

Poetry Series

Emu Getachew
- poems -

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Emu Getachew(October 18)

A woman who wears a shawl weaved out of words...a sister, a daughter and a friend.

...Before You Came...

My beloved I have much to say,
Oh my! where should I start?

Before you came...
the corner stores were waiting to live,
and yesterday was window shopping for today,
most afternoons were cold and pitiless,
and summer evening had lost its painter.

Oh my beloved...before you came
Fall came in April in a deafening silence,
and Spring refused to play with the tulips,
winter? winter, was abrasive and brutal,
and roads, Oh! Roads-had no meeting place and no detour signs,
and mountains had left our neighborhoods.

Oh my beloved...before you came
Birds had cut off their wings and had stopped chirping
there were no plays on the side walks,
no languages, no theaters
radio played no music and televisions had no images,
and the library! Oh my beloved...
the library shelves were empty of love stories.

Oh my beloved...before you came
yes, before you came...my pen resist to write poetry.

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Dedicated to those of us who waited for love at the bus stop!

Emu Getachew

'public-Self-Storage-Space'

Cold concrete floor and deafening silence
locks on every door displaying numbers
no names or personalities, no music or kid's steps
just the sound of all seasons rushing to escape
sneaking through the cracks are our collective tales.

Old photo albums, and dresses with there tags
unopened Christmas presents, and the crystal wine glass
love letters from the seventies and teddy bears from the past
Oh! grandma recipes books and old biker pants.

Ballet dancer shoes and the exercise sound tracks
broken plastic chairs and plastic covered sofas
empty perfume bottles and the broken music box
the left over gift wraps and of course dirty dolls.

The babies' first shoes and grandpas' eye wears
old crumbled maps and mangled license plates
The high-school diplomas and dried gummy bears
college essay papers and expired credit cards.

The unfinished craft projects and dried paint brushes
dust dressed magazines and the old version software
mismatched socks with holes and smaller blouse with stains
the forgotten changes in the pockets and washed up dollar bills.

Wondering through the coldness of Public-Self-Storage
are our defiant tails 'occupying' unnecessary space.

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Emu Getachew

...when We Meet Next...

I know now and even before you uttered those words,
that I will not speak language
but through my eyes
you will know that you were missed
and through my lips
I will seal your breath inside me forever.
Through your holds
you will know that I have come home.
Through your touches
I will know that I've been transformed into a woman.
To love you is an experience equal to death
and yet I don't know how to love or die
but I promise you this; when we meet next time
the "I" will die and i will morn in you forever, my mirror!

© Emu Getachew, April 1,2011
Dedicated to all Tuesday!

Emu Getachew

A Letter To My Father I Call Gestish, Happy Father's Day!

Growing up, I remember the many fights and positioning that took place in our household. However, those altercations and challenges are the cement that helped build the pillars of my life today. Somehow through our difficulties, we both came to see that we were very much alike. Free spirited, creative, life's biggest cheerleaders and risk takers. In my teens, I thought you were crazy and needed some serious medical intervention. Then in my twenties, I came to meet a different father who believed in me more so than myself. Of course, I felt you were losing your toughness and I did not know how to deal with your softness.

Then came your health scare and I remember going to the Chapel in the hospital. Though I was there to pray; I couldn't pray or even ask for anything. Instead, I sat there and thought about the many missed opportunities and vowed to work harder if you were to make it. However difficult, abate, you showed us the face of courage, possibilities, positivity, class and humility. Then in my thirties we all experienced life's biggest blow, a loss of child/sibling. I remember then, I was lost again because I wanted to see that strong, disciplined, emotionally frugal father of mine. Instead, I saw a man in pain, defeated and a man on his knee. I remember we were all lost.

Now in my forties, you became more human. What I did not see then was that you were just like me but with a lot more birthdays and a different hair color. Today, I know better. Getisheye, know with certainty that I use your life's canvas as my life's foundation. I live with less fear and child like personality just like you. Because of you, my life's canvas is painted with kindness, humility, loyalty, hard work, friendship, laughter, care, endurance and perseverance. Today, our relationship is colorful and fluid.

Thank you Getisheye for all that you've taught us. Through your health scare, I have come to view life as a gift. Through our loss you taught me to celebrate small victories. Through your commitment to excellence; I have come to demand nothing less. Thanks for the sewing classes though I hated it then who knew but you; today, I love nothing more than creating my own outfit. Thanks for my typing class. However, I still use four fingers to type. Thanks for trusting me with my decisions even though you don't always agree with them. Thanks for the freedom to make them regardless of their outcome. Thank you for my voice! You are truly my language and my country.

Apartment 426...

An empty canvas lying on the floor next to the night stand
Ashtray filled with cigarette butts
Curtain drawn, floor covered with specks of colors
Empty bottles of Red Johnny Walker
The stench of dry paints and turpentine
Charcoal pencils covered with grime
Inside the pile on the bed
I saw the artist painted in red
Time, had left its finger print
In apartment four twenty six.

Emu Getachew

Ask Me Again

How did we come to be here, ask me again?
Quietly, resting with our eyes ajar,
intoxicated by each others skin,
we are but silence wrapped in spell,
he lays words in my mouth, slowly nibbling,
with my face inside his eyes... he asked me again,
to love again at that corner bookstore,
same time, same day, same second,
same year...
I say, ask me again, my mirage,
after all when lovers converge,
the sun turns into an ocean.

©Emu Getachew February 2,2010

Emu Getachew

Because I Could Not Stop For Death...

You remember that day, that bright October day
when you my Lord, and my youthful lover argued endlessly
Do you remember that day?
When dawn sung her song of infidelity
interfering with the river's harmony.
I remember that day!
You were fighting over my engagement day
remember what i said?
I said, there is no need to fight My Lord
my father gave me to you
way before he introduced me to my lover
and said to me, my child
he always keeps his promises
rest in peace, my child
in the arm's of Lord Thanatos.

My own translation of Emily Dickinson poem: 'Because i Could Not Stop for Death'

Emu Getachew

Conversation With Jo

We can talk for hours and laugh in between
He respects my words as much as I respect his thinking
There we were choosing human characters from an article
Intrinsically we both chose a man who lavish in infidelity
however insane we both agreed separately
that this simple quest for human character
is not something that we should take casually.

He said, well social norm for the greater good
Even though, I respected his thinking,
I had to examine my own stand
Norm! I said to him with all due respect,
I despise that word for what it represents
I feel caged, slaved, even hanged
just hearing the word I got petrified.
What happened to our will I asked?

He then said primal needs are truthful...
I agreed but then he said, most are repressed
True again, I then said infidelity is a choice
that may not be taken-up by many
then again, he said, envied by so many...what a hypocrisy!
I then said, confinement is neither my style nor my life
To know is to acknowledge your-self
I rather be the outcast knowing my true despair
I always wondered what happens to those of us outside the norm?
Chuckled, I asked are we casualties of humanity...
How many times must we die for one life?
So that we can be in the right socially...

He said artist temperament! I agree but I call it will!
I then said; let me share a secret with you
I have never slept in one city let alone in one bed
I have traveled to several battlegrounds every night in my wake
many nights I have been in the presences of so many willingly
without disturbing the painter in Spain, or the poet in Syria,
or the writer among us, willingly, I have been with them all.
willing without any social restrain
after all, I am trusted with far greater gift such as pain

If I were to follow the norm,
I know I will start fading from my DNA (Dead-Not-Arrived) .

© October 22,2009
work in progress

Emu Getachew

For Those Eyes Only!

Intense in their color, tempting in their shapes
those almond eyes of yours, clandestine in their place
a glimpse is all I need to satisfy my hunger
to waltz with desire and to intoxicate my soul.

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Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!

Wake up!

Smoky gray, loud, and dark clouds

Fresh breeze, green, and black.

Hymn!

Yellow, blue, orange, and red garlands

Ruby, emerald, and sapphire harvest

Stand up!

Turquoise mountains clay of brown

Caves of crystal and beauty in rough.

Walk!

Moving lakes and graceful Oceans

Autumn, fall, spring, and summer

Pain and suffering dismay and laughter.

Chime!

Universal tune- Flute whisper of harmony

Tarnished dreams lustful memory.

Reap!

Incense brunch, trees of life

Bees buzzing advent of time.

Chant!

Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!

Emu Getachew

Habits

When time presents itself and affix to genuineness
While habits allows certainty to become more authentic
In turn knowing gives away to defend routine
So our day to day journey becomes a reality.

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I Am A Transition

Transition...I think I am? I am a progression!
I am the vacancy between the alphabets.
My feet travel silently. Back and forth-side to side
with a blazing desire to transit. Asking who I am?
I am a transition-I reply, not a completion.
But a passage, traveling between the alphabets of time
in self-expedition-Yes, I am transition! Who am I?
Who should I be? Am I transition? I think I am!
I am passage transported by time. As my feet travel
silently between the alphabets-back and
forth and side to side with a flaming desire to
transit- To stop the madness of time.
I am not a completion,
but a transition.
I think I am?
Traveling between the
alphabets of time-Petitioning
self-expedition.

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I Am In My Mind Again...

I can't sleep and I want to know why?
Conversation intense feeling of obscure sanity...
I laugh a lot with him; at least I know that for sure.
other than that, my mind climbs tree of dreams
and my sanity refrain from cumulative abuse...
self indulgence of raw talent... I call it...

I have someone with me that is taking the walk...
Yet, I ask what have I done to meet this train of thoughts?
bundled up in secure cargo
That moves like the lion roaring in the wilderness
kind of scary, but am not.

I am willing to be tamed, reached out, and addressed.
I want to propel my desire to ignite into a flame of success...
was this what I was asked to wait for?
Mind tangled in thoughts of unseen stairs of "I did it ".

I want to go out and shout, ring the bell on dream casualties.
Here I am attaining them one step at a time.
I am in my mind again...let's sleep!
Let's take and chew the day, after all it was a dazzling day...if i may say!

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I Am The Daughter Of The Almighty

I am but a stream between hard rocks
mountains sings for my arrival
while I soar like an eagle.

I am but tranquility and grace
moving effortlessly between now and tomorrow
carrying the stories of the neighborhood.

I am but a stream between rocks
gracefully reflecting the evening moon
and calming the mid afternoon sun.

I am but a stream traveling upward
a walking canvas of God's drawing
no mistakes nor regrets.

I am but his words and his promises
I am a portrait of humanity, humility, grace and forgiveness
I am agape love...I am! Yes, I am the daughter of the Almighty.

Emu Getachew

I Crave Your Eyes, Your Laughter, Your Touch

I crave your eyes, your laughter, your touch
I crave the smile of your eyes
the warmth of your breath
the scent of your eyelids
and the kindness of your touch.

I crave the opening of your lips
the agreement between your smile and your tears
I crave, I crave the voice in your laughter
the melodies of your finger tips
and the dialect of your eyes.

I crave your eyes, your laughter, and your touch
without it, I am the sound of an empty journey
without it, i am the missing petals of spring gardens,
without it, i am the tears of winter clouds,
without it, i am a woman without her skin.

Emu Getachew

-i Loved You In November -

I loved you without knowing you,
I loved you because I saw you in us,
No pride or ego, in which there is no I or you,
I laughed in your mouth,
and slept in my eyes together,
Just short thirty days in November.
My problem is not to love you again,
but to un-love you for the month of December,
and if I love you in January,
I will have to first lose my sight.

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Emu Getachew

I Then Wore His Eyes...

I met him reading the forward on "Voices from Leimert Park: a poetry anthology"
Glued to his words; I wanted to wear his eyes
I searched and searched for his whereabouts
I then purchased a one-way ticket and slept between his words.
Pages after pages his poetry became my sanity
Drinking this marathon of knowing
I came across an image, What a beauty!

I then wore his eyes and saw...

Folds of memoirs,
An antic mahogany well polished and aged,
Eye lids heavy with expression,
Books resting on his shoulder,
His mouth full of "Beat" notes,
He is a graduate of life school
An alumnus of mother earth...

I then wore his soul...

Placed my face on the cold glass
watched "Jazz" floating on the bayou
I carved his name out of my pain,
whispered my want in his absence,
poetry touching my breast,
music kissing my lower lips,
in and out of consciousness,
I welcomed him.

I then wore his eyes...

Poetry, music, religion, humanity all that and more
by the time I finished my conversation
He stayed on the screen and I took him to my country.

dedicated to Bob Kaufman... American Beat poet and surrealist inspired by jazz
music and revolutionist.

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Emu Getachew

If Only...

If only, I could sing, I would have sung for peace.

If only, I could dance, I would have danced for harmony.

If only, I could write, I would have wrote the word sympathy hundred trillion times.

If only, I could sew, I would have sewed a flag of oneness.

If only, I could cook, I would have cooked to eradicate hunger.

If only, I could teach, I would have stamped out illiteracy.

If only, I could draw, I would have removed borders from the world map.

If only, I could sculpt, I would have sculpted away diseases.

If only, I could weld, I would have repaired all the broken relationships.

If only, I could paint, I would have painted million miles with kindness

If only, I could till, I would have planted forgiveness and watched it grow.

If only, I could do all these...

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In The Morning

Many nights, i have helped unbutton your shirt
And let myself come between you and your skin
Yet in the morning, I feel the tears on my pillow
Fully understanding those trips of sorrow.
What more do you wish your highness
other than what I am able to give.

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Ink For My Pain

I serve my pen to feed my flesh and my soul extract honey from the alphabets
I come alive and true, when I write
I have no mirror, no dressing room, no camera,
I know no shame
I wait for no apologies
I skip commas, apostrophes, and I sure ignore exclamation marks
I love me in that place of no rules
my heart an ocean filled with word recipes
And me, wow! the master chef cooking a-b-c-d
as the aroma of words whistling in my kitchen of thoughts
my pen is chopping, peeling, sautéing, basting, frying,
every loss, every disappointment, every fear, every love
and serve as an ink to my pain.

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Legal Immigrant

I am an immigrant
quisling with various flags
when I enter my hut
I wear my ego and listen to CNN.
I've wondered many times
about my lyric of thoughts
is it in my flag tongue...?
Or is it in my new found love
legal immigrant.

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Emu Getachew

Liquid Love

Sailing down the river named serenity
ushered by the laughter of summer wind
emerging and fading from my senses
are time defying moments captured by my mind's eyes
fast moving screens, fading screens, still images, multiple pauses
then I stopped and saw "I" outside my body,
high on liquid love.

© Emu Getachew October 13,2009

Emu Getachew

Lust

It's like a loud gale...
scorching hundred miles an hour
leaving bruises at the brim of mother-earth
it never stops be it twelve noon or midnight
but knows how to growl and wreck my high.

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Maebel

Drifted thoughts, drenched with confusion
stood naked from within
patiently removing each wave
rupturing each thought
floating, evaporating quickly
with fear of drowning
examining each wave
stepping on each veil of water
Claming each ebb tide...Maebel

Maebel...is an Amharic(language spoken by most people of Ethiopia) word for storm.

Emu Getachew

Maybe, Just Maybe

Democracy was dressed with glitter of humility
And the moon sitting on a rocking chair, comforting baby equality
People gathered to pay tribute to his tapestry of words
Standing on the platform of oneness
Amidst several interruptions... I know his legacy will live
Maybe! Just Maybe! One Day ...Hope will endure the dream of my countryman...

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My Ankle Bracelet

I am free at heart, I kowtow to no rules
Today, I try to change and bear relationship for two
that love has tailored for me carefully
but I tried to run away
However, I had stopped
and wrapped my fear with his fragrance
and walked over and wore my sandals
I then looked around and saw nothing in my space
with tears in my heart, I took off the noise making jewel from my legs
slowly, I walked over and saw his eyes; stitching with amazement moments and
wishes together
so, I took my last alone breath and took a plunge into our world
knowing that I can sail without hesitation and anchor with certainty...

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My Soul Knows You...

Everything carries me to you,
and my soul knows you,
all my life, I've been dancing to your stories,
with you, nights waltz in lucid space,
and the moon becomes seasons.

To kiss you is to watch death at its best,
every part of me goes into stillness,
and then, your breath summons my veins,
to replace my platelets with yours,
slowly everything changes...
Yes, all yesterdays before you.

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Emu Getachew

On Sale

Nationality forced sale
twenty-five percent before the holiday
seventy- five percent after the holiday
fifty-five percent during the holiday
abbreviated first name and new last name
here is your new middle name and no name
what a deal! what a deal!

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She Is My Town...

She is the reason that I am in now,
she is the silence between my words
She is the eternal laughter that I grew to respect;
she is my humility and my humanity.
She is the conductor of my life essence.
She is my alchemist...S-h-e i-s my mother!

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Songs Of The Sky

His voice,
the sound of summer cloud
His walk,
forgotten music notes
His eyes,
brush stroke of kindness
His body,
an arranged symphony
His touch,
scent of gardenia
Summoned by his spirit
I bear him like the songs of the sky.

Dedicated to my younger brother, who got killed violently in October,1995 may
you continue to rest in the songs of the sky!

Emu Getachew

Tattered Spirit

Standing naked at the altar
Only wearing the shawl of dream
Bewitched by the scene
He calls out for the almighty
And asks for God's divine clothing.
He says, Lord, I have been naked from within
Just wearing a tattered spirit and empty dreams
He says, Lord; dress me with your elegance and
Sew my dream with brilliant ray of light. Lord!
He says, don my spirit with the tread of beauty and
Lord; weave my nature forever with love.

First Published 1999 @
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Tuesday Is For My Other Lover

I don't want to love you on Tuesday
Tuesday is for my other lover
so pick another day.

I don't want to love you on Wednesday
the day is still sleeping
and the moon is all I got.

I don't want to love you on Monday
the clouds sing the blues
and I have to play in the band.

I don't want to love you on Saturday
streets turn to meat markets
and people dance in the alley.

I don't want to love on Thursday
Thursday is his birthday
and we paint our body all day.

I don't want to love on Sunday
Saturday was a busy day
so pick another day.

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Emu Getachew

Unfinished Business

The forest fire, sneaking up with silence suggestions and
Exposing each branch to its flame
Communicating time passed; time gained; time promised
Between yesterday and tomorrow.
Triumphing solitude and lost time
Running to grab the residue of that time.
Where youth was like the autumn breeze
Fresh, seductive, rewarding, innocent and child
The forest fire that was ignited by time
Is begging for the rain to come.

First published 1999@
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Unfinished...

His conversation is like a painter's brush
Each...stroke...takes
Two hours and thirty six seconds!

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When I Love A Man...

When I love a man, I speak no words nor make sentences
When I love a man, I understand the language of the moon
and the laughter of the sun.

When I love a man, I wear the sea
Blow kisses to the wild flowers
and make date with the stars.

When I love a man, I seldom close my eyes
Nights forget to come and days become songs
months have no meanings.

When I love a man, I see poetry everywhere
I welcome my paint brush, my pen
and I waltz with various shades of colors.

When I love a man, I knead dough from precious stones
sweater from dark liquorish chocolate
and furniture from silent moments.

When I love a man, time pose
trains tango, airplanes scribble on the sky
the tree branches play the cello
while the drum learn how to whistle.

When I love a man, my feet have wings
My tongue writes music
I no longer desire to talk.

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Word Gown...

I woke up this morning dressed in a wedding gown
Jeweled with lexis's such as vow, companionship and docile
Neck line bejeweled with nouns, pronouns' and syntaxes'
And the stitches with adjectives and the lining with an apostrophes
This timeless gown is a complete sentence
I must have slither into it in my wake
While inhaling the words of Nizar Qabanni.

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Emu Getachew

You And I...

I am consciousness

You are just

I am time

You are freedom

I am birth

You are water

I am soil

You are garden

I am music

You are dance

I am faith

You are forgiveness

I am humanity

You are peace

I am nations

You are the world

I am sentences

You are books

I am poetry.

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Emu Getachew

You Man Of The Other...

Your have tainted my sanity
and my body throbs for your partiality...
You, man of the other
and I, a woman of another...
I am in awe by your-Mystery
Infected by your- Silence
promises cradling my being
sipping dream in the morning...
you nurture my existence in trance
by feeding wrinkled thoughts of lust
funny, I scrambled for it to last
because, I miss you while I am near you
and long for him when I am within you.

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