

ANGER, MAMA YOU ARE WELCOME, MARY'S STORY, SPRING ENCHANTMENT

Anger

It swoops low
grabs me from behind
Caracara like
its talons pierce
my being
once again I'm caught
unable to speak
lest I become the shrew
unable to escape
wanting to escape
to flee – pulse racing
pot boiling over
contents run to floor
all is normal once more.

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MAMA YOU ARE WELCOME A GHANAIAN THANKSGIVING

Drums beat - Mama you are welcome
friend of Sarakope
coconuts Mama's favorites
a machete flash and **Whack!**
Here drink eat
Drums beat - Mama you are welcome.

We are dying Mama Gladys
come to Sarakope
I'm only one person Gladys wept
pray God help me
her God said go to Sarakope.

Drums beat - come celebrate
dance women of Sarakope
with babies on your backs
orange red brown green
flashing Kente cloth and white blouses
elbows flying feet clapping ululation exultation
come dance Maureen and Georgia
Drums beat - feel the rhythm.

Drums beat - we've killed the goat
let us feast in Sarakope
we bring water wash your hands
eat now with Mama Gladys and Maureen
we serve you we honor you
here dip the banku* in the spicy stew
eat with your hands eat first
Drums beat - we celebrate!

Drums beat - *woezor**
I celebrate
brown hands in mine
honored guest Mama's friend
stranger who had lost all faith
I am restored
I am welcomed in Sarakope
Drums beat - *Woezor!*

"Woezor" means "welcome" in Ewe, "Banku" is fermented corn & cassava dough paste

**MARY'S STORY
(A Ugandan Chant)**

From Kampala we went
into the bush
off the main Orum road
deep into Otuke
in a safari van on a narrow goat path

from Kampala
into the bush
to meet Mary
to hear her story

into the bush
to the tidy dirt compound
with huts of clay and straw bricks
to meet Mary
to hear her story

from Kampala
into the bush
to meet Mary
to hear her story

sitting under a mango tree
Mary told her story
weariness draped like a shawl
pressing her down
fingers gripping her chair

from Kampala
into the bush
to meet Mary
to hear her story

Mary told her story
pain in her eyes
speaking resolutely of
unspeakable horrors
Mary told her story

Mary's Story

Continued

from Kampala
into the bush
to meet Mary
to hear her story

the day of her abduction
she hoed cassava singing smiling
Anders in her belly seven months
kicked hard
and Kony came

from Kampala
into the bush
to meet Mary
to hear her story

she couldn't flee
she walked too slow
her family there
she had to stay
and Kony came

from Kampala
into the bush
to meet Mary
to hear her story

Kony's men
pillaged her family farm
beheaded her father-in-law
at gun point a seventy-kilo bag on her head
Mary forced to walk

from Kampala
into the bush
to meet Mary
to hear her story

Mary's Story

Continued

the day Kony came
she saw her sister-in-law's body
she couldn't rest
resters macheted to death

from Kampala
into the bush
to meet Mary
to hear her story

Mary forced to walk
the day Kony came
she jumped a ditch
she couldn't fall
or the machetes would get her

from Kampala
into the bush
to meet Mary
to hear her story

on and on sixteen kilometers
the world's woes on her head
Mary forced to walk
the day Kony came

from Kampala
into the bush
to meet Mary
to hear her story

nightfall in camp
far from her family farm
more captives came
chaos and confusion
Mary fled

Mary's Story

Continued

from Kampala
into the bush
to meet Mary
to hear her story

soldiers hunted her
in the blackness she hid
like a drum her heart beat in fear
Mary fled
she ran and hid like a hare

from Kampala
into the bush
to meet Mary
to hear her story

through the night
for twenty kilometers
Mary fled
reaching safety in the refugee camp
the day after Kony came

from Kampala we went
into the bush
to meet Mary
to hear her story.

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Spring Enchantment

In the light of the moon on a warm spring eve
a spell of enchantment upon me did weave

drawn by the fragrance of flowers like heaven
I lingered too long in Persephone's Garden

with blossoms shimmering in moon glow
yellow bells and blue bells above and below

sleepy glacier lilies nodding their heads
spring beauties in their warm beds

in moonlight all was so surreal
entranced I ambled down the trail

thus to the Heartleaf Arnica Bower
stepping closer to see in that dark hour

I thought I heard a lively ridotto
at the entrance to that fey grotto

a bear hailed me; "what took you so long?"
Let's party she called and hit the gong

they came out of their nooks to greet me
the arnica, waterleaf, spring parsley

twirled and waved their green umbrels
the owls, jays, and chickadees trilled

we danced and we danced the time away
such was the night of that spring day

at dawn I awoke rubbing a bump on my head
sitting by a boulder in a heartleaf arnica bed.