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# FOUR POEMS

BY ORITSEGBEMI EMMANUEL JAKPA

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## Liquid Diamonds

The once green ground of dance,  
of village life and songs,  
now the ground of liquid diamonds.

There is no more dance, no song,  
no festival, no celebration,  
no farm, no crop,

but the business of diamonds,  
and the diamond man

In this prison cell, lost to silence,

In this prison cell, lost to silence,  
she sits with her damage innocence,  
dreaming of the everyday faces  
she does not know.

She sits mirroring the other side of life,  
life in motion; cannot ignore  
the things we most ignore:

The monotony of sunshine,  
the greenery of a leave of grass,  
friends that call our name.

## Lost Poems

In my bid to please the Holy One,  
I burnt the pages  
of my poems, saw them silenced

in the pathway of flames,  
smoked upward;  
disappeared from the smoke

among the wind, away from the wind;

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left me with words,  
unpiecable, like a broken egg.

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### **The Temperament of Human Reactions**

As Jesus hurries out of Jericho,  
multitude of men, women and children  
tail him Blind Baltimous, son of Timaus,  
sitting by the wayside on an hairless  
goat skin, awaiting mannerfall of good-  
Samaritans, hear Jesus passing bye,  
raises his voice, and cries, "Thou Son o' David  
"Have mercy on me". They try to stop him,  
but cries he the more, "Thou Son of David  
"Have mercy on me". Jesus passing bye  
and hearing stop. all, and those trying to  
quiet him, stop, in strong silence, like a  
snapshot. As Jesus turns and look at blind  
Baltimous shaking in expectation  
(As if by some divine remotation,  
everyone turns and look at Baltimous).  
Jesus, with his accustomed kindness, ask  
"Batimeus, 'what wilt thou that I should do  
unto thee?" Batimeus quickly replies,  
"Lord, that I might receive my sight." Jesus  
with air of omnipotence, said "Thy faith  
has made thee whole". Immediately, his eyes  
regain their sight, his eyelid closing and  
opening as to convey a message,  
leaping and shouting "I can see ... can see ...  
can see... I see ... " in motion that is "joy".  
the crowd in glad amazement, shouts, and jumps,  
claps for Batimeus, as if he's a King.

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### **I Am Judas of the Bright Age**

*for Janice Simmon*

I venerate Master,  
and no other, never, never  
those words-made-gods.  
All the books containing them  
I hid, some I burnt, others I destroyed  
from young eyes,  
who cannot discern the Truth,  
but pant after and follow like a shoe to a foot  
all doctrines of beauty  
and sweetness of tongue.  
Master is a jealous Master.  
He taught -- we must beware of  
mixing our minds  
with the minds of the pedantic wolves,  
professor sharks and wise hawks,  
who dress with fine cloths  
but their hearts and mind  
spider webs.  
I disciple to the core,

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must live by the law Master had taught.

I saw the vision  
I seized the moment,  
did what the world needed,  
to know Master  
and no other.  
Any moment from now,  
master will come  
riding on stead of cloud, with host of fanfares  
announcing His arrival.  
It will be me,  
who Master shall delight to honour:  
Judas of the Bright Age.  
He will stop and in the glorious shouts  
Of the new day  
Beckon me to sit and ride with Him.  
We shall ride through the streets  
strewn with all kinds of petals and palm leaves  
while everyone gazes at us.  
He will grant that I am not the traitor  
of civilization,  
but the heraldry of the better world.

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**Oritsegbemi Emmanuel Jakpa** lives in Ireland, and presently doing a research study at Waterford Institute of Technology in Creative Writing. His poetry has been published in a number of online and print journals including the African American Review, and the Echoing Years: an Anthology of Poetry from Canada and Ireland. He is a Yeats' Pierce Loughran Scholar.