



OKIKE

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IJE UDE

Dear Daddy

It is a full moon.
And from the other side of the world,
I hear your loneliness.

Each absence is a whip
across our bare back.
Each lie stings like salt
on fresh wounds.

I would have liked you
to gather me into your arms and comfort me
like wind flowing over sand

I would have liked you
to carry me along
gently, and watch me
settle into my
SELF

I wish you peace:
the sudden eruption of truth.

I'll wait patiently
until you are covered in its lava
and flow back into our lives.
You are my soul's mate.
Without you
my heart will always be lonely.

Aisha

Dear Aisha,
Spread your fragile wings
and step into the dark

Our parents
wrapped us in courage,
then let us fall from their arms
into the sky.

Now you're dropping, drifting,
drowning, dizzy, dreary and
depressed.

You're a clay of strength
sculpted with love
and fear is fighting to mold you.

Remember my big head
in your little lap,
you playing with my hair?
Mommy saying I was too heavy
but you just pulling me near?

The sun is within you.
Your doubt is a passing cloud.
You are perfect and have
all that you can't do without.

Your heart is your soul's mouth.
Feed it everyday.

Dream and write, pray and sing.
Dance your fears away.

Your mind is your heart's eye.
Sharpen it with silence.
Listen to the love inside you.
It'll protect you from violence.

Your will is your strength's voice.
Speak it through your goals.
Achieve, reflect, accept.
Celebration revives our souls.

Start to fly
through life's maze of tests.
Only your wings can create your happiness.

Aisha
my perfect butterfly,
spread your wings gently.
Let your soul be free.

N F INYAMA**From the Comical to the Sinister: Charlatanry as Theme in
Wole Soyinka's Writing**

INTRODUCTION

I start this essay with an assertion. It seems to me that after a writer has produced a number of works, or has practised his craft for a reasonable length of time, certain patterns or elements begin to reappear from one text to another. These may be in the form of character, theme, symbol, setting, and so on. Just as most writers develop individual or peculiar styles over time, a particular theme, symbol, or character may continue to resurface in a writer's successive productions, even if with varying degrees of emphasis, elaboration, or disguise.

Thus, for Ngugi wa Thiong'o, the nationalist struggle in Kenya, with the betrayals which accompanied it, remains a constant theme in his works, even in those that deal with the post-independence era. The theme of power and its manipulation at the domestic, clan and national levels runs through most of the works of Achebe. Apartheid, of course, forms the core of Dennis Brutus's writing. Ayi Kwei Armah's preoccupation with impotent men in a morally and physically dessicated and oppressive society does not begin to resolve itself until we are taken back to a mythical past in *2000 seasons* where a band of young patriots begins a revolutionary struggle against the monsters in their society. In other words, the worlds of *The Beautiful Ones* and *Fragments* reappear in a different guise in *2000 Seasons*, but the impotence of the characters in the two earlier novels is overcome in the latter novel.

