

# LETTER TO MY NEPHEW

for  
**Ken Saro-Wiwa**

The sun is locked in evening, half shadow  
half light, hills spread like hunchbacks over  
plains, branches bowing to birth of night.  
It's an almost endless walk until the earth

opens up to a basin of water. You gasp  
even the thin hairs on your forearm breathe,  
flowers wild, two graves of man and wife  
lying in perfect symmetry, overrun by wild

strawberries. Gently you part the reeds,  
water claims the heat from the earth, you  
soak your feet, then lie down hands planted  
into the moist earth. You glow. Late at night

when you leave, you will fill your pockets  
with wet clay. But many years from now,  
you will try to find a perfect peace in many  
different landscapes, drill water out of memory

to heal wounded limbs of the earth. You  
will watch as machines turn your pond  
inside out, spit the two graves inside out  
in search of sleek wealth. Many years

later, after much blood has been lost and your  
pond drained of all life you will wonder, shortly  
before you become the earth's martyr, what  
is this thing that kills not just life but even death?

## **About The Author**

***Mukoma Ngugi*** is a Kenyan poet currently working on an MA in African Languages and Literature at the University of Wisconsin. He holds an MA in Creative Writing from Boston University and a BA in Political Science and English from Albright College. His writing has appeared in Brick Magazine, Smartish Pace, Student Under Ground, and Teeth in the Wind amongst others. His poetry has been featured in the following anthologies: One Hundred Days, Barque Press and New Black Writing, John Wiley and Sons. A political manuscript on Africa, *Conversing With Africa*, was published by Kimaathi Publishing House.