

## Brass

*(for Benise)*

I pay attention to the dry bones  
with which you knock on my heart,  
whistling like the harmattan  
at keyholes in January.

I pay attention to the coals  
you place on my shut lids,  
burning through my eyeballs  
to the secret locked in my heart.

Yes, love walks a thin rope of naira  
strung out to your bed and girls.  
Love plunges into a brandy river  
to salvage satiation, a capsized boat lying on its side.

I must swim the crocodile creek,  
a red rooster in my right hand,  
to find you among the swaying reeds  
of desire; recall the oyster joy of your bosom.

I must traverse the treacherous distance of desire.  
I must swim the crocodile creek  
to find you at the bottom of my dream,  
a galleon the fortune-seekers will never find.

G. 'EBINYO OGBOWEI