

**COMMENTARIES ON "FAREWELL THE LEGAL ICON (For Gani)",
"THE GREEN ENVELOPE", "A PLEA TO CUPID",
"ENSTRANGEMENT", "KISSING ME DEAD", "THE FOUR FLYING",
"YEAH ENERGY" "ELEGY FOR E.E. EKUBAN" AND "LAMENT FOR
A BURLY BOY"**

[PDF](#) [HTML](#) [XML](#) OPEN ACCESS JOURNAL

**PROF. JOE-KEN NZEREM
IMO STATE UNIVERSITY
OWERRI, NIGERIA**

**MRS REBECCA MONEY NORMANS
COORDINATOR, TROY CAMPUS LEARNING CENTER
ALABAMA, U.S.A**

**CHUDDY CHRISTIAN ODUENYI (Ph.d)
PAN ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY
LAGOS, NIGERIA**

Introduction

The preoccupation of this academic work is to analysis selected poems by the above mentioned academic. These poems are "Farewell the Legal Icon (for Gani)", "The Green Envelope", "A plea to cupid", "Enstrangement", "kissing me Dead", "The Four Flying ", " Yeah Energy", "Elegy for E.E. Ekuban" and "Lament for a Burly Boy"

Commentaries

The poem "Farewell the legal Icon (for Gani)" eulogizes Gani Fawehinmi, Lawyer and activist who fought for human rights in Nigeria. Gani was one of the most famous figures in Nigeria.

The Poem eulogizes Gani fawehinmi, Lawyer and activist who fought for human rights in Nigeria. Gani was one of the most famous figures in Nigeria. He was fondly referred to as "The People's Lawyer" and "Senior Advocate of the Masses". He used his legal training and resources in fighting for Justice for the Nigerian people. He was the loud conscience of many Nigerians and sees no tyrant as being too big to be challenged for about three decades. He experienced imprisonment, harassmt and attempts of assassination created by many military regimes in Nigeria. He also was against the corruption of civilian governments, highlighting their illegitimate means of taking over power.

Gani passionately pursued and crusaded his beliefs, principles and ideals for the rule of law, undiluted democracy, social justice, the protection of fundamental human rights and respect for the hopes and aspirations of the masses who are misgoverned. He was vocal when Nigeria's leading newspaper editor Dele Gina was killed mysteriously by a parcel bomb in 1986 and boldly accused General Ibrahim Babaginda as having a hand in the journalist's death. He also fought against the

cancelation of 12 June 1993 Presidential election and the detention of Chief Moshood Abiola.

Gani suffered humiliation from Nigerian government, his travel passport was seized on many occasions; his residence and law chambers were ransacked many times. He was beaten up at different times and places. For Gani not to be listened to the masses, he was several times exiled from one part of the country to another. Some of his books which exposed the military junta did not see the light of the day. All these did not stop Gani from being vocal, they rather encouraged him to take on the ruling class and fight the rape of democracy in Nigeria. His disregard for misrule made him to reject one of the highest national honours that could be bestowed on a citizen by the Nigerian government- order of the Federal Republic (OFR) in 2008.

When the Nigerian government found out that the spirit of activism runs in Gani's blood, it denied him being Senior Advocate of Nigeria after applying seven times. However, his legal ingenuity attracted his being decorated with Bruno Kreisky Prize for services to Human Rights.

Gani died in the early hours of 5th September 2009 at the age of 71years after a prolonged battle with Lung Cancer. He was buried on 15 September 2009 in his home town of Ondo City Nigeria. He died a disappointed man, because of the state of his country at the time of his death.

However, men and women from different professions as seen in stanza one of the poem paid their last respect to the achiever. Stanza two of the poems discusses genuine testimonies about Gani. The poet seeing Gani as a Sage encourages him to continue the freedom fight with Fela who fought against injustice through his music. With such respect from Nigerians, the poet believes that Gani still lives.

"The Green Envelope" is a statement against bribery and corruption in Nigeria.

The poet ironically hails the "Green Envelope". This poem states that corruption is built around the envelope. The persona's logic is that no matter the colour of the envelope that is used for bribery and corruption, it is Green since the colour Green signifies things that are positive. The implication therefore is that the colour of any envelope used for bribe to get what one does not deserve or qualify for immediately turns to Green.

The persona is not happy that the green envelope turns failure to pass. At our ivory towers nowadays, envelopes that are green in colour influence grades the moment they are offered to lecturers. These envelopes also influence allocation of courses to mediocres rather than people who could teach those courses well. The giving of green envelopes by students at tertiary institutions is known as "Sorting" as stated by the persona.

With the influence of the Green envelopes candidates who are not qualified for office jobs and in fact, those who never attended interviews are employed. These square pegs in round holes mess up the society with their incompetence. Policies are ignored the moment an envelope is offered to one who is in charge. The best jobs in the oil and Gas industry as well as the Banking industry are given to candidates who offer the Green Envelope. Even when the green envelope appears, embargo must be lifted.

The Green envelope as stated by the poem is the cause of failed contracts, election rigging and other corrupt practices in the world in general and Nigeria in particular.

The persona wonders how justice would be achieved by humanity since the Green envelope which signifies corruption controls the world. He bemoans the fate of the society as he sees the green envelope as the bane of mankind.

"A Plea to Cupid" presents cupid, the god of love as being capable of bringing two people together to start a romantic relationship.

Cupid also called "Amor", the ancient Roman god of love and the son of either Mars or Mercury and Venus, identified with Eros and commonly represented as a winged, naked, infant with a bow and arrow is seen as the child of the goddess of love.

The persona who is seeking to be loved believes that cupid has the power to inspire love in people. Cupid is often depicted as shooting arrows at unsuspecting individuals, causing them to fall in love. Considering that love is rough, boisterous and pricks like-thorns, the persona pleads with cupid to be benevolent in his matchmaking as it concerns him. The poet does not need lovers who break lovers hearts but is in need of every lover's immemorial longing of a perfect partner.

The poet is assured that Cupid could help him end his long suffering of loneliness because Cupid possesses the conventional attributes of the Olympian gods such as Superhuman strength, endurance and longevity. He also has extensive archery skills in shooting love arrows.

The poet complains that he has lost his muse and desires that his creative skills blossom again. This can only happen when he falls in love and it is only Cupid that could make him achieve this courtesy of Cupid's three important powers which are Telekinesis, Beaming and Remote Beaming. Telekinesis is cupid's ability to move objects and being with his mind. Beaming is the ability to teleport with pink light while Remote Beamig is the ability to beam other people from one location to another.

"Estrangement" and "kissing me Dead" are about human or social institutions, institutional issues and disturbing distractions that occur in life. "Estrangement" with its telling subtitle features a first person "I" narrator who is expressing a grievance related to the family. The family has been falling apart for generations and if the generational issues of that family are not addressed by leaders in the family, then the family would face exposure to a spiritual infection, worse than COVID. "Kissing Me Dead" is about the residual devastation death leaves behind. The speaker again is first –person, and the first-person point of view is intentional. The use of the first person in these poems is indicative that the speaker' personal thoughts, grievous feelings, observations and perspectives must be voiced before healing can occur. The poet is of that an ignored soul will cry out. The view that the persona states one crying soul silently struggling with conflicts is dangerous to a whole family or community. At some point, the result can be far-ranging, from suicidal ideation to domestic violence, both of which can have catastrophic impacts.

The poem was a product of experience during the Covid pandemic period in 2020. Economically, the world was at a stand point, losing every aspect of communication, social gathering and work force.

This excruciating effect gave rise to the fall of the great economy of the world. The situation gave raise to hyper-inflation. The writer had lots of challenges during the time. Some tourists had similar experience that affected their movement and health.

"The Four Flying", was written while riding in a vehicle underneath the sky. The poet, an American was in Owerri, Nigeria, West Africa. Can you imagine how surreal it felt for a black American from a working – class

family, to find herself in Nigeria at any time, but especially during a pandemic.

It was surreal and liberating and a little fearful. Again, objectivity came in to play, for the poet could have chosen to keep her eyes on the road, but instead, she looked up just in time to see four birds flying with purpose. She imagined their communications with one another and internalized their messages.

The poet contributed the poem "Yeah Energy" in hopes of adding some balance and levity to her voice. As much as we have sorrows, we also need to experience celebrations. In the black American community, achievement of the American dream is closely related to achievement of a higher education degree. "Yeah Energy" simply asserts that the same amount of energy we humans put into enjoying other activities in life might better serve us if we add that energy to illuminating our minds, and attending higher education institutions. The poet asserts that leadership is in demand, yet also in short supply.

Elegy for E.E. Ekuban is a poem that mourns the tragic passage of Prof E.E. Ekuban; a beloved and exemplary University Don. A somewhat dirge, it adopts a free flowing verse format to lament the demise of the former University of Calabar Don who met his untimely death in a tragic lone accident on his way back from a long trip to Lagos. It jarred the more that the accident took place at Ikot Ekpene, at a spot notorious for such mishaps. This was after what must have been a gruelling trip that saw him traverse many roads that were decrepit and deplorable, and to imagine that he was almost safely back to his base. The poem bemoans the loss of a decent soul and an astute academic who left his footprints on the sand of time. Ekuban, the poem laments, was a titan who will be sorely missed in the academic circles.

Lament for a Burly Boy mourns the death of a cherished childhood friend. Abuyu, so named for being beefy and considerate, was a supportive pal and a soulmate whose demise would rob his friend of a cheerleader on the battlefield .The impending life battle must be waged, but it will not be the same again because Abuyu won't be at the protagonist's corner to boost his morale.