

no. 3

# Nilichoandika

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for the works I've written and those to come

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Cover Image by Calvin Lupiya via Unsplash.com

# #TheShortStories

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Hello World, what's good? How's your July coming along? Is it here yet? Well, I'm all about the holidays and I wanted to make this edition all about short stories. I also wanted to keep it short.

I've been doing a bit of writing and reading a couple of books off NetGalley throughout June and July.

There have been some great songs and albums that I have been listening to and I'd just like to say that DAN+SHAY have an epic country album that just blew me away. It's been on repeat for two weeks now.

So, for more of my escapades check out the blog:  
[www.nilichoandika.wordpress.com](http://www.nilichoandika.wordpress.com)

Here are two short stories for this issue. The August Issue will feature my travel escapades!  
Lotsa love, Nilichoandika.



*Tell a friend, to tell a friend.*

*For more updates on the upcoming issues visit:*

[www.nilichoandika.wordpress.com](http://www.nilichoandika.wordpress.com)





# Just Before Midday

Written by Anam Agano/ Photography by SethDoylee via Unsplash



Growing up, my Father held onto one truth "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," and judging from the beatings I received, one should deem me wiser, but my fate has never been of my own choosing.

He lived by each word that oozed off the pages of that book. However, I never understood why such a small revered book could make fear a member of our house. Simply put, Father never spared the rod. Of course there were those times when I'd gather every breath, belief and strength and in those moments I called him 'Daddy. I suspect that my resemblance to my mother was unbearable. He was shy and reclusive, and as far back as I can remember, my father was either in a drunken stupor or getting drunk.

He's too sick now, all the drinking eventually caught up with him. He won't live fully his remaining days. He suffered a stroke and now spends his time staring into emptiness, locked inside himself. I try to help him as often as I can, but he won't let me.

As a child father rarely looked my way more than once, whenever he did, I knew straight away. Better behave! Not that he was lazy or couldn't be bothered; I guess that was his way of announcing a spanking. Other parents said way too much and gave much too many warnings before they eventually acted, Father didn't. I liked his way better, I mean, too much talking isn't for me either. Action speaks louder than words - I learned that from Sunday school. Tough love that's what it was. It would help me one day, I thought, but at the time it was hell.

Any household like mine left little to the imagination on what was right and wrong - moral and immoral. After a while, no longer a child, I found out that father was the drunkard who fought everyone; we were the family to avoid, the rotten bunch. Growing up in Africa, religion, like obeying your parents, isn't an option.

For us, Church and by extension Sunday school belonged to an ever-burgeoning category of things never to be questioned. Morality and immorality tend to converge the older we get, like an alcoholic daddy. It hits you all at once; the only device left is the imagination. Reconciling human fallacy, inadequateness to the godly fear instilled in me as a child became unbearable.

These childhood memories linger on. Like the constant cloud above my head, or the shadow we were taught not to play with. They have little to do with learning as much as playing in the African sun on a Sunday, just before midday, without a care in the world.

We were finally on our own, away from the threatening eyes of our parents, away from the hopelessness.

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*Anam Agano is an aspiring writer. His favourite Authors include Charles Bukowski, Kazuo Ishiguro, Elena Ferrante (not her real name of course) and Ta-Nehisi Coates. He tries to read at least two books every month. He also has this blog [www.sidebarbooks.blog](http://www.sidebarbooks.blog) where he shares his views on literature and life. Send him a tweet @sidebarbooks*

# A Symphony

Written by Sara Jama Mohamed/ Photography Courtesy of Unsplash

What is your earliest childhood memory?

A simple question, albeit a nostalgic one, but this question comes to me through a tune, a chord, a sport, a dance, bright colors and the look of admiration on my Father's eyes. It also brings with it 'the talk'; the day mother had to explain what was appropriate for a well nurtured Somali girl.

When I close my eyes, I recall being four years old and enjoying arts and sports. I lived for school competitions and winning at districts. I enjoyed running back to my Father with my piece of art and having him admire what he saw, the brilliance of a child, his child. Oh, how you'd think I'm bragging when I get started on being on both gymnastics and dancing teams the first four years of my grade school.

The sheer pleasure of playing the piano would later come to the light.

Now, when I think back of this time, I wonder why it was ever deemed right that only girls would pick what was expected of them. My love for art and expression was deemed immodest and I had to choose between my desire and Mom. I chose her.

Sometimes, it comes to me in bouts of angst, sometimes it sheds a light of how wrong I was to set aside the things I cherished, simply to fit into a cultural mold.

What is your earliest childhood memory? It's not just the music and sports, it's the day I found that as a child someone could make you choose one over the other and growing up to live with a decision is like buying a piano as a piece of art for a house and never lifting that board to strike a symphony!



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*Sara's Somali born, raised in Abu Dhabi. She returned to Somaliland to pursue her undergraduate studies at University of Hargiesa. She got that degree in Biomedical Sciences and now works as an Elementary teacher at IAAE Primary School. She's got a heart of gold, loves mentoring young girls and women and she's so epic she's a Young Africa Leaders Initiative Fellow.*

