

DEUXIEME PARTIE  
PART TWO

CAMEROON WRITERS IN THE MAKING  
ECRIVAINS CAMEROUNAIS EN HERBE

Short Stories.  
Nouvelles.

## CREATIVE WRITING IN CAMEROON.

*I have been impressed since taking up English-language teaching in Cameroon, with the way with which a good number of the students (I refer to those still attending secondary schools) are able to convey a sense of reality in their composition. This ability applies of course to narrative composition rather than essays of an abstract or descriptive nature. To illustrate the point, here is a selection from such narrative essays. They are taken from the current year's work of pupils at Saint Augustine's College, Nso. The examples are selected rather than typical and a number of "editorial" points have been ironed out. Apart from them - and they are few and minor - the work is their own.*

Brother James.

## A FRIGHTENING EXPERIENCE.

Bamah Susan.  
(Fourth year)

*Last summer holidays I went down to Kumba with my Father to pay a visit to an aunt. The day was cold and the road was very muddy so that my Father was unable to travel fast. We left Metam at ten o'clock in the morning and arrived at Mamfe at about nine and could not continue our journey because of a puncture. We had no spare tyre and so we had to spend the night at the crossroads where this occurred for there was no hotel nor any house nearby.*

*At about twelve midnight I felt something biting me. I got up woke my Father who was sleeping. "Father, Father, ants, lots of ants!" "What is the matter? He said. "Ants, ants!" I shouted. He got up and found the whole car full of ants.*

*He gave me a torch and told me to go into the nearby bush and get some dry sticks and leaves. "Quick, quick!" He said. "Bring plenty." I ran to do what I was told and brought back my Father in the most severe manner. I piled the leaves and branches on the main army which was streaming out of the nearby forest. I soaked them with kerosine and set light to them. They burned very quickly and the fire came towards our car. My Father and I were busy preventing the fire from setting the whole forest ablaze.*

*Before we rushed towards the car we were rather unfortunate because the tin of kerosine nearby attracted the fire towards our car and set it ablaze. We were unable to quench the fire so it burned fiercely and the car was completely destroyed.*

*A man from a nearby palm-plantation saw the fire and ran to us. Before he reached us the fire had gone out and all our belongings were burned with the car. The man was very kind and asked us if we had any friends or relatives around to lodge with. We said no and he took us to his house to pass the night there.*

*We were well entertained and we stayed there for the rest of the night. At dawn we left the generous man and his family for Kumba and thanked him very much for his hospitality.*

*The following tale is slightly more sophisticated than the foregoing and lacks something of its, sense of reality. I do not think many would deny the strength of its narrative impact however. It is written by a fifth - year student.*

## A DAY OF DOOM.

Langah Kisito.

*It is certain that my Grandfather did not know that day's harvesting would be his last on earth. As we gathered the corn with joy and threw it into the barn, the weather began to darken. It was going to rain, I suggested.*

*No sooner had I said this than a very strong and cold wind began to blow. We decided that we should go home but my Grandfather who knew more about the weather than we did, said that it was better we stay where we were until it was all over.*

BY SECONDARY SCHOOL CHILDREN

Collected by Brother James  
Marist Brother

And as we stayed. But the rain would not cease. Instead, it became more and more violent. Soon great stones started rolling down the steep slope on which our farm-house was built. If we did not leave, our farm-house was going to be destroyed with us inside. We left our house climbing up the hill amidst lightning and thunder.

We had not gone half-way when suddenly a great boulder came crashing down on us. Before I knew what was happening, Martina was rolling down the hill together with the stones covering her together. She was lucky. Suddenly she was caught by a tree and the stone passed on its way. We scrambled down the hill as fast as we could and picked her up. We decided to take her to hospital immediately. We did not know what obstruction lay in our way.

We were still in our state of anxious excitement when we reached the main road. We seemed to have forgotten that it was raining, yet the most terrible thing I have ever experienced was to happen. The noise in the sky suddenly grew fiercer. There was more lightning and thunder than ever. We walked blindly on. I was walking beside my Grandfather for I now knew the way.

There appeared in the sky a great flash of light accompanied by a dreadful noise which seemed to me to be the roaring of a lion. In the next second my Grandfather was on the ground beside me with blood oozing from his mouth and ears. With all the strength left in her, Martina threw herself from her carriers and fell on to the dying man. They died together.

We reached home and told our story in the midst of silent listeners. I guessed, and gathered from kizito, that the tale just told was fictitious. I hadn't the heart to ask the girl who wrote the next story if it were true.

## NEL.

Jang Ewija.

It all started on the twelfth of December last year. Whilst in school I had been having sleepless nights. I was always disturbed in my sleep. I had terrible nightmares. So I asked permission from my Principal to go home. He asked me to leave the dormitory and stay with the Rev. Sisters but I refused and insisted on going home. And at last he gave me the permission.

I went home and my parents were very surprised to see me. They asked me what I had come home to do and I told them all that had been happening to me. My Mother promised to take me to hospital the next day which was a Friday the thirteenth of December. But instead of being taken to the hospital, I took someone else.

My little nephew who was just about a year old caught a very serious fever that night. His mother, my elder sister, was not in the house and I was the only one in the house who could take the child to hospital. My Father was in Yaounde and as there was nobody to drive his car, I had to walk carrying the child on my back at about one o'clock in the morning.

We arrived at the hospital at about half one and the child nearly died on the way. The hospital admitted the little sick boy and I had to stay by his side as he could not help himself. Hour after hour I stayed there, I had sleepless nights now because of terrible nightmares but because I was afraid the only joy of my life, the little child, would pass away.

Saturday, Sunday and Monday came and passed like lightning. I knew nothing of the passing of time because my little one showed no signs of improvement. I was afraid to leave the ward at all for any reason. I feared that on coming back the child might have died. I spent every single minute of my life by my sick child.

Tuesday morning came. Ah what a bright and hopeful day! My small Nel, for so he was called, smiled at me for the first time since he had fallen ill and was able to lift up his head. I took him from his bed and he lifted his right arm up and laid it on my breast. Afterwards he put it in my mouth for he was fond of that. I was so happy I wanted to put him back on his bed and was telling me something my little brain could not understand.

About seven o'clock in the evening I was beginning to understand my son's language as I might call it. The Elms had become very serious again. This time he was not able even to cry but was just stretching himself on the bed and turning his eyes. I could no longer see the pupils but only the whites of his eyes.

What else could I do? I had to face the reality. I knew the person I loved most on this earth was soon going out of my life. I knelt by the bedside of my dying son and prayed in God's name. The prayer Jesus prayed when he was about to die, that if "this cup cannot pass away then, will be done", and his will was done. The following day which was Wednesday the twentieth, he died at twenty minutes to eleven. I was so tired that I could not even weep. The corpse was taken home and was buried.

## THE FIGHT

He strolled up, determined and persistent. He looked silent and obstinate, and from looking at his face, one could almost see that his little heart was going so hard with indignation and rebellion.

Standing at a corner with hands folded, Tano regarded him with scorn and indifference. He was not ready for any squabble but if this wench of a boy decided to be obstinate... well then.

Hanging loosely from his shoulder was the cap which he had seized from the boy. It was not of much use to him, but this would give him an opportunity to show off his strength. He was always followed by a train of boys who admired him not only for his strength, but for his fine figure also.

A group of young boys had already gathered around. There were also officers to be the judge over the fight which was inevitable. There were hints on how the enemies should handle each other. Some faked derision and in every way the group encouraged the two enemies to settle the issue with a duel.

A big boy, the bully among all of them, pushed forward. Planting his feet wide apart and with shorts which hung loosely, he thrust forward his two palms. The crowd among the two would be the one to refuse to hit his palm; thereby refusing to fight. The little boy, agitated and fearful, stepped forward and hit the bully's palm. Tano stepped forward by pride hit the bully's palm also. For a moment, the enemies glared at each other menacingly. Then.....

The two flew at each other, teeth bared and fists raised. In a flash both were down. There was swearing and a cloud of dust enveloped them. Nothing could be seen but legs kicking furiously in the air. The group went wild and jumped round the boys happily. Shouts of encouragement came from all sides. Bits of paper and sticks flew, but none of the boys was ready to give up.

"Get back to class", came an unexpected and booming voice from nowhere - it seemed. The headmaster had arrived. Horrified, the boys scurried away leaving the two unfortunate enemies to fall victim in the hands of the master. The fighting stopped abruptly. The boy mood up slowly, bruised and dusty, still glaring at each other angrily.

The master took hold of both and dragged them away roughly. Sitting at the window seat I had watched them, was still watching, but they were soon lost to sight. I smiled grimly to myself. Pride and selfishness! The main defects of this world of ours - I had seen a fight.

Joseph FOBA

Class IV

Lourdes College, Mankon - Bamenda.

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