

**OUR BLOOD WRITES
BETTER LAWS**



**A Poetic Chapbook
By
Kenneth Oodee**

SYNOPSIS

This poetry collection digs into the underbelly of politics and governance, unearthing the brutal truths of a failed democracy. Through powerful and evocative verse, it exposes the corruption of leaders, the silencing and murder of activists, betrayal within communities, and the deep scars left by tribalism, nepotism, exploitation, and genocide. With unflinching honesty, the collection critiques the structures of power that uphold inequality, perpetuate poverty, and fuel the suffering of ordinary people.

Table of Contents

BLOOD HAS NO TRIBE	1
SELECTIVE MORALITY	3
THEY DIG; WE BLEED.....	4
MINISTERS OF MISCHIEF	5
THE POWER IN OUR MANY.....	6
BETWEEN CANDLES AND CORRUPTION	7
THE ILLUSION OF FREEDOM.....	8
NATURE SPEAKS, BUT WE CANNOT	9
NO ROADS TO DESTINY.....	10
WHERE HEALING DIES.....	11
THE PRICE OF DIVISION	12
VOICES IN THE SPILL	13
A DEAD MAN'S ADVENTURE.....	14
WEAPONS IN SUITS	15
DUST ON OUR DREAMS	16
THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO GREED	17
SAME CHAINS, NEW MASTERS	18
EQUALITY ON PAPER.....	19
THE COST OF OBEDIENCE	21
THE NAMES THE WIND STILL CARRIES	22

BLOOD HAS NO TRIBE

The same blood the Northerner bleeds
Is the blood the Easterner bleeds
The same anthem the Southerner sings
Is the melody the Westerner brings

The government drains the river's crude
And steals the North's rich fields of food
Yet hoards the wealth for just one tribe
And hands out power to its own kind

The Christian, the Muslim, we share the same pain
Floods and hunger do not ask our name
If pain does not ask where you're from
Before it strikes and leaves you numb
Why then must we ask, "Who's your father?"
Before we help one another?

The soil and the rain, do not ask for our borders before they
feed our roots or quench our thirst
So why do we wait for the highest bidder, before we admit or
employ our own?
We care only for those who speak our native tongue
We're far worse than hypocrites

We're more brutal than the savage
And yet, by blood alone
what have we truly gained?
By language alone, what demons have we overcome?

Even in denial, the oldest culture is humanity
Our colonial masters have gone, and our enemies lies within
We're quick to condemn racism outside our home
Yet in ignorance, we let tribalism destroy our home.

SELECTIVE MORALITY

We are at home, yet we live like strangers
We preach peace, yet we groom our dangers
We claim progress, yet dwell in poverty
Wearing chains beneath the mask of liberty

Systemic risks no longer feel risky
We sip pain like whisky, warm and misty
Nepotism and tribalism lead the way
Where who you are matters more than what you say

We shout, "Justice for Gaza!" "Justice for Israel!"
But fall silent as our own people wail
Abroad, we act with kindness and grace
Yet back home, we judge by tribe and face

In foreign lands, we're breaking records
But here, we're breaking hearts and futures
We inspire the world and lift its spirit
Then come home only to curse our image

With act of kindness, we rescue strangers
With motivational quotes, we console our own
We're saints abroad and Judas at home
We murder humanity in silence and pride
And history, like time, will not let it slide.

THEY DIG; WE BLEED

They aim for the gold that lies beneath
Digging deeper for the oil beneath our feet
It matters not what harm they do
As long as profits come rolling through

Spillages stain our farms and fields
Crops destroyed, yet silence yields
When we speak, they send more might
Forcing darkness to eclipse our light

The sky wears soot like a mourning shroud
Its tears fall heavy, silent, loud
Our bellies empty, our children cry
While smoke and sorrow cloud the sky

Our rivers, oily parched and dead,
Where once the fish were freely fed
The rich stay blind to our lament
The government deaf to our torment

Bad governance, a moral boon to the vile
Ken Saro Wiwa spoke, they tried him on trial
They tried to kill his truth, to silence our song
But still we stand, though the nights are long

Our courage holds, our voices rise
Even as the mourning multiplies
We will not yield, though grief advances
We endure, through fading chances.

MINISTERS OF MISCHIEF

They grew old, but never wise
Spinning circles, echoes of lies and lies
Craving power, yet weak and blind
Clueless senators, asleep half the time

They scheme and stage their public parade
Bribing silence, their aides betrayed
They torch our green pastures, then scorn the youth
Blame them for weed, while they distort the truth

They steal with pride, yet call theft a crime
Except when it's theirs, it's perfectly fine
Financial gluttons at a gluttonous peak
Draped in shame, in designer chic

Devil's advocates in robes of deceit
Their righteousness rots beneath their feet
A government's voice? Just one dull note
"We need more loans," their only quote

They are the judges, lawmakers, and the executive
They're the law, they're the police and the thieves
They write the laws, then break them with flair
Policing the poor while looting their share

A parasitic league, bloated and grand
Draining life from this broken land
Feasting on hope, they call it governance
While we gasp beneath their dominance.

THE POWER IN OUR MANY

We did not choose our ethno-religious diversity
Nor did we choose our sociocultural disparity
Life made us both victims and victors in innocence
And to survival, we pledged our daily allegiance

Power and beauty lies in diversity
Yet, ironically, it births our fragility
A great history once bound us tight
Now a wounded future dims our light

From the cultures born in Ile Ife
To the chains once forged in Calabar's bay
From Benin's artistry, bold and grand
To Opobo's flight at King Jaja's command

Wearing agbada doesn't make you greater than me
Wearing etibo doesn't mean you see more clearly
Wearing a hijab doesn't make you holier still
Our strength lies in unity, not in will to kill

Diversity is power when we stand as one
But when we divide, catastrophe has begun.

BETWEEN CANDLES AND CORRUPTION

With good hearts, we tread on broken roads
If not potholes, then raging floods unload
Our schools are drowning in ignorance and dust
Curriculums outdated, decayed by rust

Lecturers now play the politician's game
Professorship reduced to a title of fame
The system is messed up
The citizens are fed up

No electricity to light our dreams yonder
Collapse of power grid, they blame it on thunder
When in their houses, they control every switch
Cause each repair, makes them a million-dollar rich

The only difference between them and the devil,
Is that the devil is wiser and accountable to his evil.

THE ILLUSION OF FREEDOM

What is democracy without protection for the few?
What is democracy without rule of law, or rights held true?
Human livelihood decays beneath the oil's black spills
While Shell and its kin drain the land to fund their thrills

Domestic colonialism has stolen our autonomy
Kleptocracy boldly cripples our economy
Tribal ties and party pride fuel marginalization
While aged minds hinder growth and civilization

They invest abroad, and soar on private jets
While civil servants' wages feed their pets
No land left to farm, no rivers safe to drink
Our youth lie drowning in smoke and drink

When we speak, they label us rebels
In this dark nation, where truth rarely excels
Nothing prospers but corruption's rise
Nothing prospers, but hunger thrives.

NATURE SPEAKS, BUT WE CANNOT

The wind sings softly through the trees,
As branches dance with graceful ease
The birds compose their morning tune
In acrobatics under the moon

The frogs and toads in chorus rise
A choir beneath the open skies
All living things express their fire
Their voice, their truth, their heart's desire

But man is silenced by decree
His voice bound tight in tyranny
A thousand lies in law's disguise
With shadows cloaked in suits and ties

Every truth against the government, has it prison programmed
Freedom of speech in politics, is by far the greatest scam
Politics, an enemy of truth and competition
Unless you're defending her corruption

Our rights have wandered far astray
As kleptocrats mold laws their way
They try to silent our every truth
They try to silent guts of the youths.

NO ROADS TO DESTINY

A nation built with sweat and struggle
Now lies in ruins—prey to political juggling
They quench the flame of our rising hopes
And thicken the air, making it hard to cope

The weight of corruption, long prolonged
Drags us into places where we don't belong
A cycle of greed and moral decay
Crucifying peace and order each day

The Third Mainland Bridge swallows the youth
While Lagos streets floods with touts
Graduates marketing their dreams for away
From one microfinance bank to another bank, they decay

We see our rulers only on screens,
Mass murder in Benue State, souls scream
No town halls held to voice our pain
No homes to shield us from the rain

No roads that lead us to destiny's gate
Fuel prices rising, sealing our fate
We sit on balconies, helpless and worn
Dying slowly, forgotten and torn.

WHERE HEALING DIES

The wards in our hospitals lie empty,
No drugs to heal, or make our system immune
No beds to calm the pain or ease the strain
Only echoes of past screams from endless pain

Our doctors have all fled abroad
Some freedoms, truly, don't deserve applause
For every single life that's saved
Five more are lost to death cold wave

Nurses grow weary, drained of might
Haunted by hunger and bills each night
Dreams and lives are lost while saving others
Night shifts have turned wives into widowed mothers

This is the nation we've come to know
Where misrule makes what's, right seem low
Democracy? It's madness indeed
A government of itself, by itself, for its greed
Government of the government, by the government and for the government.

THE PRICE OF DIVISION

Our colonial masters left us a legacy
Some call it xenophobia, others tribalism.
Taught to hate our own reflection,
Same skin, yet still rejection.

That South Africans, will chase her brothers from Nigeria away
The Sahel despises her own blood from Algeria.
Tanzania and Mozambique no longer align, due to boundary dispute

Mgingo Island stirs silent war,
Kenya and Uganda, friends no more.
Western quotes replace our ancestral words,
Our proverbs silenced, like caged birds.

We've abandoned our roots and herbs
Of all goods, it's the bad we chose to observe from the western world
If not maternal deaths, it's hunger's cry,
Or children's futures passing by.

If not child labor and exploitation,
Then climate change and degradation.
If not the right to proper education,
Then poverty, disease, or forced migration.

Africa, our cradle of wealth and fame,
Now clothed in sorrow, burdened with shame.

VOICES IN THE SPILL

The crops are hungry,
The rivers, dry and thirsty
The fishes have drowned
The grasses turned brown

The earth is blackened
Our mothers, frightened
Oil flows and spills in rage
But not a word from those in charge

As long as they steal our crude in peace
They summon police when we dare speak
They sold our refineries to the wealthy few
In gluttony, they tightened the noose

Those who told the truth became the foe
But still they sleep, their conscience low
They try to cage us, silence, tame
But they can't kill our truth or name.

A DEAD MAN'S ADVENTURE

The worst fate for any good nation
Is ignorance and perhaps, bad governance
Politics becomes a dead man's adventure
A feast for economic scavengers and vultures

Their promises burn like cigarettes
They start with light and end in darkness
Like hyenas, they feed upon their own
Like Judas, they betray and leave you alone

They have no friends, no lasting foes
Just loyalty to the highest bidder, like hired whores
Their plans are empty, lacking vision
Yet always cloaked in some grand mission

Either they're stealing public funds
Or they're stealing public funds
There's no in-between, just deceit and spin
A dangerous game, the enemy is always within

WEAPONS IN SUITS

The dirty edge of politics
Stained with blood, sharpened by tricks
Forged in rust, wielded in greed
Its victims and victors alike still bleed

Tyranny is a weak man's tool
Wielded by devils who pass for cool
They dream of ruling with lifeless zeal
No wonder they nap while we foot the bill

They slumber through our tragedies
Calling us lazy, while hunger gnaws our bellies
We've grown weak from enduring too long
Our children forced to act grown, robbed of their song

We place our hope in uniformed forces
Yet they guard the gates of our tormentors' palaces
We are caged in the name of freedom
A nation trapped inside its own kingdom.

DUST ON OUR DREAMS

Our anthem has lost its voice
Scholars sing, but no longer rejoice
They pledged to be faithful, loyal, and true
Now, they chase power with motives untrue

“Giant of Africa”, a warm exaggeration
Yet we are dwarfed in growth and stagnation
The hopes of the youth have been washed away
Their certificates gather dust and decay

From national budgets to private gain
From “free and fair” to ballots stained
From police brutality to courts unjust
From bribery’s grip to broken trust

Judges now deliver justice miscarried
Devil’s advocates, with truth buried
Yet still, the people rise relentless
Dreaming of a nation that’s fearless, and endless.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO GREED

They live in their agbadas
Multi-million-dollar Ankaras
Customized chieftaincies
Over clothed dashikis

Their words are masked like their faces
Hundreds of forces, escorting them to places
Our scarce petrol, overflowing in their cars
While they spread in their tinted glasses with their cigars

They promise hope, in the same breath, curse their citizens
Steal our resources, lavishes it in Europe, America and Asia
During election, they attend all churches like they're on evangelism
After election, they express a practical display of egocentrism

They gamble our lives for their game of power
In our lamentations, they send their condolences and flowers.

SAME CHAINS, NEW MASTERS

In ships, our colonial masters once sailed away
But somehow, it feels like they still rule today
New masters have risen, and they look like us
They speak our tongues, yet betray our trust

They bear our blood, but wield the hearts of thieves
Echoing the tyranny of those who used to leave
They promise change, but deliver decay
Yesterday's oppressors now dressed our way

Different complexion, but the same cruel aim
New methods, same victims, just a different name
They buy our votes, then sell our land
Demanding our silence with greedy hands

They once wore suits with beastly pride
Now it's Agbada, where their lies still hide
Different eras, same culture
Different masters, same vultures.

EQUALITY ON PAPER

One day, they preach equality
The next, they practice iniquity
They praise democracy with every speech
Yet silence truth and freedom of speech

They killed Dele Giwa to quiet our cries
To bury the truth, to silence our lives
They try to tame voices like Aisha Yesufu
Dissolving each gathering that dares to push through

But still, like Maya once said, we rise
“Like dust,” defiant beneath their lies
Stronger and higher, we rise
In numbers, in courage, in fire, we rise

They wear fine suits, but their hearts are cold
From the bench to the throne, corruption takes hold
The sadness here plays a timeless tune
A nation's pain ignored far too soon

In this place, where power wears a mask,
The leaders see our suffering as too small a task.

FROM TRIBUNAL TO TYRANNY

Politics, clothed in the cleanest attire
Yet the dirtiest profession one could admire
Martyrs are made of the innocent
While tyrants are crowned, praised, and prominent

They traded a rope for the hopes of Ken Saro-Wiwa
And planted bombs in place of peace for Dele Giwa
Kwame Nkrumah, once a victor, but betrayed by a coup
While in '63, Sylvanus Olympio was struck cold and blue

Moshood Abiola, detained and defiled
A nation betrayed, with justice exiled
Betrayal has woven itself in our roots
A shameful thread in ancestral boots

The tribunal is no longer the common man's shield
And the press no longer reflects what the wounded feel
They stole our culture and sold us division
Fed us tribalism to fracture our vision

They took true democracy and gave us greed
Wrapped it in capitalism, masked as need
They trample the legacies of Mandela's flame
In blessed memory of Madiba Keita and Thomas Sankara.

THE COST OF OBEDIENCE

Justice is no longer blind
to the common man, the judiciary no longer kind
For choosing peace, we're branded guilty
our silence stretched, our pain made filthy

We dare not protest; they swell our despair
tightening the chains we're forced to wear
In this nation, law is not what you read
it's who you know, who holds the seed

The legislature signs away our breath
approving budgets that script our death
Still, we kneel, praying with trembling hands
as if revival will heal broken lands

Their “true democracy” has betrayed us all
our national trust became our fall
Like orphans, we wander our own streets
searching for justice that never meets

Democracy, now a mask for theft
a stage for rogues, no mercy left
All seems free, yet we remain in chains
while every law feeds their gains.

THE NAMES THE WIND STILL CARRIES

Kwame Nkrumah — A continental fighter

Thomas Sankara — A soldier of peace

Ken Saro-Wiwa — The common man's hope

Nelson Mandela — A universal reverend

Ibrahim Traoré — The voice of the voiceless

Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti — The brave lioness

Gani Fawehinmi — The writer's freedom

Aisha Yesufu — A mother's pride and beacon

Yaa Asantewaa — The fearless queen of Ashanti pride.

Steve Biko - Ambassador of black consciousness

Patrice Lumumba — Advocate of anti-colonial truth,

Miriam Makeba — The voice of social justice

King Jaja — The people's leader and guide

Isaac Adaka Boro — The people's strength and stride

Fela Kuti — The nation's gut, its rhythm and melody

Margrete Ekpo — A rose, Blooming in the soil of unity

Brenda Fassie — The sound of Freedom

Leymah Gbowee - Peace in the Face of war

Chief Igbani Gika — The people's wall, and fierce defiance.

Nnamdi Azikiwe — The father of nationalism

The Ogoni Nine — A national treasure

Wangari Maathai — Our environmental measure

Samora Machel — A true revolutionary flame

Samori Touré — Relentless in freedom's name

Oliver Tambo — the youth's enduring strength
Gamal Abdel Nasser — independence at length
Modibo Keita — the muscle of emancipation
End SARS Protesters — the heartbeat of a generation