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# FOUR POEMS BY DIKE OKORO

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## **Awake**

Awake at midnight,  
Let the river lead the moon's search.

Awake at daybreak,  
Let the clouds revel in sermons monotonous.

Awake...  
Let the wind feast from the waters rot.

Awake...  
Let the bushes bury their dead.

Awake...  
Let the moon's affectionate kiss comfort the leafless trees.

Awake...  
Let winds raking leaves  
.....  
Appease gods bereft of godliness.

## **Thinking of you**

I left a stone in a pond today,  
just to say I miss you.

## **And so it rained**

And so it rained tonight.  
The beetle for the yam's heart,  
The termites to the bulb's call,  
The hoe in its sacred hide,  
The hunter in moonstruck gaze,  
And the red earth in soaked powder  
Where words and ears are conspiring twins  
houses divided between a hill's armpit  
And a valley's anthill.  
And so it rained tonight.  
For lonesome hearts returned  
From journeys unending, attending

To the day's last dance  
Before dying to see another day.

### **Some things to remember**

Night. Kettle's steaming.  
The heart is a hawk, battered  
in sand. This is it: the quest  
to make sense on paper. Shouts cut  
through the open window. The neighbors  
are at it again. The shamelessness couples confront  
to defeat self love. Pen in mouth,  
I wait. Bobby Womack's *Harry  
Hippie* drags on. I want to call  
Amina, to hear what her father said  
when she got home after 10pm, or what sermons  
her mother tossed at her while mending  
her braids and learning how she paddled across  
a steady wave, a man's fingers  
playing with her braids, his chest her pillow,  
her heartbeat his comforter.

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**Dike Okoro** writes poetry and short stories. His work has appeared in major magazines and journals in Britain, Norway, South Africa, and the US. He teaches in the department of English at Olive Harvey College, Chicago. His book of poems, *Dance of the Heart*, is forthcoming (Malthouse Press, London/Lagos, 2007).