

## Pursuit of Self

By George Gumikiriza

Cold is the morning before me,  
bleak the thoughts that within my mind prance  
There is much I do not know, this I've come to learn,  
like whether the sun will rise today  
It's probably hiding its face from me, like my father,  
ever since I strayed from his path; the dreams  
he'd for decades on, dreamed for me

I do not know if tomorrow I shall think myself  
worthy in any regard  
If these dreams of mine will ever amount to anything...  
anything at all  
My father would probably have an earful for me,  
a condemnation into the dungeons of the unwise...

*To not know what tomorrow holds, to have no sure-to-work plan,  
to wallow in the velds of uncertainty... is no way to be a man  
A real man must have it all figured out  
A real man holds within his possession, the undisputed skill to mold fate  
A real man has no business associating with past failures  
To commune with pity, especially for oneself, is the surest way  
to secure any man a feast with poverty*

So much eludes me lately, so much but  
the consistent attendance of troubled thoughts  
So much but the punctuality of dwindling hope  
gnawing at an already fickle conscience  
I do not know what price I must pay for dreaming,  
But if my tax is any modicum as much as what  
I've known to be my reality of late,  
Then, by the grace of Deity most sovereign,  
I wish to take leave from this long slumber

Sometimes, my prayers are long silences,  
unsure of what to say to God  
What to tell?  
If nothing from His gaze is ever hidden,

then what shall my lips before Him present?  
What in the soft whimpering of a heart overcome  
shall I of Him ask that He knows not already?  
If by a single decree all life came to be, then  
handicapped must be the tongue with which  
my redemption was entrusted

This, with potent passion I loathe,  
that nothing is clear about this life, about  
the path I'm meant to lead  
Can someone tell me what it is I have to do?  
What is it I was created for?  
Perhaps if my purpose were spelt out clearly,  
I would not wallow this long in uncertainty  
Perhaps if my purpose were spelt out crystal clearly,  
thoughts of inadequacy would not riddle me so  
'Cause I'm in the middle of nowhere, asking for  
a friend, a guiding hand I cannot seem to find;  
With tears too close, despair more inviting

I tread upon lands of old, seeking counsel,  
beseeching travails common to my own  
'Cause misery knows but a single pond from which  
to fish for company: its own  
Two boys, two worlds apart, each suffocated by the  
slow rhythms of systems too careful to keep a familiar face,  
systems too scared of change, play hookey under a tree  
Each lost in thought, pondering, questioning... curiosities  
in dire need of quenching  
Upon the first boy's head, an apple falls, knocking him out  
of thought and delivering him onto the wings of Eureka!  
From then on, the falling of things to the ground shall have  
a name: Gravity!

The second boy finds his passion in words, in poetry,  
a detour from the Physics he'd always thought to be his calling  
When a leaf from the thick umbrella tree makes its way into  
his open palm, he examines it and smiles  
The green-yellow hue is the color of therapy, for in it he learns  
that conformity is only a cocoon

He learns that sometimes, you must step away from the crowd  
to know just how exclusively your garment gleams on its own  
Like a tiny leaf departing from a thick green canopy to take  
on a new smile, the warmth of the sun  
To dream calls for a parting from common lore, a daring at  
things unseen, a gamble upon terrain seldom traversed

And the two boys, like two roads merging into one,  
meet as kin in oneness of spirit  
Fueled by a single desire: the pursuit of self!

The morning is still cold, and the sun though  
grudgingly, climbs the horizon  
There's still much I do not know, and a whole lot  
I might never know  
But on those days when the world closes in, I think of  
the first boy, Isaac Newton  
What mental battles he faced when he dropped out of school?  
When he ventured out of societal norms to bring about  
a new age of understanding?  
What anxiety he battled when things continually slipped  
in and out, in and out of his grip, fully forming,  
only to collapse before his eyes

O, what dark days he must've endured!  
And now rings his name in rooms and all corners of  
the world, as the man who gave Physics its first stride!  
The man who cracked open a portal to understanding  
that had for eons, been sealed away from carnal man  
My face stretches into a smile: Isaac Newton, upon whose  
discoveries civilizations thrive!  
Every time I regress in my pursuit of purpose, I think of  
the first boy, him and the intruding apple  
And in the depths of my soul is stocked, the ferocity  
of a thousand suns!

With me is a dream, a seed into the dirt, parting  
the earth for a glimpse of sun  
This dream, many do not see, my father does not see,  
but someday, this dream to all shall manifest!