

**KENYAN WRITERS
PUBLISHED BY NOVELTY FICTION**



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Six Kenyan writers, their books, and their views

What started in 2010 as two periodicals – “Novelty – Stories & Perspectives” (magazine) and “Novelty – The Literary Showcase” (newsletter) – eventually became Novelty Fiction, the independent publisher of books, e-books, audiobooks, magazines and more. Our first anthology titled “A Touch of Mystique,” published in 2013, included authors from the United States, Britain, and Ireland. Today, we have almost 100 titles in print, featuring about 45 authors from North America, Europe, Asia, and Africa.

OLUSOLA AKINWALE (Nigeria) and ABIGAIL GEORGE (South Africa) were the first Africans to knock on our door. Both have been instrumental in attracting many other authors – primarily but not exclusively from Africa. As of April 2026, we have published the fictional works, poetry collections, and memoirs of 18 African authors, plus the collective essays of 16 African contributors.

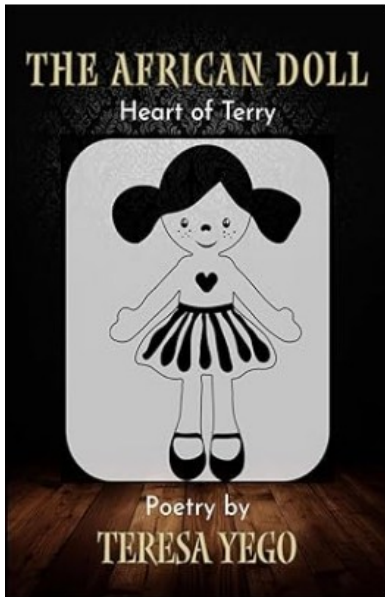


VIVIENNE KAPKARICH was introduced to us by Abigail George. Vivienne submitted her comprehensive collection of poems with a central theme.

“*Eminent Desire*” is a book of plain-spoken poems that tell stories of fun, romance, fantasies, sadness and fear. We experience different desires in our daily lives. The desire to love and be loved, the desire that brings passion, hope, joy, trust, empathy, and also the desire that comes with sadness, hate, pain, and doubts. These desires might or might not be extravagant, but what makes them irrefutable is their profound and outstanding nature. “In love” desires bring passion, the “Doubt” desire comes with disintegration. “The monster” brings a

desire that causes pain and sadness, and the desire for “Staying positive” brings courage and strength.

“*Eminent Desire*” was published in September 2023, an illustrated version in 2024. Vivienne designed the cover idea for the first book, completed by Remy Francis (Dubai). The illustrations for the second book were created by the publisher. Both works have been showcased and discussed in videos, a brochure, and the official author interview. A number of physical copies were printed and shipped to Kenya.

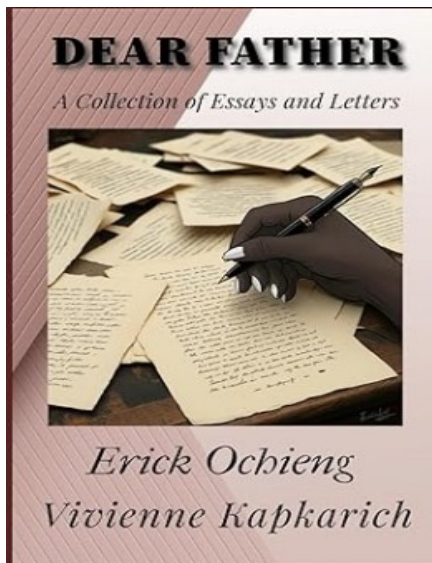


TERESA YEGO was introduced to us by Vivienne Kapkarich. She submitted her thematic collection of poems.

“The African Doll” poetically explores a range of emotions including love, hate, and confusion. People commonly experience different forms of abuse, whether physical or emotional. Victims often hesitate to speak out due to fear of being judged or labeled as liars. Experiencing heartbreak doesn’t necessarily mean we fell in love with the wrong person. Heartbreak may cause intense emotional turmoil and desperation, and will in some cases lead to substance abuse as a means of escape from reality. Our choice of partner may be seen as unacceptable by society at times, but love is beyond our control and

inherently beautiful.

The illustrated book was published in August 2024. It was featured and discussed in videos and a brochure, which includes an author interview. A number of physical copies were printed and shipped to Kenya.



ERICK OTIENO was introduced to us by Vivienne Kapkarich. The two of them submitted an outline for an anthology comprising essays with a central theme.

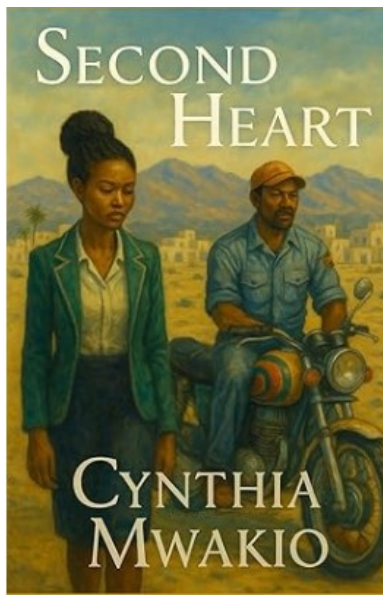
A diverse group of eighteen adults from Africa and beyond took this unique opportunity to write a letter to, or an essay about, their father – whether deceased or living. Each letter or essay is candid, sincere and deeply personal.

“Dear Father” was published in September 2024. A number of physical copies were printed and shipped to Kenya.



FORAM DESAI was introduced to us by Vivienne Kapkarich. She submitted her collection of inspirational poems, subdivided into three chapters. The poems beautifully and sometimes dramatically captures key moments in the poet's life, ultimately forming pieces in a birth-death-and-rebirth cycle.

“Souldier On” was published in February 2025. It was featured and discussed in an introduction video and an author interview.



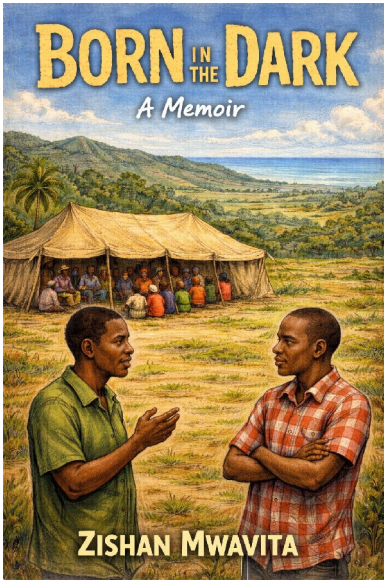
CYNTHIA MWAKIO was introduced to us by Vivienne Kapkarich. She submitted her drama/crime novella.

Amanda, a receptionist in her mid-twenties, falls quick and hard for Mwashighadi, a small business owner in his early thirties. Actually, he spotted her first, and openly finds her attractive. He is handsome, funny. She is beautiful, ambitious, intelligent.

The relationship is still in its tentative phase when Mwashighadi exhibits a dark side that quickly gets him in serious trouble. Amanda stands by him, but the partner of her best friend is quick to spot their vulnerability and take advantage of the situation. A complex love quadrangle is in the making.

“Second Heart,” a contemporary novella, exhibits the opportunities and pitfalls of living in a prosperous, modern Kenyan urban area. First and foremost, it is about young professionals’ struggles to build meaningful relationships.

“Second Heart was published in August 2025. It has been featured and discussed in an introduction video and an author interview.



ZISHAN MWAVITA was introduced to us by Vivienne Kapkarich. He submitted a memoir capturing his experiences as a young advocate for equal educational opportunities.

Family, faith, hard academic work, and loyal sponsors contributed to giving Zishan Mwavita and his brother the educational opportunities they needed and craved.

Once settled into university life, they returned home during a semester break and started the local volunteer activities that would eventually develop into a structured movement.

“Born in the Dark: A Memoir” captures every important moment from the author's early childhood, through family struggles, academic challenges, and daring humanitarian work, until the present day. It shows us the rewards and pitfalls of building a movement from scratch, driven by faith and idealism.

“Born in the Dark” is scheduled for publication in April 2026.

An Interview with Vivienne Kapkarich

On September 8, 2023, Vivienne Kapkarich submitted an unpublished poetry collection to Novelty Fiction. Proofreading and light editing ensued. The work, “Eminent Desire,” was published in paperback format the following week via our imprint Abigail George Books and in Kindle e-book format about 3 weeks later.

NOVELTY FICTION – Your love poems are written in the first person, and you address someone else – a current or former lover – who is unnamed. Are the poems rooted in your personal experiences, or does the collection include some imaginary scenarios?

VIVIENNE KAPKARICH – Eminent Desire is a semi-fictional work comprising a collection of poems, including love poems, that are rooted in personal experiences, acquaintances, environment, and surroundings. The profound emotions evoked during instances of desire enabled me to harness my creativity and compose from a distinctive perspective. My literary offerings encapsulate my deepest yearnings and the activities I envisioned engaging in with my beloved, expertly blending memories and fantasies into an alluring concoction. These desires transported us to an imaginary realm, where we could escape reality and experience it vicariously. Whether reciprocated or not, my compositions remain a bold expression of my imagination and experiences. My love poems are derived from a place of assurance, drawing inspiration from both personal encounters and hypothetical circumstances borne from my surroundings.

NOVELTY FICTION – Is it likely that someone out there among the readers will believe that a poem was written about them? If so, how do you feel about that situation?

VIVIENNE KAPKARICH – I strongly believe that one of my admirers, who I happen to have a crush on, will stumble upon these poems and interpret them as if they were written for them. The experiences we shared have been the foundation of my work. It would bring me immense joy to know that they felt the emotions conveyed in my words, independent of other factors. Such recognition would make me feel valued and appreciated.

Connectivity does not end there. As I wrote, I envisioned my reader connecting deeply with the message in these poems. I am confident that my work will evoke powerful emotions in my readers, leading them toward a better understanding of their inner selves. Though I may not know my readers personally, I feel a deep sense of appreciation when my art resonates with them. Creating a connection with my reader was my top priority, and I am certain that my work will help them visualize and embrace their emotions. I am confident that my evocative poetry will leave a lasting impact on my readers, as it helps them become more familiar with their emotions and themselves.

NOVELTY FICTION – The chosen title “Eminent Desire” and your description on the back cover indicate that this work is a compilation of poems about different kinds of desire. How many poems had you written before this theme emerged, and did the concept inspire you to write additional poems?

VIVIENNE KAPKARICH – Earlier this year, I had over 80 poems, each with a title. However, I did not title all of them at the time. When my colleague and an author approached me to publish my work, I had no title for the book. I had to read my work again to find a suitable title. I wanted to make sure the

title accurately represented what my work was about. Amidst this, as I was writing "Week twenty-eight," I had lost two people in the same week over a span of 6 years.

Later, I began to imagine a conversation with "Death," as I had a lot of burning questions about it. Then it became clear to me that passion is what drives things forward, even in the case of death. That's how the title of my book came to me – "Even Death Has an Eminent Desire." I believe that death's desires are fulfilled when we suffer, hence the title. By that time, I was confidently writing one of the last poems among the published ones, titled "Death."

The concept Eminent Desire has truly inspired me, and I am excited to have created something that resonates with my readers. I have received a lot of curious questions from my fans about why I chose this title, which has further motivated me to continue writing. I believe that desires, whether real or imagined, have a significant impact on our emotional experiences, and I am confident in my ability to explore this theme in my future work. In fact, I have been considering doing a spin-off of Eminent Desire, and am eager to see where this creative journey takes me.

NOVELTY FICTION – For you personally, what makes poetry the most effective and suitable means of expression when writing about this theme?

VIVIENNE KAPKARICH – As an ambivert, I have come to embrace the power of my alone time when words flow effortlessly through my mind. I used to question why these words were present in my thoughts, but one day during my solitude, I decided to put pen to paper and began to write. As I wrote, I discovered a sense of ease and comfort that came with expressing my thoughts on paper. Over time, writing became a therapeutic outlet for me, allowing me to present my imagination poetically and share my mind without fear of judgment. I now confidently use poetry as my preferred medium of expression, not only because it is enjoyable but also because it serves as a valuable tool for self-discovery and personal growth.

NOVELTY FICTION – Your style tends to be straightforward. Do any of your poems contain subtle hints and hidden meanings? Do you think readers will come closer to understanding you by reading the collection more than once?

VIVIENNE KAPKARICH – My poems are masterpieces crafted with intricate subtlety and profound meaning. For those who appreciate poetry, each line contains a wealth of intriguing interpretations waiting to be discovered. Even if the initial read only captures the surface meaning, multiple readings will reveal the true depth and significance of the words.

NOVELTY FICTION – Anything else you would like our readers to know about you or your work?

VIVIENNE KAPKARICH – I was raised in an environment where education was greatly valued, but I felt that its scope was limited. Despite my strong passion for art, it seemed like there was no room for it. However, I didn't give up; instead, I turned inward and channeled my energy into reading. Among the novels I read, my favorite was "Things Fall Apart" by Chinua Achebe. What fascinated me the most was the part where Eneke the bird says, "Men have learned to shoot without missing their mark, and I have learned to fly without perching on a twig." Although I had never written poems, I was always drawn to the art of poetry.

Five years ago, I reread the book and searched for the meaning behind the title "Things Fall Apart." This led me to the poem "The Second Coming" by W.B. Yeats, which evoked something in me. Then I

came across "The Road Not Taken" by Robert Frost, which was used to explain a situation in another book. These two poems sparked a passion in me for poetry, and I wanted to learn more. That's when I stumbled upon Emily Dickinson's work, which fascinated me even more. With all three authors, I wrote my first poem, "Scars of Change." It was then I realized that I had found my destiny through their books, and the future had me in store as a poet. This journey led me to write two more poems inspired by my life in relation to one of the mentioned authors.

I am confident that my readers can recognize the inspiration from these authors in my poems. My journey in poetry was not something I pursued consciously, but I was connected to it through different authors. They evoked some poetic art in me, and I believe that my success is just as much theirs. I urge my readers to make reading a habit, and they will find their path in this world, just like I did. I'm sure they will be able to connect to my work and find their own path as well.

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An interview with Teresa Yego

N.F. – *Is poetry your preferred means of expression, and do you write in any genres besides poetry?*

T.Y. – Yes, poetry is my preferred means of expression. Besides poetry, I write scripts – not to express myself but to share my unique art.

N.F. – *Can you explain the inspiration or other motivation you feel as you sit down to write a poem?*

T.Y. – In most cases, I want to relieve my head of the chaos within. However, what motivates me the most is that there are people going through similar experiences who are afraid of sharing, so I share on their behalf.

N.F. – *The title poem of your collection identifies the family member who molested you as a young girl. Would his sincere apology have given you second thoughts about publishing it? Why/why not?*

T.Y. – A simple apology would ease the pain but not the trauma. I might have forgiven him, but I would still have published the poem. We are taught silence, but people should speak up for the sake of those who are afraid, if not to create awareness that the troubles start at home.

N.F. – *Do you view this book as a collection of African poems, or do you have a broader perspective on themes, style, message, target audience etc.?*

T.Y. – The African Doll is not just a collection of African poems. From the thematic concerns, style of writing, and message, the book can suit anyone anywhere because we go through similar experiences regardless of color, gender or social standing. I have spoken as an African through my book, but somebody else on a different continent might have done something similar.

An Interview with Forum Desai

NOVELTY FICTION – Our readers will be very interested in knowing what three countries you feel closest to right now, and why.

FORAM DESAI – I'd definitely pick New Zealand, Kenya, and India. Kenya is my home country, and it has been one of the most grounding yet abundant lands I have ever connected with. My time in India occurred while I transitioned from being 18 to 25 years old, and played a huge part in shaping who I am today. I learnt some of the biggest lessons in life there, and built some lasting relationships that I still carry with me. NZ has been my dream country ever since my neighbours moved here 17 years ago, and I have always wanted to live in this country. Unlike other cases of expectation-versus-reality, NZ has been more beautiful in every respect than I could ever have imagined, and I am so grateful to be living here.

NOVELTY FICTION – Please explain the vision behind the front cover image of your recently published book “Souldier On: A Collection of Inspirational Poetry for the Soul.” It is a serene painting of a woman facing the tranquil sea, the sun low on the horizon, her arms folded above her head.

During the publication process, you made it clear that you preferred such an image as opposed to one that also captured the darker and more difficult poems within your collection. Why did you prioritize in this fashion?

FORAM DESAI – The image of the woman facing the tranquil sea, with the sun just setting across an oceanfront, deeply resonates with a time in my life when I was at a crossroads, a period where I truly took to deep introspection and self-discovery. Most of the poems in this book were written during that time. The image is meant to symbolize the true message of this book - “souldier on” - taking one step at a time, and looking towards the sea of opportunities that life constantly provides. I opted for a more inspirational image rather than one that captured the more difficult poems in my collection, so as to leave my readers with some inspiration. To me personally, the image translates as a reminder that there is always something to look forward to just above the horizon, if only we can find the strength within ourselves to face it and move towards it.

NOVELTY FICTION – Your collection is subdivided into three so-called “chapters,” each consisting of ten poems. Is it fair to say that these chapters reflect a certain progression, namely from various challenges and difficulties a person may encounter, to a time for reflection, and then to a time for constructive contributions to other humans?

Did this structure make it easier for you to complete the collection?

Do you think that this structured approach may have served as a form of self-defense against negativity, namely that hardship and unpleasant experiences are not dwelled upon but merely used as fuel for self-improvement and personal growth?

FORAM DESAI – Yes, that is exactly how I wanted the sequence of poems to flow. Chapter One titled “Shadows” includes the poems that were written with difficult themes and hold within them a kind of a messy unraveling, which leads up to the poems in Chapter Two titled “Reflections.” In this chapter,

the poems settle into a more wondrous state, connecting with themes from nature and reflecting off these themes to begin true self-discovery. Finally, Chapter Three titled “Awakenings” holds space for the poems that are meant to invoke a sense of true inspiration in other souls, symbolizing the end of one journey and the beginning of the next.

Interestingly, I had most of these poems written between the age of 15 and 28 years old. So when I prepared the first draft for this collection, I just selected poems I thought would match the overarching theme of the book title “Souldier On.” After deciding on 30 poems, I realized I wanted to segregate them based on these three chapter themes, because they truly mirror my creative journey in how I originally wrote the poems.

While I agree that this structured approach could serve as a self-defense against negativity, I also believe the chapter themes - shadows, reflections, and awakenings - are a continuous cycle. I think I have gone through these phases in a spiral over time, again and again, each time emerging with a new sense of purpose; and so I'd like to think my readers may also connect with these phases in the same order - because there is always some learning, strength, or inspiration to draw from difficult times in life.

NOVELTY FICTION – Your collection includes a number of thought-provoking and, daresay, original poems. In the opening poem, you write about making an ally out of pain. You also describe experiences with anxiety, and hypothesize that nostalgia may happen because a person misses feeling like they once did. Then you refreshingly introduce the idea that the only key to survival may be to relax and give up resisting an unstoppable force. Presumably, you did not grab these themes out of thin air; what specifically led you to discover such things?

FORAM DESAI – I think the inspiration for the poems in this collection that touch on the more raw, painful themes of the human experience were heavily drawn from my personal life experiences and the experiences shared by some of my loved ones who truly found their way out of some deeply complicated life situations. I believe each and every one of us has faced difficult times in some respect as we go through life's journey, and when I look back in search of the root ideas for most of the poems that touch upon the themes of loss, pain, anxiety, or betrayal, I realize they come from some past experience where I have been deeply affected and had to find my way out. The poems evolving around nostalgia and anxiety specifically come from the times in my life when I moved out of my home country and found myself alone for the first time in a foreign land. It is interesting because I am of Indian origin and grew up with a lot of the influence of Indian culture, but when I moved from my home country (Kenya) to India for my bachelors' studies at 18, I had never felt more displaced or more out of place during my initial years of living there. This made me truly introspect on some of the experiences that came with this move, and the result took shape in some of the poems you see in my book.

NOVELTY FICTION – Let us return to where we started this interview: Geography and nationality.

As a young woman who has lived for some time in three different countries situated on three different continents, you must know firsthand what leaving one country behind to begin a new life in another feels like. What made the deepest impression on you, and do you think it was worth it?

In our interpretation, your collection promotes an interesting form of individualism, where the

individual is free and in focus, but also keenly aware of their relative unimportance compared with humanity as a whole, nature, and the universe. Do you believe that striking this balance is essential to a fulfilling life? Furthermore, do you think that your visions of spirituality and surrender to the forces of nature are equally relevant to all people regardless of where in the world and in what surroundings they live?

FORAM DESAI – This is a truly interesting question, and one I have thought about a lot personally. It's hard to decide on any one country that left the deepest impression on me because I carry so many of the learnings, experiences, and memories from my time in each of these countries with me no matter where I am physically. I strongly believe in destiny, especially when it comes to the land you are destined to live in. I feel like it might have been written in my destiny somehow for things to follow the path they did, which made me experience moving from one place to another. Kenya is my home and the land that gave me my childhood, my safety net, and my understanding of what the world is like growing up. Moving to India at 18 opened a whole new doorway to dreams, self-identity, friendships that I will cherish for life, and experiences that broke me until they made me who I am. Moving to New Zealand came much later at 27, but it is particularly interesting because this is the country I wanted to move to since I turned 13 and first heard about it. In some ways, it is the only experience of my life where I held a blind dream without really knowing anything about the land in practicality; and after coming here and living here, I was gifted with a reality that went far beyond anything I could have imagined - literally, a dream come true. I have a strong attachment to all three countries, and I am so grateful for my experiences and time in all of them.

A lot of my thoughts and beliefs about spirituality stem from my journey into yoga and into ancient Hindu literature and philosophy. From personal experience, and my own spiritual awakening, my biggest realization was "surrendering to the flow." Of course, I believe an individual must proactively work towards their dreams and their goals, but I found it was at the moment where I stopped taking myself too seriously, stopped holding on to fixed ideas too much, and stopped resisting change, that I somehow flowed ahead in life through obstacles and challenges. There is something about giving up any resistance to change and surrendering to the flow in life, balanced with working towards a goal, that has been working for me ever since I accepted this realization. So for the balance you mention for a fulfilling life conveyed through my poetry, I completely believe in this because it has worked for me. Everyone has their own spiritual path and their own belief system, but I do feel this approach is something that can help anyone no matter where they are from.

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An interview with Cynthia Mwakio

NOVELTY FICTION – The young people in your novella “Second Heart” all lead fairly independent lives. One could say that they are young professionals who prioritize work and personal goals over family to some extent. Was it a deliberate choice for you to focus on this segment of the population, as opposed to conventional families?

CYNTHIA MWAKIO – Since the book revolves around individuals who are emotionally driven, young and vibrant – with an invigorating vibe – I imagined incorporating the conventional family setup would dissolve or break the continuity of the storyline, hence interrupting the flow. The chosen approach is aimed at making the reader hyped up and fully captivated.

NOVELTY FICTION – Amanda, your main character, seems to take the middle ground. She is hardworking and fairly ambitious on one side, friendly and romantic on the other. Also, we are under the impression that she enjoys being feminine, wanting to look her best with fancy clothes etc. Do you consider her a role model, as opposed to - say - a housewife or a completely career-oriented woman?

CYNTHIA MWAKIO – I would definitely consider her a role model. Amanda is a young woman with ambitions, someone with the aim of attaining the goals she has set. Fortunately or unfortunately, during her career journey, she comes across Mwashighadi – someone who seems to shift her focus, where we get to see her loving, caring, and compassionate side. Nonetheless, she also exudes the character of a housewife, where we get to see her dreaming of starting a family with him; and that to the extent where she pictures them having a child together. Her caring character is so motherly. On the other hand, she is also a career-oriented woman who has goals set by herself and determination to achieve them.

NOVELTY FICTION – Your novella seems to place emphasis on the friendship that develops between Amanda and her boyfriend Mwash, as opposed to a physical relationship between them. Do you feel that their relationship is something very beautiful that reflects your own values?

CYNTHIA MWAKIO – Yes, I believe any relationship is essential and workable, and can be maintained even without much physical interaction. Their minimal physical interaction puts them in a place where they both crave, having a deeper desire for each other. I personally would say that a relationship that is truly genuine and has minimal or limited physical interaction puts couples into a state where they develop an insatiable desire for each other. This explains why, whenever Mwashighadi and Amanda meet, they don't want to let go of each other: Time apart creates a stronger mutual desire. As the saying goes: “Absence makes the heart grow fonder.”

NOVELTY FICTION – Please broadly describe the gender roles in contemporary Kenya. For example, are more women pursuing higher education and careers than before, and are they treated equally in various contexts?

CYNTHIA MWAKIO – Kenya is among the fastest-growing countries in Africa. Its rapid growth has influenced women to become participants. In ancient times, women were not exposed to education. Their key roles revolved around household activities, childbearing and looking after the young ones, as well as ensuring a relatable social environment. In recent times, women have been influenced and empowered through acquiring educational skills, and are now exposed farther away from their native roles of being housewives and managing households, namely to excelling in education, politics and business. Women are today occupying positions mostly dominated by men, something that was rare and almost impossible to acquire or imagine in past decades.

Fortunately, in recent times, rapid growth in Kenya and Africa at large has positively impacted women by enabling them to contribute and actively participate in shaping their countries' social, economical and political growth. Even though women are excelling in different fields, they still face challenges in navigating and facing persistent inequalities. Especially when it comes to leadership, women are still being undermined and deprived of attaining such roles. A good example was when one of our own, well-known female political leaders aspired to become the next president of Kenya. She had the leadership potential, but things didn't work well for her. Africa, and I believe the world at large, has placed women on a certain level where they can take a dominant position; and yet, leadership roles remain elusive for them. This is sad but very true and evident to all.

NOVELTY FICTION – Your novella has a spontaneous energy, like seeing goodness in people and in life. Does this writing style reflect your own outlook?

CYNTHIA MWAKIO – Yes definitely, I am an individual who not only sees good in people but notices people 's potential and capabilities in different respects.

NOVELTY FICTION – What are your hopes and expectations as far as being read in Kenya, in other African countries, and elsewhere around the world?

CYNTHIA MWAKIO – Well, I have been having mixed feelings about it. Everybody has a different view, outlook and perception of every written article or other content one creates, and definitely no one delivers something that will be positively embraced or negatively taken by everybody. Some will have a positive view upon it, and vice versa. I am confident that some people, possibly even most people, will be positively encouraged or inspired. Either way, I am open to any feedback, which will become a point of reference for my future work, if any.

NOVELTY FICTION – Anything else you would like to share with our readers?

CYNTHIA MWAKIO – I would like to encourage people to learn to embrace seeing the good in people, pointing out their areas of potential, as opposed to bringing people down. If something is not right, let it be pointed out straightforwardly without sugarcoating. I know that mankind doesn't love to be corrected, but corrections are good to the wise because they help you navigate better in your future endeavors. If something is good, let it be encouraged; if something is negative, let it be pointed out. Let's call a spade a spade, not a big spoon.

The other thing is: I personally believe that everything we learn, hear, experience and perceive has some positive and negative ramifications, and there are pros and cons to every decision and every choice we make. Wisdom is a virtue every individual should desire to attain, as it can help you understand and decipher hidden meanings. That is very vital indeed.

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