

2010 NIBF LITERARY AWARDS POETRY WINNER

# FLIGHTS OF POETIC FANCY

A COLLECTION OF POEMS

VINCENT DE PAUL

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*A collection of poems*

VINCENT DE PAUL

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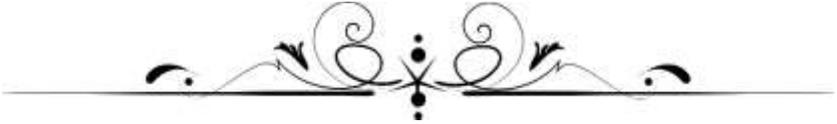
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*For*

*The (un)fallen heroes of (un)just wars.*

Patriots (politicians) dream of waging wars  
For the young men to die in (for a red ribbon);  
They talk of dying (and not killing) for their country.



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# Love Affair

*Love, an emotion of immense joy yet great sorrow*





## Bad Love

The hugs  
The strokes  
The caresses  
All the love  
When small  
Were all lies  
Lies, lies, and lies  
Of love  
And concern—  
You're never loved.



## Broken Heart

I mourn the loss of a friend  
and curse the senseless fiend  
for never more will he smile  
nor together jog the mile.

The broken heart where love thrived  
is hurt, laden with bereave,  
Covered with grief like the face of a terrorist hid in a mask.  
Over her going he weeps  
He may never be himself.

He thinks of the empty promises  
like the hope of eggs laid but never hatched.  
He will never hear of her flute voice again,  
the gentle tap, the loving touch—  
It is history with the slamming of the door.



## I Am Love

I have lived for aeons, never died even once  
Reincarnation isn't in the cosmic plan.  
Despite the challenges, I persist when all fail,  
I make people happy, source of their joy;  
Mine when they are happy, and laughing,  
Yet I hurt them often, not that I want to.  
I whimper at their sorrow, as they pain  
From the cutting deep of my sword;  
Panacea is not survival, or revival  
But consistence, never persistence.

I am mystery of history, writers pen my story  
Poets turn me to verse, rhyme from time to dime  
Actors sell me on screens, musicians through lyrics;  
Bereaved call me dirge, curse me senseless fiend  
Yet I am the way of life, the fabric of humanity  
The bane of friendship, abode of the frail men  
The poison of Cupid's arrows, love I am.



## I'm Lonely

*And God said, it is not good for man to be alone  
I will make him a companion.*

I close my hands about my cheeks,  
Every day and night for weeks;  
Let cold tears roll from my eyes,  
Watch them pool my bed and turn to ice;  
I hear distant sounds, and the rain  
Mourning; speaking of my soul's pain.

In the study is the one I love,  
Buried in the books he craves;  
Sounds I grew up with are now silence.  
I'm so tired of the occasional pretence;  
I want him to come and touch me,  
Be one like mixture of rice and seed of sesame.

He is learned, a master of many arts,  
But lacks words for his acts;  
Says with books he's got no better friend  
My love to me has turned fiend,  
I am so lonely in this cold bed  
I wish God forbade books and love

My loneliness has become a sad song.  
I mourn. I allow my voice to chop  
With the rhythm of the dark night:  
So harsh I contemplate flight

This loneliness is deep as the ocean  
I will it to go away so much.



## Dream Woman

A woman of sweet decadence  
Satisfying her is pleasure and sentence;  
I anticipate and hold without release  
Crave her wicked imagination,  
Soaring on clouds of ecstasy;

She's endowed with other amusements,  
Stories never told by the fairies;  
Sings in a voice birds envy,  
She's the world's best ballerina  
And a chef the French seek.

I fell for her charm  
Ebbbed into her flowing rhythm,  
Golden nights, silver mornings  
Days, weeks and months  
Lost in a haze of heavenly bliss;

I have no intention of leaving, ever,  
I've no intention of letting go forever;  
But I know I have to, someday—  
Forever is denied to mortal man.



## Gillian's Body

Gillian's body is beautiful  
He loves it so.  
He devours her mouth greedily  
Feeds on the lust of her lips  
Nibbles her earlobes  
Hickeys her neck  
And sucks and pulls her breasts.

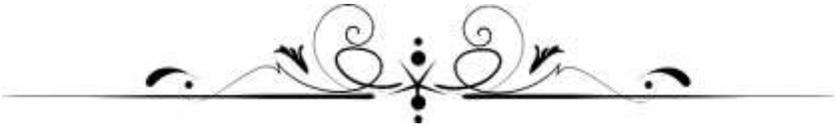
She wets a finger and draws where the ocean is  
Tells him to kiss her there, mark territory that isn't his.

Her hands are linen, and fine satin  
He kisses each knuckle; his hands are slow but urgent  
A web of fingers finding places to own Gillian's body;  
They find themselves alone in the night  
Feasting on each other's lust, conquering territories with their  
mouths  
And they dream of days together.

# Army and Wars

*The military don't start wars. Politicians start wars!*

**William Westmoreland**





## **We're Soldiers**

We're soldiers, peacemakers  
We're soldiers, warmongers  
We're soldiers, angels of death  
We're soldiers, agents of hope  
    Men of integrity and discipline  
    Accused of atrocities;  
    Defend the country  
    Watched by vile people.

We're professionals  
Epitomes of discipline  
    never riot nor demonstrate  
Never discredit our nation  
Never disgrace the nation  
Sacrificed by our nation  
    on the altars of patriotism and duty.



## The Girl I Am

Birds in their little nests will agree  
I am one girl so free.  
I don't sing like a lark  
Or chirp like a cricket,  
I whistle like a boy.

Sisters brand me unladylike  
I'm growing up, they say,  
I hate to think that I have to  
Be a woman—wife, mother:  
It makes my head twirl.  
*So bad enough to be a girl*  
I'm so disappointed in my being one.

I have to stay at home  
In charge of dishes and dusters,  
Dad's away in the army.  
I do not like the girl in me  
I should be with him  
Fighting, defending the nation.

I play brother to all the girls  
The brother they never had.  
I've defied all convention

They call me tomboy  
I should have been a boy  
The woman in me, the girl I am  
Overwhelms me wit' gall.



## Army Lover

*To all girls out there: when you see the soldiers coming,  
run for cover, you'll need it.*

When the spell was cast  
And something as sweet as love  
Was known to mine heart,  
I wished the days would last.  
Astonished they went fast and far  
From my arms thou hast taken;  
My spirit, my song,  
By commitment to duty  
And service to the nation.  
I wish the army's at thy volition  
For sweet satisfaction  
That forever I'm with thee.

Hither from home afar, soldier boy,  
I bid thee come  
My love afar in the silver moon  
Born of roses, fed on dew  
Wish thou come home soon.  
Thoust tire not of camp tentage life  
Whence thine sweet arms thou love  
Are dying, longing for thy presence?

Come thee home with elfin speed  
My spirit, my song, don't get me wrong  
Tomorrow's an everlasting time to wait.



## The Army Family

*Mom, when would dad come home?  
Does he really love us?*

O sweetie, dad would come home  
But not for months, and he really loves us, baby,  
It's for us he's away  
Along he shall come  
When the time comes.

*All that sleeping in tents  
Eating tasteless canned food  
And drinking from tin mugs,  
As he tells us,  
Must be very nasty.*

Dad enjoys what he does, it's for us, baby  
He misses us, don't fret, or forget  
Dad's fine, home he will come.

*Mom, it seems so long  
Can't wait to see him  
I think of him by day  
Pray for him all night  
I miss him so.*

Dad will come home, honey  
He wants you to be strong  
Conquer your fears bravely  
He'd be prouder and fonder of you  
When he comes home.



## Mother's Sorrow

*To my sons: when the army comes calling, bury me!*

The woman stood at the hill for long  
Watching her sons amongst the troops marching,  
The long snake of them in the distance winding  
Till it was a tiny teensy-weensy ribbon;  
She couldn't stop her weeping  
For her sons drowning  
In the floods of raining bombs.

The woman couldn't stop weeping  
For her sons—her hope—  
And husband—her comfort—  
Dying,  
For a cause they did not know.  
*Hadn't she warned them of this?*



## Rules of Engagement

Guidelines for soldiers in war:

Commanders must adhere to them

Geneva conventions for those left behind

Evidence against who don't give heed

Prosecution enough at The Hague

Well understood by combatants

Not enforced by the commanders

The innocent soldier is crucified

By drunks at The Hague

With PhDs in Geneva Conventions

For crimes he didn't commit against humanity.



## Behind the Clouds

I was sick, lonely and full of sorrow  
Wishing Armageddon came tomorrow  
Thinking of sons of mine,  
Scattered like leaves before a gust of wind  
Everywhere as though home is an evil spell  
Whence came the disturbing call  
From the Forces Memorial Hospital;  
Everything came to a standstill  
No panacea for such affliction.

All I do is pace the dark house  
Praying fervent prayers only mothers utter,  
Wishing every hour is the last to dawn;  
So imagine I look into the dreary night.  
From behind the clouds bursts the moon  
Shining like a bright benignant face  
And I hear a whisper in the silence:

*O mother thine heart with pain is sore  
Fear not, be comforted, dear soul.*

There is always light behind the clouds.



## Conscripted

I thought I would never sway  
I was meant to be of the way  
When I grew in the place where the chosen few stay  
Till when the war broke.

Brothers away from home ran  
Sisters followed them, and became war wives  
Old fashioned incest isn't sin.  
Mother died shortly after  
The grief's too much for her.

So much carnage in the battlefield  
Just cause for the country;  
So many of them went  
To fight wars instigated by politics  
And never came back home.

The reserve was drained, and  
The police and the youth service  
No one was left but us  
Holy Immunity held no waters.  
Chaplaincy was of no help in the field  
And we're hiding, so unpatriotic, politicians said  
Then we were ousted—  
From the mansions of hypocrisy  
To fight in the war.

Rifle and bayonet  
And few chosen friends  
Are my faithful companions  
Besides these is enemy



And soon we too are biting the bullet  
Death is the only way out.

*Operation Protect the Nation* isn't a success  
Young men are fighting, daily dying  
And we are following them;  
Old men are in the August House talking,  
Please ignore the politics.



## Saluting Boots and Helmets

We are veterans (and vegetarians),  
Served in our countries' Defence Forces  
When we were warriors in our clans  
Earned no UN<sup>1</sup> or AU<sup>2</sup> allowances  
But pride for defending our land, our people;  
Fighting the colonists from Rhodesia to Abyssinia—  
World War I and II, even when it was cold;  
Retired honourably after the failed coups  
To overthrow post-colonial governments.

We salute them, boots and helmets of defence forces,  
Paid from the taxpayer's coffers yet they pay tax,  
Said to be idle in the barracks fattening on exchequer  
When they actually are training readying for deployment,  
Living in bivouac on long ago packaged rations.  
They walk miles wearing sad smiles in Iran,  
Afghanistan and Somalia  
Live in fox-holes, when they own bungalows;  
Rain bombs in the area, and leave others unexploded.  
They donate their half-eaten army biscuits to impoverished  
and famished kids  
Of the internally displaced persons, and refugees;  
Reduce cities to ruins and bury the enemies under the rubble,  
Make enemy's daughters, and mothers their 'comfort women'  
Thence give human rights activists a field day.

We salute them, *Operation Kill Osama* is a great success  
*Al-Shabaab* no longer want to go to Alaska  
Kismayo is the headquarters of the African Union,

---

<sup>1</sup> UN – United Nations

<sup>2</sup> AU – African Union



*Al Qaeda* is becoming a charity organization,  
All terrorists murdered;  
Taliban have become vigilantes,  
And *Boko Haram* is no longer a harem.

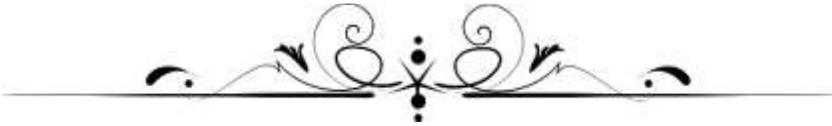
We salute them, boots and helmets,  
Despots leave their power trappings  
If democracy is a distant planet  
NATO<sup>3</sup> supplies the bombs, UN the fighter jets  
“Bomb everything!” is what AU orders the pilots.  
We salute them all—  
Boots and helmets of defence forces.

---

<sup>3</sup> NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization

There is in every one of us, even those who seem to be most moderate, a type of desire that is terrible, wild, and lawless.

**Plato, *The Republic*.**



## Acknowledgements

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And all my fans all over the world for waiting eagerly for the next poem to read on my website. Just in case there happens to be an internet Armageddon and Google is totally wiped out, this book shall forever live.

Last (and definitely not the least, at the risk of sounding clichéd) all lovers of poetry.

## About the Author

Vincent de Paul is the author of the NIBF (Nairobi International Book Fair) award-winning collection of poetry, *First Words*; collections of love poems, *Holy Emotions* and *Holy Crimes*; a collection of flash fiction stories, the *Flashes of Vice* series; and a novel, *TWISTED TIMES: Son of Man*.

Together with ninety-three other African poets, his poetry has been published in an anthology of poems by the new age African poets, *Black Communion (Poems of the New African Poets)* published by artbeat Afrika, a society of contemporary African writers and poets, with members across Africa and friends around the world.

Vincent de Paul is a member of the Bloggers Association of Kenya (BAKE), Association of Independent Author (AIA) in the USA, a Goodreads author, and a Freelance Writer. He has a Diploma in Comprehensive Creative Writing from The Writers Bureau, UK. He works and lives in Nakuru, Kenya. For more of his works go to:

[www.poeticjustnes.com](http://www.poeticjustnes.com)

[www.flashesofvices.com](http://www.flashesofvices.com)

## Other Books by the author on Mystery Bookstore

### **Poetry**

*Holy Crimes (2014)*

[\*Holy Emotions \(2012\)\*](#)

[\*First Words \(2012\)\*](#)

### **Flash Fiction**

[\*Flashes of Vice: Vol II \(2014\)\*](#)

[\*Flashes of Vice: Vol I \(2013\)\*](#)

### **Novel**

[\*TWISTED TIMES: Son of Man \(2015\)\*](#)

*Flights of Poetic Fancy* is a collection of whims, whimsical enchantments and impulsive imaginations that attack the mind beguiled into visions and fantasies.

It is an aggregation of quarrels, musings, battles (rather not) fought, wounds and wooings, loves and agonies and all sorts possible nonsense and forgetfulness—anything and everything ghastly grim of the wandering mind—that possesses the mind and convinces it that no maxim and order has more sense than its thinking.

*Flights of Poetic Fancy* has a critical sensibility and humorous look at life, issues, and vice while challenging the invention of history and beliefs strongly held by a people rather falling into despondency.

From the award winning author of *First Words*, *Flights of Poetic Fancy* will leave you impishly amused yet reeling with ire and indignation.



Vincent de Paul is an award-winning author, freelance writer, blogger, and poet.

He has a diploma in Comprehensive Creative Writing from The Writers Bureau, UK; and is a Bloggers Association of Kenya (BAKE) member.

Find out more and subscribe for Vincent's flash fiction stories at [www.flashesofvices.com](http://www.flashesofvices.com). For the best of his poetry go to [www.poeticjustnes.com](http://www.poeticjustnes.com)

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