

The Literary Circus

I last saw him in Chingwe's hole,
Scavenging the charred remains
Of poetic inspiration.
He complained,
The rhymes had become phreatic,
Reachable, so he lamented,
At the mercy of literary morticians.

He once chanced into the writers' circle,
Believing in the new poetic ambience
But had no protege;
Thought it an ingress into the circle,
And trusted the protection
Of the self-acclaimed champs of free speech.

Boy, he should have known!
They screened every p and q,
Diagnosing the poetic cancer
That sadly ate away the defamiliarization;
And they didn't skip the syphilitic references
To political demagogues of yesteryear.

A few lines were disparaged,
The majority were inoperable
With the nuances of the imagery
Grossly wanting,
And the rhythms out of step,
Violating the sanctity of the Muse.

The international court of poesy
Could have tabled his case -
Had there been one.
And the champs of free speech,
Had they not deserted him.

He had dreams of a Nobel Prize,
A life chance of a residency,
A column in the newspaper,
But had reckoned
Without the literary demolition squad.

Being effusive in their criticisms,
He could not plead poetic license
In extenuation of the poverty of alliteration.
Wasn't this Hobson's choice
That expurgated him from the circle?

They chipped off chunks
Of his ordinate passion for poetry,
Porking at his already growing inquietude.
He thought
They had bleached poetic license
From public tapestry.

He again complained
Of the drudgery at creating lines
That sounded poetic and not prosaic,
And of the rough touch of literary undertakers.
Naturally,
He poeted his last,
Wondering,
If poetic certainties aren't rather blurred.

Alfred J. Matiki