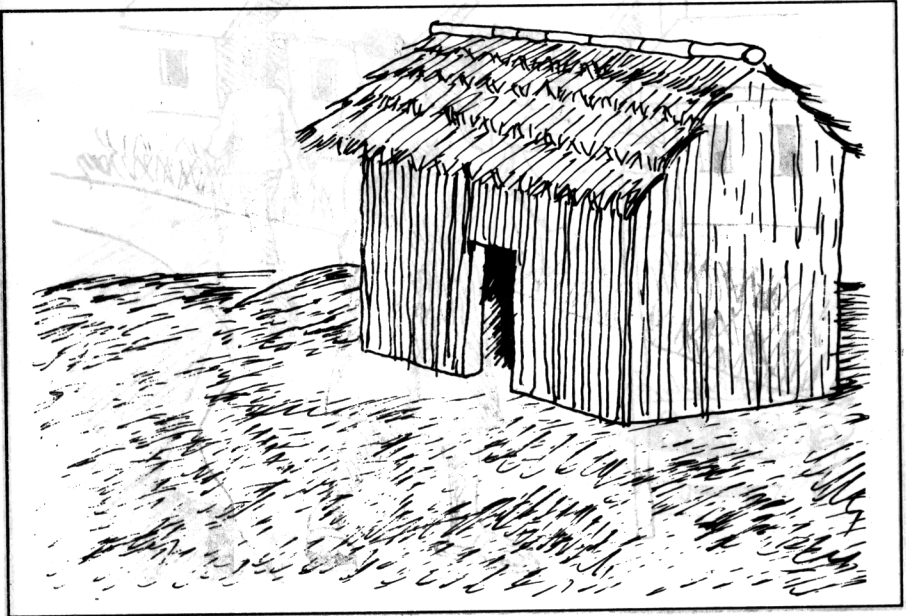


MY BUDDY

There's this bud, bud, buddy.
I'm fond, fond, fond of.
He took me home one day
To know where he shelters.

It's an old wretched house
That makes a shelter for him.
And a poor old woman
Who is a mother for him.
I became all pity, pity
For him my bud, bud, buddy.

My bud, buddy noticed my mood moody.
He said to me stern and soft.
«Look bud, bud, buddy
No need to worry, worry, worry.
For the choice never was mine
Look! Even these fingers fail to be same».



GREATNESS

Mother solemnly said to me one day:
Greatness comes with effort and patience

This we all must have to know.

When we're only crying babies

We're totally far, far away from it.

As boys and girls we're hardly great

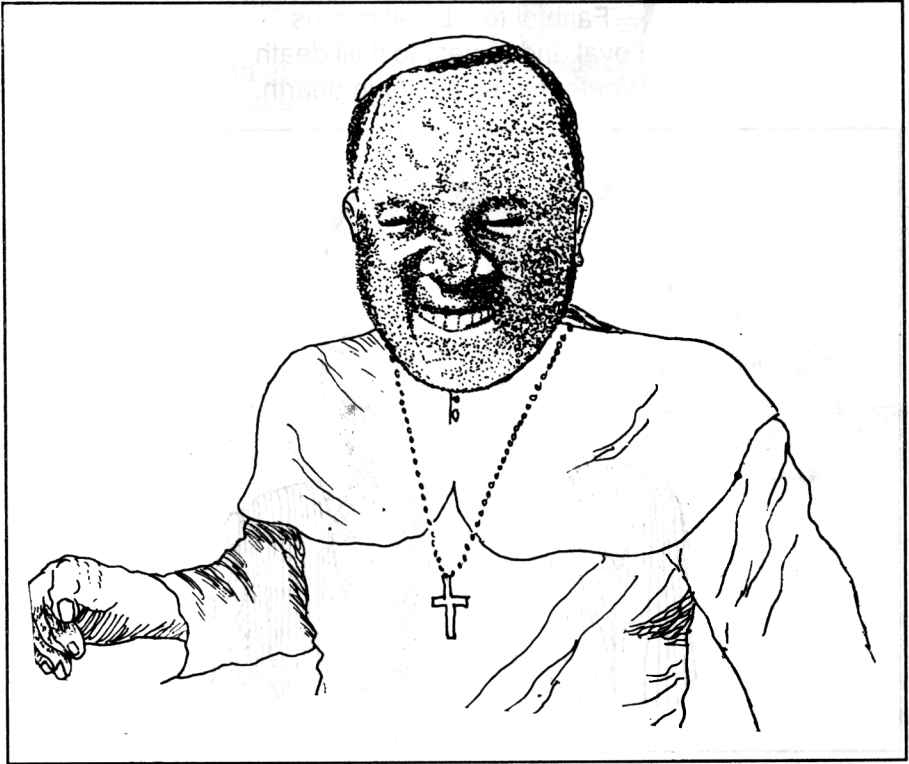
Because the time hardly has dawned.

But as men and women we'll surely be

Really close to becoming great.

But greatness comes with effort and patience

This we all must have to know.



PATRIOT

Shy shiri shot up a finger.
Teacher nodded
She stood opened her little lips
And shyly asked:
Teacher, teacher, may I know
Who is a patriot?

Teacher in turn opened his lips
Gave out a cough, short and slight
And then rolled out a rumbling hum:
Children, children, give me your ears.

A patriot is a citizen of a nation
He or she is in earnest love
With their one and only nation
Faithful to it by all means
Loyal and honest to it till death
Whether in wealth or in dearth.



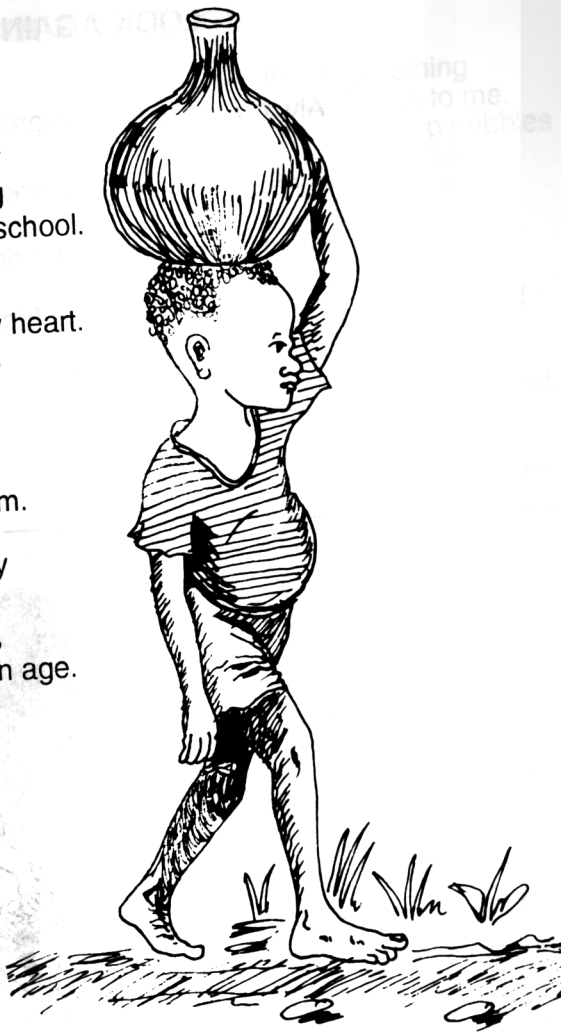
MORNING DEW

At dawn everyday
I go to the village spring
A giant gourd on my head
To fetch water, for drinking
Before picking my way to school.

What I see each morning
Springs up a dance, in my heart.
Each blade of grass stays
covered

In its own grey blanket.
Plain calm and peaceful
As the sun rises onto them.

How I hate when the grey
blankets
Are thrown off and away,
As hostile dawn, takes on age.



Sammy Oke Akombi

Remember September 11

The twin towers went crashing down
As hate-infested villains bumped into them.
Passengers and all burst into infernal flames
Marking an end, for thousands of people
Cut down in their journey of thousands of miles
Even before they had said their last prayers.

But has anything change after towers
And the people had turned into rubble?
Has anything changed, apart from the ballyhoo
As to who's right and who
Is wrong about the ensuing actions?

Actions which have only led to more
Letting of blood, much more blood letting.
Let's drop it! People of the world drop it:
Fundamentalism, parochialism, racism, Zionism,
And adopt the love for peace- *helas*, peace-ism
Which definitely will bring about
The much desired heaven on this earth of ours.

September 6 2004

*

LOYU-AH

A tramp called Ngato was passing by, one day, when an abandoned building caught his eye. He took up his head and saw that the doors were wide open. He walked into it and found out that each door had a shutter but the shutters had not been shut. One of them led him to a staircase. He walked upstairs and it struck him that the house was yearning for a tenant. He decided to be that tenant and lived there for one week and then he saw that it was good. No- one had come to eject him and he found himself in the luxury of a ten-room home. He thought of many other homeless people in Yunda City and decided to invite them to share his mansion. In the week following, the building had become a home for forty-four other people. Twenty-five downstairs and twenty others upstairs. They were all happy, having found warmth in their misery .

Prior to their living together, they had had almost nothing in common. They did not even belong to the same tribe; some of them came from other countries. This was no cause for worry as they all firmly believed that they belonged to the same race and besides, they were not involved in any race. They all had unalloyed respect for Ngato, whom they considered as mentor. They fondly called him '*vieux*' and named their home *Beyond Frontiers House*.

At the dawn of every day, each got up and after the morning rituals, disappeared into the city, to do what they could to live through the day. Some of them were street beggars, others were roving shoe repairers and tailors and there were some who spent the day scavenging the numerous refuse dumps in the city. They always claimed they worked very hard even though their incomes were usually everything but good enough to enable them live decent lives. At dusk they met and shared their miserable experiences under two dim lights from two bush lamps. From time to time they were distracted by some gleeful outburst of laughter that came from the other side. The other side where flood lights lit the splendid tennis courts of the Great Aim Hotel. Some people were enjoying the game of tennis with their rackets rising and falling, swaying from side to side and giving hard knocks on the hard balls that went swiftly over the different nets. Out of the room windows directly opposite Beyond Frontiers House came fluorescent lighting which carried a positive message about the occupants of the rooms. Even the lawns outside were lit by special bulbs. At each outburst, the folks of Beyond Frontiers House, in unison, would raise their heads, look in the direction of the laughter and appear to swallow their saliva as they resumed what each of them had been doing. Their nights like their days were usually long and without promise. It was not unusual for Ngato and his people to talk themselves to sleep.

Like it happened at each dawn of day, the Beyond Frontiers household left for their various occupations. At dusk, one by one, they returned home to find that everything that was theirs was out of place. Their home had turned into a huge heap of rubble. They looked around and noticed that the premises had been visited by strange visitors, very strange indeed - caterpillars and bulldozers. By the time all the forty-five pairs of eyes were looking at the rubble, astonishment, embarrassment and frustration could be read on every face. One of them sighly turned to Ngato and asked, "Vieux, what's the meaning of this?"

"I can't explain either, but something's telling me it's Loyu-ah," Ngato said sorrowfully. As if they had all been bitten by the same mosquito, all the forty-four chorused, "Loyu-ah ! What's that ?"

Ngato could not find words to explain. He just stood looking nervously, as if the pairs of eyes were piercing through his heart. He shook his head sadly and slowly tears started darting out, down his tired cheeks. After sometime, someone in the crowd called out " I can explain, I can explain.!"

The crowd went dead. He raised his voice and spoke solemnly:

“You see brothers and sisters, the city has recently been boiling with a lot of activity. The big, big men and of course big women of Africa are coming here soon for some big, big meeting. It is this meeting they call Loyu-ah. So those who speak French call it; for those who speak English it is Oh-ei-yu.

“They're having this big, big meeting, so what?” Another person wondered aloud. “So they've got to get rid of Beyond Frontiers House. It stood in their way, too close to Great Aim Hotel,” he said pointing to the imposing building. “It'll be home for many of the big, big men and of course the big, big women who are coming for the big, big meeting.” They can't live too close to a home so wretched and infested with wretches like you and of course me, the man explained

“But this meeting, what is it for? Look at what they've done to us. Even our belongings are now part of that rubble, complained one of the people.

“It's for the unity and progress of African people, “ answered another man.

' Ah, unity and progress indeed!' said Ngato, “I thought you, Kasimawo and you Ahmadou and you Amandela, Abdoulayi, Muamaru, Hosini, Arapapa and the rest of us here, were all Africans? I ask this question because tonight we're each going our separate ways, for the home that used to bind us has been turned to rubble. “
