact that men are social beings. None of us could maintain the college as an individual. Even states cannot exist as individuals only to quote the example of Rhodesia! For states are inexorably interdependent.

The stand of the women students could be justified on these grounds. First, they were harshly treated when the college was closed. They were given, I hear, an hour, to quit their Halls of Residence. Perhaps their Warden had some grudge with them. Secondly, they are not sharing their rooms, they do not have to use 'greasy eating tools', they do not have their toilets flooding into their rooms, they do not have cups, plates and water jars thick with dirt in the bottom, they do not have to line up for a quarter of an hour for their meals, and the manholes around their Halls of Residence were not overflowing! Thirdly they are the weaker sex. But if they stand up to claim equal rights, then there is no ground for their stand.

In short, because we decided to participate in the Dar games, to attend the opening ceremony, to organise the marathon walk, to organise the Rag Week (unfortunately in part for the benefit of the public), the administration has come to the justifiable conclusion that they eradicated the cause of unrest!

God only can forgive their wilful injustices !

By E. SSENGENDO

EPILOGUE

When they understood the thing was over,
Then they sighed, and quietly closed the cover.
They breathed deeply
As if they were wounded mortally.
And with their eyes agog
They realized how far to go
Before they could behold another like it.

By SAM H. MUNGAI

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