KOJO LAING

Vacancy for the post of Jesus Christ

When the small quick lorry was being lowered from the skies, it was discovered that it had golden wood, and many seedless guavas for the hungry. As the lorry descended the many layers of cool air, the rich got ready to buy it, and the poor to resent it. The wise among the crowd below opened their mouths in wonder, and closed them only to eat. They ate looking up while the sceptical looked down. And so the lorry had chosen to come down to this town that shamed the city with its cleanliness. The wheels were already revolving and, when they shone, most of them claimed they were the mirrors of God. The lorry was quick but the descent was slow. So many wanted to touch it. A whole morning had passed leaving its dew behind long ago; and yet the lorry had not reached the earth. The wooden gold was easy with its birds landing and unlanding. And when the great gust of African rain came down, the wise still kept their eyes up, the poor huddled, and the rich shut their purses small. But nobody left. Come down, lorry of golden wood, with your cleanest exhaust ever seen, they said.

And the old woman was crying. They asked her whether she was crying for a wasted age, or she was crying for the coming lorry. 'Come and cleanse me, divine owner of this mammy truck, take my heart now, for I eat too much cassava to be good, I break too many proverbs.' They stared at her, then forgot her, for the lorry's golden rope had slackened, and was coming down a little faster. If only it could send down some sheabutter for the strained necks . . . and tell the birds to stop their singing so loud, for they wanted to hear the engine and place the range of its power. 'But we don't want material power, we want miracles, and the healing of the spirit.' The sceptical looked at the poor for the poor to share the slander of what had just been said. As if to say: when was material bread never needed? But the lorry did not mind