



New names, New Faces



Author

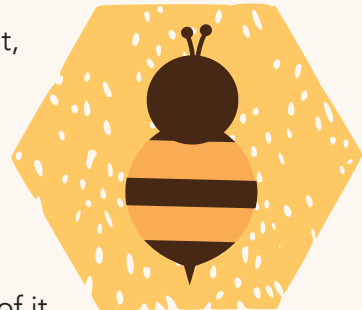
Hawa N. Kimbugwe





Silence drips from rafters like rain in deserted houses
It coats tongues, thick and still
They have seen what happens
To those who speak with open throats and full chests
To those whose words rattle the air like broken chains

Some sit in shadows, not by choice
Light has burned them before
Others gather around the glow of detachment,
Warmed by the quiet,
Too tired to feel the complicity.



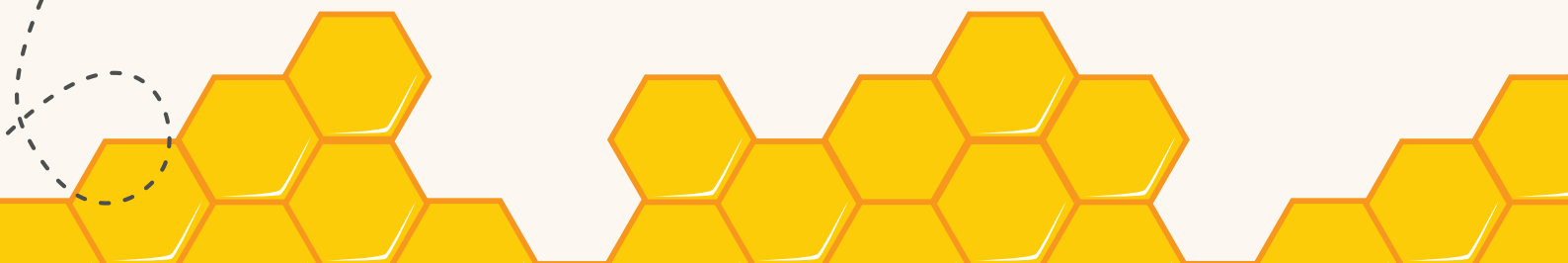
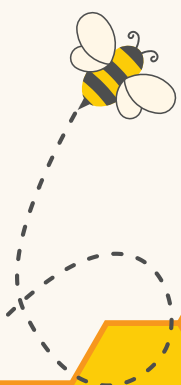
Eyes glance, but do not linger.
Hands twitch, but do not rise.
The crowd nods to the rhythm of staying out of it.
And I watch them all.
Wide-eyed with a hunger for something I cannot name



New names, new faces
Same games, same places
Yet silence holds the same shape

I envy the weightless ignorance,
The feathered sleep of the untouched.
How peaceful it must be
To float above the fray
To sip from the river and never ask where it begins.
I do not know that peace
I have known the bees and their burden.

The bees burn through their hours.
Bent backs glinting in dawn's light
Passing sweetness from wing to wing.
Stacking life against winter.





While beetles rest beneath shaded stones,
Feigning frailty with practiced grace.
Their shells polished with lies
Their steps were choreographed to mislead.

They drag gold from the hive in daylight,
Slip it into silk-lined pockets.
They return at dusk, offering crumbs wrapped in flags.
They kneel beside the bees, whispering orders as prayers.

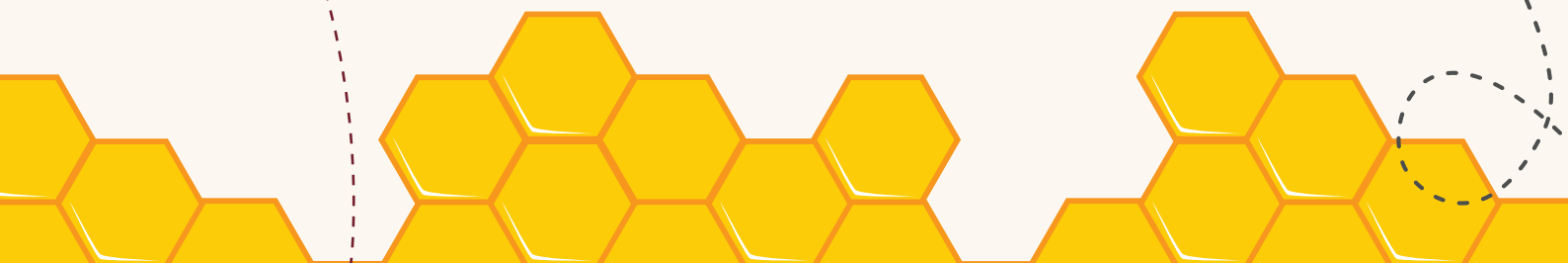
Fields bloom with the sweat of wings,
But the harvest rolls uphill.
Scales tip in favor of those who never sowed
Their hands stay clean, their names engraved in brass.

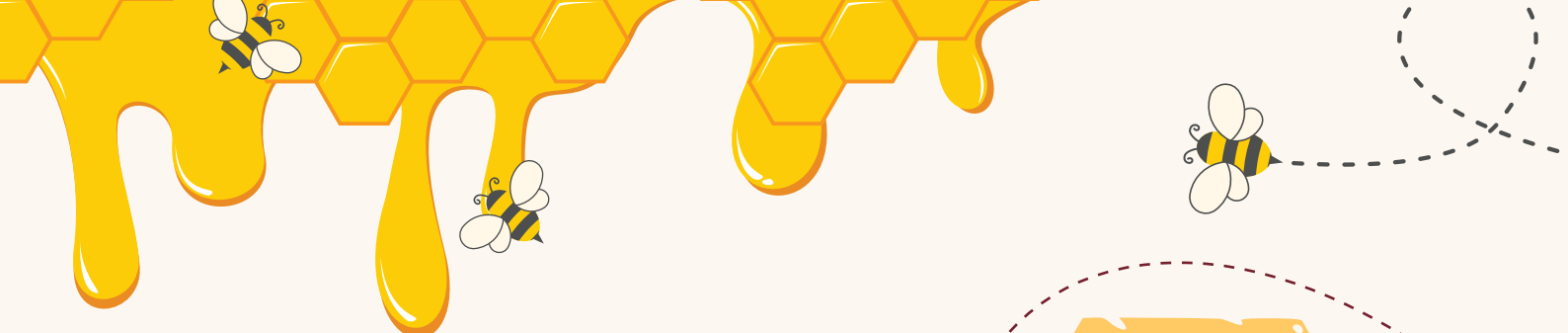
New names, new faces
Same games, same places
The patterns return like floods in spring

And still,
They say nothing
They watch
Empathy curled in the corners of their mouths
Never quite reaching their hands

But I
I feel the sting beneath the silence
I see the outline of what could be
If we dared to move

Death waits, yes – quiet; certain,
But so does fire /
and joy /
and justice,
If we let our voices rise before we fall.





So, I gather mine, even if it shakes.
I speak, even if it draws blood
Let the beetles scuttle behind cloaks
Let them choke on their honeyed lies.
Let the names change while the games stay the same
Let the faces change while the places stay the same
I will not!

I will live with my hands open, not clenched
I will leave behind more than echoes.
If dust awaits us all, let me arrive burning.



The poem above analyses Nyuki, a political comic published by Akina Mama wa Afrika. Nyuki—Swahili for “bee”—is a symbolic story that follows the journey of bees, creatures known for their collective labour and communal strength. Using this allegory, the comic unpacks the legacies of colonialism, imperialism, and patriarchy, revealing how these forces have shaped modern wealth inequality. Told from a Pan-African feminist perspective, Nyuki challenges dominant narratives and reimagines taxation as a tool for justice, equity, and Ubuntu. Read the Nyuki Comic here [The Bee Story: A Metaphorical Tale of Wealth Disparity and The Need to Tax the Rich](#)



About the Author

Renowned poet and social justice advocate **Hawa N. Kimbugwe** inspires transformative impact through innovative artistic expression and strategic leadership, empowering youth, girls, women and fostering inclusive communities.

