



ART SUBMISSION

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Beyond Broken Promises

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Beyond Broken Promises is a poignant commentary on the agonizing legacy of colonialism in Africa. The poem sheds a piercing light on the profound and enduring impacts of colonial exploitation on the African healthcare system whose effects are present to this day. The poem serves as a clarion call to urgently address the ongoing injustices dating back to the colonial era, inspiring readers to take action toward dismantling the deep-seated structural inequalities in the African healthcare system.

The opening stanza of the poem captures the bitter irony of civilized colonial powers who promised to bring progress and development into African nations, only to deceptively exploit the land and its people in a barbaric manner. By exposing the hollowness of such promises, the stanza reveals the insidious impacts of colonialism on the continent, which left the colonized feeling like mere pawns in the colonizers' game, perpetuating generations of suffering and injustice.

The second stanza depicts how colonial powers exploited Africa's resources, while simultaneously introducing harmful pathogens into the continent. The metaphor of a poisoned brook is used to depict how diseases like cholera were brought by colonizers. The damaged healthcare system is the remnant of the race between colonial powers, favouring the privileged while neglecting marginalized communities.

In the third stanza, the metaphor of a snake is employed to illustrate how colonialism left many Africans susceptible to foreign diseases without access to proper treatments. The stanza emphasizes the tragic irony of how the same colonial powers that introduced these diseases into Africa failed to provide adequate healthcare infrastructure to effectively address them, leaving countless individuals at risk of debilitating illnesses. The poem's speaker highlights her internal struggle against the desperate idea of begging the colonizers for an antidote to the colonial impacts on the healthcare system. This request remains unfulfilled, invigorating in the speaker a sense of despair and hopelessness.

The fourth stanza marks a pivotal turning point in the poem, as the speaker's initial sense of hopelessness transforms into a passionate plea for help and a call to recognize the enduring legacy of colonialism. The speaker reckons that healing can only come through a collaborative effort to address the deep wounds inflicted by colonialism.

In the final stanza of the poem, the theme of light is employed as a symbol of hope and transformation. The speaker suggests that there is a way to right the wrongs of the past and make healthcare a universal right through collective efforts. The stanza uses evocative imagery to depict the dawn of a new era, in which the shadows of colonialism are dispelled,

The ancient wounds run deep,
As 'civilized' men came to reap.
With promises of health, wealth and fame,
It seems as though we were just their game.

The treasures of the land they took
Left us to drink from a poisoned brook,
And the remnants of their race
Broke our systems to favour those with power
and grace.

Your snake spread its venomous bite,
And left me with nothing, but fear and spite.
I slayed demons before I came begging for the
antidote,
But to this day, my request is left afloat.

Don't let me be a mere fool for a girl,
Who patiently dreams for her wishes to unfurl.
You have to help me heal the wounds of the
past,
For this is the only way we can build a future
better than the last.

As I stare into this light,
I pray that together we can stand this fight.
Let a beacon of hope be ignited
In a world where health is a universal right.

and the light of progress and justice shines brightly. Through this inspiring conclusion, the poem invites its readers to join in the effort to create a brighter future for all.