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FOUND IN A CATACOMB

by

Methode Alain Butoyi

The milk suddenly turned to blood
 when they came when they came
 the morning dew stared away, dumbfounded
 and the crickets shied away
 as though choking on their sweetest medley
 when they came when they came
 the manes on their shrines
 briskly shook their heads in alert
 of that one of a kind encounter.
 The hippo shoved off home
 not without shedding a tear of solidarity
 for the deeper-tanned mankind ashore.
 They came by ten they came by thousands
 bringing along nothing obliging
 but boring phlegm and historic dilemma. uprooting syndrome.
 In the land of plenty they settled down
 down on the edge of a mother's dream of Africa!
 They killed the birds, the moths, mother
 you killed the fear of everything but you.
 Once there were the cows of Monomotapa
 and milk inside the cow and flesh around the milk
 look around and see nothing but
 the flatness of now
 nothing but the nightmarish seething waters.
 He came from the freedom land
 and cleared his voice
 spoke of Nkrumah - Nkrumah was dead had died or had he?
 Windhoek, listen to the golden sound of silence
 o hark the manes of your ancestors:
 "Don't stir the shadows,
 boring kingdom of molasses
 white shade of milk turned to sour
 nothing but circumstantial."
 I hear the drums of the warriors
 strolling through green hills
 delight of the morning dew
 the milk has turned to red red hopes
 of a belated sun
 shining over Mau Mau shepherds
 their shukas blown by the afternoon wind of plebiscite
 Roll me easy dada

beware the midsummer's fever mingi
brother sleep tight no fight
Ian's talk fight-fight
Chaka avenge the martyrdom, Kariuki, Biko
behold! Messiah dreaming in Monomotapa ruins
blossoming tears of tomorrow's Luanda
diamond pregnancies stranger midwives
k-k breed beware
newborn baby's water colder than the coldness
of the spear
coyote choke me not in the middle of my dream
in the middle of my birth
o Mother Africa, kneel down and give me birth
again.