

Poetry Series

Sochukwu Ivye
- poems -



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Sochukwu Ivey(Wednesday, August 16,1989.)

Sochukwu Ivey, Chukwuma Livinus Ndububa, is especially given to formal poetry. His epic series, The Great Cold, is hailed as the longest metrical poem by an African.

Sochukwu Ivey has published on numerous magazines and journals, viz. Poetry Life & Times, Scarlet Leaf Review, Ginosko Literary Journal, Poetry In Form, The Creativity Webzine, Written Tales Magazine, Rhyme Zone, etc.

His poetry series on English spelling made Professor David Crystal say, 'Many thanks for letting me see your most ingenious creation. It's very cleverly put together, and certainly the longest such literary illustration of the vagaries of English spelling'.

Professor Joan C. Beal who saw the second part of the series called it 'interesting and amusing'.

Currently studying for a Master's degree, Sochukwu Ivey hails from Isseke, an ancient Igbo land in Eastern Nigeria.



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English Is Fun II

I

A lot are students' thoughts I itch to sieve
English supple spelling does delight GIVE
Puny spirits feel they could never THRIVE
but the ardent hearts keep their zeal alive

Over no eyes nor heart, English pulls wool
as an open book to whom grants its PULL
Rest assured it not does the fervent DULL
The questing mind, the Thomas, it will lull

The buyers are of tongues abundant born
but it does, of laziness and nerves, WARN
The faithful will acquire a spacious BARN
and wear some ease and aura: of no yarn

The spelling rules, they say, have excuses
that breed tasks: to which a native LOSES
Those that learn, ease on a bed of ROSES
to find the course which as a maze poses

While English makes one acquirer a thorp
its spelling culture dwells in a time WARP
It plays, such that it may play one a HARP
but before long, as a thorn, prick as sharp

They that cannot drift past obtain castors
knowing that the end produces MASTERS
The aloof will call all fears time WASTERS
for they live for themselves: better tasters

It cheers one that hospital shrank to hosp
but this truncation stings me like a WASP
Who ever at spelling English words GASP
do them, only through vigilant ears, grasp

A word's spelling, its coiner might not say
English dwells not nor grows in a CHALET
New coinings are not etched on a TABLET

those are just read; not worn as a chaplet

Spellings can do pronouncing them injure
phonology, seen words might not GINGER
At our slips our heirs will point no FINGER
form and inventions for this tongue linger

Spelling, now, rests on the old phonic glut
if a thing is false, students may tell WHAT
In new sounds, it no longer appears THAT
each shift in old vowels at which lips spat

To know English spelling: to fetch a notch
Others are a torch so English may WATCH
All who realize English keep not a MATCH
they arrest the world others will not catch

From the near and remote, it fosters form
This one nature first declares it so WARM
They who on else lands are easy to FARM
for no barn or market, must harvest harm

Followers did the scorn for words throttle
A grasp of the spellings outguns WATTLE
Leading ideas with which all else BATTLE
depicts pride that breeds a cheerful rattle

'English rests great', I tell my friend, Toby
It keeps not strongholds made of ADOBE
It lays a mouth of all nooks of the GLOBE
Who is to be told must not grip their lobe

II

Each stanza before here lays the last pair
with endings where letters alike loll BARE
All, today, depict what actual rhymes ARE
but will sate just eyes, times after and far

Deem at no time that spelling is not strict
the wilfulness of language is so PRICKED
English just feels productive; not WICKED
It spells and sounds randomly; lay the kid

English spelling enjoys that sublime quirk
which also sets all native minds to WORK
They know when it is left or right to FORK
that see a spelling clockwork lay a torque

English spells faithfully; its mien might lie
When it rains proof, one will discern JULY
The daily words may, thus, not spell DULY
three fourths of all words utter not newly

For myself, I should wish to own my debt
to this tongue in verse more than a DUET
I will be served a sausage that met SUET
as I lay a tongue that feeds all lips sweet

To come without humour is no good sign
for English whips all it will wine and DINE
This should grudge no horror of the CINE
English is such wear the keen see skinny

Of telling the story, rapt minds can boast
English is the language events try MOST
For its honour, a good grasp is the COST
In speaking, in playing, English is tossed

Similar letters lounged in charm, Haitian
dwelt the writings of the scribal NATION
To tell the terms, hints rose or a RATION
still spelling strangely, the end lay ashen

Spellings in fresh loci did old sounds lay
the old word so: turned to a dire BALLET
A new key had to take from the WALLET
this is what spelling then chose to call it

Monks first led the interpretation course
and recorded Old English; before NORSE
If the outcome evolved better or WORSE
these monks never did arouse any curse

They added new letters, to meet the rest

to roll in sounds not in the Latin BREAST
They made all runic letters turn a FEAST
for the blends and diacritics they pieced

In the morn of learning, a few were good
Writing own accent did any who WOULD
Own likings also did the spelling MOULD
To fit else words, left was spelling of old

The script medieval scribes rated: warm
led some letters to represent one FORM
Salt was coveted to spray on the WORM
— a ruling that not kept the spelling firm

Flaws of the old alphabet were dead fun
but English believed it and the new: ONE
Many letters enjoyed more than a TONE
myriad sounds: by untold letters, shown

Away from the Midlands, citizens strode
for the plague evaded the hut and ROAD
All: to the southeast; of dialects: BROAD
England filled of accents to lose or laud

That migration brought dialects to clash
but the Londoners held a lingual CACHE
To set their accent apart, they did ACHE
so, varied their vowel rules for that sake

When carrying the court to London rose
of her rebirth, English lay in the THROES
Now, for the marvels English ever DOES
Oxford-Cambridge as one, did only buzz

As Oxbridge came the loci of the school
England sat, calling no linguistic GHOUL
The sky, for English, did ever grow FOUL
as London accents rose; others, to howl

Thus, has English dwelled for any Briton
It is its docile heart that wooed BRITAIN
English lays void behind eyes to RETAIN

Do we not allow them cry that we cane?

In the chronicles certain scholars made,
diction in French orthography they LAID
This thus beautifies English, many SAID
but it delivered all-new sounds, and fled

Rising cachet: every French accent bore
for whom knew no lexicon in a DRAWER
The British patricians turned a GNAWER
and broke a word that shook every foyer

Bibliophiles made for the English rhyme
but hypercorrection had made to CLIMB
This was inventing vowels with no LIMB
to walk the phonation: in a French hymn

Awry corrections to lay less French: tore
of a broad idea of France and their WAR
The French had held spelling overly FAR
from the Anglo-Saxons, to where we are

Invaders had attempts: lasting and brief
to fit their grammar on the English LEAF
To English, they felt not eyeless or DEAF
but cooked spellings: ill-suited to a chef

To verbalize spelling, some came merry
the rest spelt sounds the lexis did BURY
The difference did ignite heat and FURY
such that every second dropped a curie

Words fled to English from alien shores
To the translators: spelling all is YOURS
The load on the writers in a few HOURS
rose more than it often did, past towers

Printers and publishers arrived to haunt
they led a fix, or spelt as they did WANT
Soon, the erudite did still letters GRANT
for spelling to pluck: from its Latin aunt

Who told just little or no English phrase
joined Caxton to evade spelling MORES
This laid errors that generated SCORES
Spelling knew this alongside prior wars

The first printers would not say it aloud
they earned for any line a job ALLOWED
Elongated lay words, fell or HALLOWED
past simpler wording kept a new abode

Bringing back English to thwart a gulley
first did its steadfastness grimly SULLY
Printers, amidst their wars, did it BULLY
Most: created styles that guided woolly

By many from whom English went aloft
the first English bibles gave off a WAFT
Shackles enfolded the restating CRAFT
local bibles, no translator must draught

Foul spellings bred the Bible no cordon
as reprinting Tyndale's sat no WARDEN
For this leaf families, first, did GARDEN
the bible: no man lettered could pardon

Tyndale got expelled vilely like Stephen
arrested and burned at the stake, EVEN
Who spelt by a rule, soon did by SEVEN
to revive Tyndale veiled was this leaven

Studying word-origins made heed grow
as students arose for the spelling WOE
Extra letters, in English, did SOFT-SHOE
for the calm, in many a word, they grew

A sound may dwell like a stray or a waif
but writers held tactics they rated SAFE
To host long vowels, they tried no CAFE
a still E or paired vowels wore the sway

In two of five words silent letters mosh
The silence lie to do no esteem QUASH

A word's story the stillness is to FLASH
and further do no understanding cache

Phonic units were by new duties grilled
Existing units: the new dwelled to GILD
Letters set to flee English, for the WILD
Idle but puny, some left not, nor smiled

Many sought tenets that fitted its state
as the oddities of spelling laid WEIGHT
Intimate spellings by pens at a HEIGHT
they failed to make adapt, amid the rite

Two books, to lull the orthography, rose
for wording laid a worry old and GROSS
The King James Bible lay not at a LOSS
Samuel Johnson's manual made sauce

Many spelling items are not yet marred
for their inventors fitted all with GUARD
Dr Johnson best led the spelling WARD
but some of his creations never soared

Clashing ideas on spelling were in birth
as the rise of lexicons bore big WORTH
Printers put tactics and usages FORTH
of futile ideas, theirs lay past the fourth

To reveal voicing was dictionaries' goal
their strength did pronunciation ENROL
Letters tempt the voicing of some IDOL
which holds in daily speech, rare or idle

Cutting letters to sit terms thin-waisted
scribes of the English civil war TASTED
More rhetoric on a page, they BLASTED
so, to their ploy was for plants a plastid

All excess letters they did not slaughter
the cut with the rest tainted the WATER
This news grows the new into a HATER
thus, a native speaker breathes a traitor

Spelling with a touchstone did not align
quills ran flexibly, as though the FELINE
I would call spelling in this age: CELINE
It lettered the sky still felt new and lean

Noah Webster saw the language floppy
and gave his country: his English COPY
This created changes some held ROPY
but down from this heat, I wear my topi

The thumb, as a hallux, lacks phalanges
Immediate bones allow them FLANGES
Over else words, away, English RANGES
than the authorities could hold changes

Whilst unfolding, for English, is the soul
various spellings loll on today's SCROLL
In selling-labels, and settings they LOLL
numerous aspects account for them all

Clearness and identity, spellings freight
but more playful variants, for that, WAIT
In characters' names, they lie in a PLAIT
On some literary tongues, they keep flat

Realization changes what comes heard
when you blot the first letter of a WORD
Words not even tied by a spelling CORD
are, at times, one pronunciation, scored

Homonyms lie, of many spellings made
Novel merging of letters has, long, LAID
The letter, I think, wears a mystic PLAID
which intrudes or escapes a phonic fad

French or Latin, English does never stay
the idea, French or Latin now rests NEE
A sound alters; the spelling we still SEE
a spelling grows; its voicing will firm be

Phonetic spelling draws not a mild goal

One does not bear it rounded in a BOWL
You not look to spell a hoot or a GROWL
or that heartfelt noise and not do it foul

English carries not every noise at heart
soulful noises and the verbalized PART
Your sounds the RP or GA will THWART
when your accent is not, of both, a sort

The regret for coming stuck on the way
makes the idle student rather grow FEY
Rather than spell: pressing many a KEY
they opt voice or icons borne on a quay

If you often are by English words ached
you hold, any spelling is not so SLAKED
As you feel no sense in a sound NAKED
you speak all languages with no fake id

For the parasites that in spellings crawl
mid the alphabet and sounds is a WALL
I shall not face the fall if English SHALL
except: shall a neighbour, mate, or e-pal

In spelling, to read as to write is starred
signs and symbols rest as its LEOTARD
They are quiet and hard like a LEOPARD
So, consistency's eyes loll yet peppered

A spelling shift, the internet does cause
The spelling is not sure, as it once WAS
Softly, the forms, the word-manual HAS
dialects spell weirder than the new jazz

Every speller's forms crawl like a weevil
unique tastes for changes rest not EVIL
Who cannot spell all comes not a DEVIL
bright spellers not always in gains revel

Spelling is grown by, if you can let what,
the limbs of the adopted not times CUT
So, the choice of a spelling, bluntly PUT

tells a myth; not language issues, afoot

To all spelling rules, I not always cleave
They, so, make tutors of spelling NAIVE
English will do no self-unfolding WAIVE
a boom and long life it could ever crave

Even when its future role is not straight
the internet lays ideas, new and GREAT
Abating of weird spellings is: a THREAT
its aura tends to assure hearts that fret

This evolving orb does its heft increase
varied spelling will not just be CAPRICE
At a snail's pace and a sufficient PRICE
reforms already form the lingual gneiss

Texting, on spelling, turns a large heron
Its features you cannot regard BARREN
This abides, as words travel a WARREN
spellings look pithy but lay eyes foreign

We feel: texting fails English a new way
it streams to some ceasing like BENUÉ
An e-gadget stays the brightest VENUE
where big inventiveness tops the menu

Our spelling looked not new to Beowulf
It has hunted the frail sight like a WOLF
A speller has their own stick as in GOLF
I pulled from the era of Quirk, Randolph

Parched throats keen for a falling icicle
may first feel them coming by BICYCLE
English spelling transforms in a CYCLE
to seize it, borrow the wings of Michael

"English ever grows", justly noted Gwyn
Its size and opulence bears no FAMINE
As long as English is not yours or MINE
the fate of eye rhymes is of a plain sign

Let no sound, for spelling, give a corbel
words seat letters to diversely WARBLE
Letters, not tones, ring upon a MARBLE
words lay spelling as fish bear a barbel

III

Writing, local dialects should not shush
many voicing types, dialect types PUSH
If dialects spell, writing will next CRUSH
some evade the H; others, their Rs hush

IV

Words of many sounds we utter or print
although dialects do the language TINT
Of some elixir, tongues else lack a PINT
but English itches to take past the ninth

Sochukwu Iveye

English Is Fun

I pledge resolved to sway no reader numb
I bear some news; the alert can get SOME
It is what breathes in every Briton's HOME
and the mystery many minds aware roam

For how English succumbs oddly inclined
I lift a flag which sleepless eyes can FIND
My idea is shared by space and the WIND
I will tell easy, for all tongues have sinned

Countless English letters hold as a clique
As many spellings fit not what we SPEAK
No word devourer assumes that a STEAK
Instead, this does the fervent spirits ache

Indeed, English wears an uncommon trait
Well, it is but fun to me and tastes GREAT
such that each time I buy myself a TREAT
having boarded at an own grammar suite

Learners fear that English is a weird stuff
I never see learning more English TOUGH
For it remains a field of gains to PLOUGH
What turns various heads raises my brow

Students miss what is being spelt or said
as they fail to trace the hitch to the HEAD
It does not count if one will spell or READ
but not to the norm and rightness accede

Many fret that each day births rules anew
As if else tongues are novel to that COUP
For my lips, English is some melon SOUP
That I grasp no quirk colours me no dupe

English pulls ill will but rests sought after
It puzzles you but causes me LAUGHTER
I watch, to tease not a son or DAUGHTER
but to spell the hushed notes in my jotter

Know English, and you kiss it to the bone
Of the Saxons and Angles, it has GROWN
Of the Celts, and battles, it is the CROWN
For this niche, I know not the fitting noun

Any breath pulls its cap an eagle's plume
Fell seers see when it will meet its TOMB
No one of those do its days of old COMB
English, growing all-oneness, is our loam

English is just shifts that do our age stud
The while it changes it exalts our BLOOD
The unlettered rove; about it they BROOD
Those who evoke its energy bear shrewd

It is well when the milked cow also calve
English does but twenty-six letters HAVE
All let forty-four phonemes to the BRAVE
Every request to pat our backs, we waive

So bares my soul for the tongue I sing of
The avid can tell my heart from my LOVE
Well, I may say if this does no-one MOVE
On any tough land, English cuts a groove

The Celts could descry a four-leaf clover
but the Vikings and Normans took OVER
The stars went obscure as a new LOVER
but one bright moon did in the sky hover

As the printer bewildered spellings more
it pulled to English the reforming CORPS
It was the English era that bore THORPS
for English is the tongue anything warps

This tongue not let to note many a dawn
was awakened for battle days felt GONE
Risen was one ilk that users must HONE
Thus, vital were words from afar on loan

I hold not what the untrained really want

English is fun; still, the blind do it TAUNT
Who fails to grasp lacks an agony AUNT
No other tongue does better relish grant

English adopts a distant writing thought
It is a big flaw with which it is FRAUGHT
Still and all, apostles rest in a DRAUGHT
I can taste this each time I make a draft

That is weird of English spellings at last
— how again they create many a CASTE
Each people spell to signify their TASTE
The view of fit spelling is for the braced

Bright alien spellings stand on their feet
Others are changed to delight the ELITE
English obtains everywhere — as a KITE
Fresh findings and faint lexis put it right

English uplifts and does no student foul
It dwells with no role of a checking OWL
It lets no student clasp a begging BOWL
for its dialects serve enough as a whole

Sages like English clearer — is the news
but scholars who live to fulfill that LOSE
Watch how the USA to the tongue ROSE
That bewilders what any student knows

Well, English is fun and earns my flower
Still, ill eyes will foretell tomorrow LOUR
This pot into which infinite words POUR
cooks to my desire, and offers me more

English is fluid; rigidness cries drowned
Similar spellings may not bear a SOUND
The yet rattled may ever wear a WOUND
Every champion has their custom tuned

This tongue lies fun for a Beth or a Seth
It wishes to starve no interest to DEATH
English may not at all become a HEATH

I may often plough it armed to the teeth

Older poems hold rhymes felt to be true
In our era, they are what eye rhymes DO
If you trust the Great Vowel Shift did SO
my bliss, like a garment, I may now sew

To unite words do visual rhymes masse
Avid eyes may note if they, above, PASS
English proves fun in my treble or BASS
Exact spellings may only wear one face

It paves the means for a scholarly dawn
as I now bared my mind to mister SEAN
My voice, I imagine, has not been MEAN
Now, my intentions may marry my mien

Sochukwu Iveye

Aisha Yesufu

Heart exalted from the mountain of strength
to undertake blessed ventures afresh
Meet the goddess of divine punishment
who gives cannibals a taste of their flesh

The heroine for whom our clock ticks on
She has marked our age on the sands of time
but makes us the owner of her passion
We assume therefore we do her grace mime

Room with a fireplace, vessel breathing fire
They soon plunge through bushes like antelopes
that did your resentment and crusade hire
Now, your children awake their dreams and hopes

Marked with a sword of the sorrowing tongue
which touched your shoulder with the sword of rights
You will never wear out by bearing young
nor be put to rout by your honest fights

Perch for tame birds, Boudicca of our age
A woman against whom men are measured
You do not watch vile hands tear off our page,
rape and torture your children so treasured

Meet a daughter from the town built of stones
A pilgrim through the road to our story
who seeks our freedom with all of her bones
and lets us, her young, bear all the glory

Brave queen who leaves eternal white footprints
Whose gait is borne with the strength of the sea
who of a freer tomorrow gives hints
March astride the soil; your young make this plea

Armour for the faint breast of each warhorse
While the lower forces join in your toil,
the earth gladly interacts with your course
Reign on, as potent, on African soil

Amazing powder for drying our wounds
Each of the injured spirits now frolics
Thank you for your sweat below suns and moons
Your used handkerchiefs turn sacred relics

Sochukwu Ivey