

APOLLO'S WILL: A PLAY

BY

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C50/78981/2012

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REQUIREMENTS OF AWARD OF M.A (LITERATURE) DEGREE OF THE
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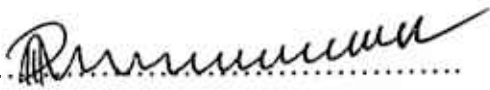
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DECLARATION

This is my original work and has not been presented for a degree or diploma in any other university.

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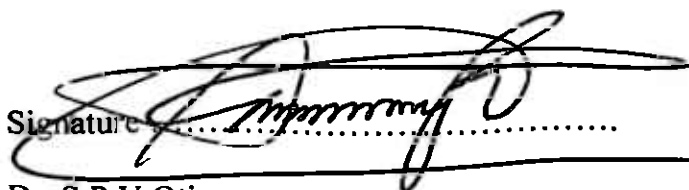
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This Project has been submitted for examination with our approval as University supervisors.

Signature 

Date 2.11.2015

Dr. Makau Kitata.

Signature 

Date 29/10/2015

Dr. S.P.V Otieno.

DEDICATION

To my son Frank, Agnes my loving wife, Ann my dear mother and to the memory of my late father Alfred.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION.....	ii
DEDICATION.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
ABSTRACT.....	vi
CHAPTER ONE	1
BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Statement of the problem.....	2
1.3 Objectives	2
1.4 Hypotheses.....	3
1.5 Justification.....	3
1.6 Literature Review.....	3
1.7 Theoretical Framework.....	17
1.8 Methodology	20
1.9 Scope and Limitation	20
CHAPTER TWO	21
APOLLO'S WILL	21
SYNOPSIS.....	21
WORKS CITED.....	83

ABSTRACT

This play, *Apollo's Will*, focuses on an inheritance conflict in a church set-up. It exposes hypocrisy, power struggles and greed in religious circles. The project uses dramatic techniques and theories of play writing that focus on the unities of drama: unity of place, time and action. My project also centers on the sociological literary theory in the appreciation that literature is not made in a vacuum. *Apollo's Will* satirizes the society by exposing the gullibility of worshippers and the hypocrisy of preachers. Apostle Apollo uses his Apostles Apolycapse Ark church as a base to have a smooth life. He uses the tithes paid to the church to indulge in immorality by visiting brothels. When he is set to become the leader of the church, he blackmails Ludia into marrying him so he could keep her secrets intact. Ludia on the other hand supports the church to run its programmes by paying tithes regularly but she never attends church service. The struggle for power of the church and Apollo's wealth splits his family leading to their secrets being exposed. Congregants at the Apolycapse Ark are surprised to note that all along they have been dealing with a criminal disguised as a preacher. Apostle Apollo is thus exposed as a land grabber and a sexually immoral preacher. The play reflects contemporary society in the way it exposes the vulnerability of Christians, and the duplicity and insincerity of leaders in the church.

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Drama is an art that can be appreciated in various forms. Many people love watching performances on stage, many more would appreciate the art even more on film. Because of this dynamism of drama, several writers have found it worth their while to express their creativity through this medium. I find this genre of literature important as a means of my communicating my ideas because of the added advantage that drama can still be packaged for the reading audience.

This project focuses on the hypocrisies of religious leaders especially the Christian ones out of the acknowledgement that they play a central role in making those who feel abandoned cared for. Kenya has a majority population who profess the Christian faith and very many denominations. In the spirit of Ngugi's "a sensitive writer" who responds to the burning issues of the day, this play is aimed at casting a light on the activities of such men, and women of the cloth with a view to helping them, or others in the same line overcome their weaknesses by reading about them in fiction-because fiction creates an emotional distance and therefore the targeted will also watch and read and see what they should avoid. This is in appreciation that literature has a moral obligation. It is hoped that the play will be able to point the errant preachers in the direction of help as well as help the believers to laugh off their vulnerability and be able to critically examine the sermons they listen to before they believe and act on them.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Although Kenyan playwrights have written about religious hypocrisy, there is need for constant engagement on this topic. This is because hypocrisy among religious leaders continues to be a serious issue that Kenyans are struggling with. Many Kenyans have been cheated out of their fortunes by scheming individuals who either are religious leaders or have found religion an easy way of making money due to the unsuspecting nature of the believers and non legislation on the same. Many religious organizations are not taxed nor are they required in law to constantly prove their accountability. My project therefore is aimed at contributing to ongoing debate about religious issues through drama. It is an acknowledgement that there is need for fiction that can help focus on the problems of believers who have gone through dispossession in Kenya to portray the effect of it and possibly point the victims in the direction of help. Drama, other than any other fictional genre, has a way of using the voice on stage to give life to the voiceless in a way that other genres cannot. Poetry would be good to portray issues that can be read and be understood in a single setting. However, poetry suffers from an intellectual perception and may therefore ill portray issues I envisage. My play is aimed at being such a voice.

1.3 Objectives

1. To demonstrate how creative writing can be used to capture the aspirations of people in the society.
2. To assess and satirize through writing drama believers' gullibility and the role of preachers in furthering the plight of citizens in the society.

1.4 Hypotheses

1. A creative writer is able to capture the aspirations of a people through fiction.
2. Playwrights employ plot, theme and aesthetic effects to assess and satirize society.

1.5 Justification

I choose to use the drama medium because of its immediacy in delivering a message. In church, preachers and worshippers are basically like actors and the audience. Since I base my writing on what preachers preach, what they do and how they get hold of the attention of their followers to continue giving donations to them even when they themselves remain poor; drama is a fair method that captures what really goes on. The believers, the preacher and the church are like the audience, the actors and the stage.

A play on religious hypocrisy will add to the existing body of Kenyan plays. This is important as human beings laugh at their weaknesses with the purpose of correcting them. If the intended changes have not been achieved, constant engagement is required. It is also because drama has the capacity to reawaken people towards advocating for a better society, and thus through writing of the play, the researcher will be assessing and evaluating society with a view to projecting a better society.

1.6 Literature Review

In *The Experience of Literature*, Marjorie Henshaw and Nicholas A Salerno argue that drama employs a variety of conventions than any other form of literature because of its two-part nature.

It can be read as literature; however its primary purpose is to portray people and events through action and dialogue that are performed. It adds to literary conventions a series of

stage conventions. Staging devices-such as lighting, props, costumes-form an integral part of a play. Thus the playwright includes stage directions not only for staging the play, but to help the reader visualize the scene and action. (Montague, 499).

In the writing of my play, I intended that it would be read first because it is part of the requirements for the fulfillment of my course and therefore I was borrowing from this description to describe characters and actions as well as scenes for my readers to visually realize my ideas. I was also cognizant of the fact that the drama needs to be acted and therefore the stage directions should be descriptive enough for the directing and acting to be clearly and meaningfully realized on stage.

Henshaw and Salerno claim that the conventions of the theater provide the context for the action of a play. They identify these conventions as involving plot, symbol, and character. They further identify and explain staging through symbolism as that of using lights, music, vaudeville techniques as well as animals and other aspects.

One of the earliest kinds of function characters is the chorus. This has however led to other character typologies like the confidant, the soliloquy, and the asides. These are all important in my study as I turn to them from time to time.

Plays often employ a narrative structure similar in some respects to many novels and short stories. Though this is true, however, because of its long tradition drama has developed a unique plot which is more conventionalized. Depending on the various purposes for the play and what the playwright wishes to communicate, several schools of drama exist. These include but are not limited to expressionism, impressionism, sentimental drama, and the theatre of the absurd.

However the number of schools of thought, there are basically two types of plot, hence two kinds of drama, these are tragedy and comedy. (Montague, 504)

Rabeca Ray in “The Five Act Play” identifies several structures of a play, among them the Five Act Play. The scholar analyses the five act play in detail and clarifies that the Five Act Play developed from the Three Act Play that was first written about and described by Aristotle.

In comparison with the three act play, the five act play is only more elaborate. The reason many playwrights restricted themselves to the three act play were mostly on audience attention. Frank Deis in “Five Act Play” argues that the format of five acts is familiar from Shakespeare and is “grounded in the concepts of unity in Aristotle’s Poetics.” According to Deis, the five Acts are: Act 1: exposition; Act 2: the complication; Act 3: the climax of action; Act 4: the falling action and Act 5: the catastrophe. Deis explains that it is in the exposition that we meet the dramatis personae, and where the time and place, or setting are founded. The playwright also lets into the audience the antecedents of the story. The playwright also establishes focus on the cause of conflict, and thus attention is directed.

In the complication, the path of action is made clear and is complicated, loose ends are tied. Here, interests clash and events accelerate towards a particular aim. Tension is intensified and momentum is thus built up.

In the climax of the action, which is the last part in the Aristotelian structure, the development of conflict has reached its highest point “...the hero stands at the crossroads, leading to victory or defeat, crashing or soaring.” The climax is the most enjoyable part of the drama and it is at this point that the audience’s attention on the action of the drama is highest. In the Aristotelian structure, the play would come to an end in this Act.

As can be seen from this quote, Aristotle's structure has a catastrophe at Act three, while the Five Act Play's Catastrophe is the fifth Act.

In the fourth Act, there is a falling action. This explains the consequences of the hero's action in the climax. Reversals take place at this time, and in tragedies, heroes are feared to lose almost everything. Pity is highest for the hero here, for he might lose everything. The momentum starts slackening and tension is mounted, build on false hopes, and or fears.

In the final Act, which is also referred to as the dénouement, or the catastrophe, there is the resolution of the conflict "...through a catastrophe, the downfall of the hero, or through his victory and transfiguration."

According to dramatists, there exists closet drama. This form exists primarily to be read rather than to be performed. Proponents of closet drama regard the written form as literature and the performed one as mere melodrama. They thus privilege the written over the spoken, performed. Whereas I do not entirely agree with their sentiments, my project would still benefit from those of this view. I also appreciate that the performed exists before the written can come into being. It being the case, one is likely to find drama considered closet drama embodying most of the elements necessary for a performance. Taban Lo Liyong's *The Colour of Hope* is an immediate illustration. On the cover of the text the playwright clearly labels it Closet drama, which immediately draws our attention that it is not meant to be performed but to be read. However, immediately one turns the pages to start reading it, the playwright provides the stage directions that direct any would be performer (actors/actresses) on how they ought to bring out the roles.

An African royal setting, like the Old Baganda Kabaka's palace. Made of grass, with verandah and its door. The verandah on both sides of the big house can be used as

meeting places. The Chief and His Queen are inside. The Queen is relaxing on a wooden bed strewn with animal skins. The Chief too is relaxing on his more dignified wooden bed, with royal animal skins spread all over it. Brown bucks' skins should predominate. When the queen goes to let the messengers in, she puts on her slippers and uses her walking pole. (Lo Liyong, 1)

Even with the reading alone, one would benefit from imagining how the action would turn out. My project is hoped to reach those who would enjoy the reading as well as those who would enjoy the performance. Being a literature project as well, I hope that it is literary enough, and thus would still agree with the proponents of closet drama that drama needs to be literary.

According to *The Experience of Literature*, comedy is associated with pleasant endings while tragedy is concerned with sad endings. Comedy is concerned less with individuals than with types, types involved in social situations. Comedy tends to be, then, a heavily plotted (although often episodic) form, since what happens rather than the persons involved is emphasized. Comedy usually ends happily, with life triumphing over ruin and death; it ends with a beginning, that is, by suggesting a whole new story to come. Tragedy on the other hand "ends and ends finally, often with the death of the main character." (Montague, 505)

Other dramatic forms that have been founded on tragedy and comedy include farce, melodrama, sentimental drama, and slapstick comedy. According to Montague, melodrama is to tragedy what farce is to comedy. In farce, as in melodrama, exaggeration is blown out of proportion such that there is no appeal to or semblance of reality.

In *The Heath Guide to Literature (1984)* David Bergman and Daniel Mark identify key elements of dramatic literature as characters, dialogue, plot, conflict, setting and language. They argue that

in the text of a play, the setting is usually described in the opening stage directions. Its function is to establish the play in a specific time and place, and it may determine the play's level of reality. The setting may be realistic or non-realistic. A realistic setting requires extensive scenery and stage furniture, for the object is to create as real an environment as possible.

Reese also notes a particular pattern in the development of drama. This is classical, medieval, Renaissance and Elizabethan. The earlier plays had a lot of sermonizing and ethical preaching. The Mysteries or Miracle plays were mostly based on the religious texts, like the Bible stories and were more interested in telling the story, rather than showing any other detail. In this regard, mysteries lacked dramatic conflict as well as enhancing dialogue. The mysteries were followed by the Morality. The Morality had the definite function of showing the effect of evil and mostly struggled to encourage people to remain morally upright.

J.L. Styan in *The Dramatic Experience* says that plot is roughly described as events pieced together to make up a story. The story then communicates a theme, which is the main purpose for which a play is written (4). Styan proposes that the task of the playwright is to arrange the questioning material of cause and effect in such a way as to keep the spectator guessing.

In *Story and Discourse* (1998), Seymour Chatmann says:

The events of a story are traditionally said to constitute an array called 'plot'. Aristotle defined plot (mythos) as 'the arrangement of incidents. 'The events in a story are turned into a plot by its discourse, the modus of presentation (Chatmann, 42).

Carl E Bain in *The Norton Introduction to Literature* (1995) argues that all stories, all individuals are embedded in a context or a setting of time and space. It can be limited to only a few minutes or days. The time can be contemporary or historical. Bain states that the exposition introduces

the characters, situation, time and place. The rising action shows the events that complicate the situation and intensify the conflict or introduce the new ones. He defines the climax as the point where luck changes. For example, a character has had their way but suddenly things change. The mainspring of plot in a play is conflict, which can be physical, psychological, social or all the three.

A character is someone who acts, appears, or is referred to as playing a part in a work of art. According to Montague, a character in a comedy is usually trying desperately to adapt to a social situation; a tragic character is usually trying to establish his own identity or to live his life despite society's demands.

Crisis is an element to the study and production of drama. A crisis is the supreme turning point in the play. The structure of drama is something that has evolved in response to audience reaction. In tragedy the crisis is usually the point from which the fortunes of the hero descend. In comedy the process of tangling up a situation proceeds to the crisis, the point of greatest entanglement; from that point the process is one of clearing up the confusion and bringing about a happy ending.

Finnegan asserts that it is uncommon for all the elements of production to come together in one drama (Finnegan, 501). She observes of written literature that drama, unlike prose narrative, is not 'self-contained' but depends on other additional elements for its full effect. (Finnegan, 502)

This similarity to dramatic performance is heightened by the frequent occurrence of music and sometimes even rudimentary dance movements. It is common for the story teller to begin a song in the course of the narration- often a song sung by, or representing the actions of one of the

characters- and for this to be taken up antiphonally and dramatically on the events and characters of everyday life. (Finnegan, 505).

Ngugi wa Thiong'o has dealt with this issue of religious hypocrisy in several of his works, but most notably in his play co-authored with Ngugi wa Mirii, *I Will Marry When I Want*. According to the Journal of Religion and Theatre, "Ngugi attacks religion as an instrument of exploitation and impoverishment of the poor. The Christianity mission came with colonization. The missionaries are accused of holding the Bible in the left hand and the gun in the right. Though *I Will Marry When I Want* exposes the hypocrisy of the Christian religion, the playwrights do so without centering on the religious leaders. The main characters in the play are followers of the Christian faith such as Kioi and Ndugire. Kioi and Ndugire belong to the group of those who use religion to oppress others. My play is focused on the leaders of the Christian religion, the pastors. The playwrights of *I Will Marry* tackle the same problem of religious hypocrisy as portrayed through the led, my project will address the while focusing on the leaders. In *I Will Marry When I Want*, the playwrights focus is on the period just after independence when collaborators use religion to attract new members into their fold, and force them to carry out rites related to the Christian faith that are costly to the poor Africans who had hoped that with independence they would get back their land. Instead such rites as weddings further impoverish them since those established in religion take advantage of them to further dispossess them:

The KIOIs and the NDUGIREs now leave the table and take more comfortable seats facing the KIGUUNDAS. The SERVANT/WAITER begins to clear the table.

KIOI: What do you want?

KIGUUNDA :(Clearing his throat) We have come because of that matter.

WANGECI: We have thought a great deal about the matter,

And we came to the conclusion that

We should not put obstacles

To your larger purposes.

KIOI: If you have agreed to our plans

We shall now become true friends,

Your house and mine becoming one

In the name of the Lord. (Ngugi, 118-9)

When the Kiguundas present this agreement to the Kiois, they inform the Kiois that they have a problem with the Christian wedding because it would require money that they do not have. Kiguunda knows that a modern church wedding requires lots of things, "...we cannot enter the holy church the way we are, with muddy feet/and these rags ever on our shoulders." In a blatant display of hypocrisy, Jezebel, Kioi's wife, quickly informs them that they do not need a lot, but this goes to be a long list will require Kiguunda to use his one and a half acres as surety. They should have been willing to meet the expenses of the wedding of the Kiguundas if they really hoped to help them lead a sinless life. This list eventually includes rings and flowers which Kioi suggests Kiguunda can purchase, "and you can buy all those from my supermarket on Wabera Street."(121)When Wangeci wonders where they will obtain the money from, Kiguunda suggests that Kiguunda earns a lot of money which he expects Kiguunda makes savings from. The irony and therefore the hypocrisy here is that Kiguunda works for Kioi, and Kioi does not pay him well, only enough to buy sugar. Kiguunda says that two hundred shillings a month 'with which

to buy clothes, food, water, and you know very well/That prices are daily climbing up!/A person earning two hundred shillings,/can he really cope?’’(122)The long and short of it is that Kiguunda asks for a loan from Kioi who informs him that there are no free things, and that because he likes him he will take him to a bank that is known to him so that he can get the money and Kioi withholds an amount from him to pay the bank. Kiguunda gets the money and obtains the things required for the wedding but the wedding does not take place because his daughter has been impregnated by Kioi’s son, John Muhuuni, who refuses to marry her. The Kiguundas end up a disillusioned lot with their land auctioned and a hopeless future courtesy of their courtship with Christianity, contrary to Gicaamba’s advice to him.

We finally note that the title deed to Kiguunda’s one and a half acres of land is replaced by a Christian poster that is of no use to him or his family. Thus, in the name of religion, he is robbed. Though my focus is also on the cheating believers undergo because of religion, the focus is on the religious leader. The time frame is also different as Ngugi is concerned with what happened to the freedom fighters. My project is focused on personalities many years after independence and who are unlikely to trace their dispossession Europeans, Americans and Japanese.

The Trial of Dedan Kimathi is a play that reconstructs the Mau Mau freedom struggle around the person of Dedan Kimathi. It portrays the role Kimathi played in the struggle. But of concern to my project is that, in their effort to deter Kimathi from his mission, the colonial government uses many people, all of whom fail. They resolve to use a religious leader, Priest to dissuade him. Priest is very much aware that he is just tricking Kimathi into believing that it is much more important to be concerned with heaven than with earthly possessions. He tempts Kimathi by stating that ‘...my calling is a little different...my kingdom is not of this world.’’(47-48)

Redemption centres on corruption in the church, especially of preachers. Archbishop Muthemba applies for the registration of the church and sends documents to the Mother church overseas- these include photographs, write-ups and videotapes of the poor malnutrition-prone children of his flock with an expose of the drought of the general surroundings. Arch bishop Muthemba uses the money to enrich himself at the expense of his flock. My play deals with corruption of a different form. Apostle Apollo exploits his flock in sexual terms, though he also benefits, like Muthemba, from their tithes.

In *Redemption*, King'atai becomes a drunkard. This was as a result of the deception from Archbishop Muthemba taking away his land with promises of relocating him (King'atai) with the others to a more fertile place, a promise that only lands King'atai in misery and the preacher on his land. This makes King'atai to seek solace and refuge in the drink. *Apollo's Will* features Marita whose landless condition is as a result of mischief by Apostle Apollo. Apollo colludes with a land dealer and dispossesses Marita of her land, resulting in despair for Marita. Apollo has a secret about his family and therefore, he is leading a life of deception.

Also the message of *Redemption* is for reform in the church such that errant preachers like Archbishop Muthemba are punished and devoted preachers like Manela rewarded. In *Apollo's Will*, the preacher is punished, a pointer to the church in the same direction.

For Wanjala, dialogue in drama should tell a story. Dialogue occupies a central position and is actually at the heart of the time of the play. It is dialogue that tells the story. This is told verbally and physically and visually. Dramatic action does not necessarily mean physical movement, "but regression in the situation, the meeting of minds and wills, with decisions."

A story may be told through disagreements or through discussion. A discussion may lead to a solution, a decision. In a disagreement, characters may be forced to come to an agreement due to pressure for change from the various characters. This pressure may be emotional, situational or even societal. It may not be by direct exposition but “by speech which produces physical action, introducing and accompanying it.”(Wanjala, 160)

The playwrights in East Africa, and Africa did not lack a background on drama on religious hypocrisy. As discussed in this paper, religion and religious hypocrisy have coexisted with drama. In *Tartuffe*, Moliere grapples with this issue and attacks Christianity’s pretenses especially as concerns piety. Many people have been cheated of their fortunes by those who appear very pious, yet deep down, these are only but selfish individuals bidding their time to snatch whatever their benefactors are feeding them. When he first staged *Tartuffe*, the church was mightily offended. *Tartuffe* was meant to expose the behavior of corrupt individuals who “screen their vices behind a façade of purity and goodness, and to portray the often inexplicable willingness of those who would be hoodwinked and almost destroyed in their blind admiration of what should be the transparent excesses of comen.”(Miller, 327)

The insincerity of *Tartuffe* has clearly convinced Orgon, that he surrenders all that he has to him, including his wife! While we expect that Orgon should be cautious, his blind loyalty religious piety does not allow him. Even when his son lets him know what a despicable character *Tartuffe* is, Orgon does not believe. Orgon and his mother are emblematic of the many that religious comen cheat; they are used by the playwright to effectively draw us to the hypocrisies of religion.

Orgon: That will do.

Speak of his poverty with reverence.

His is a pure and saintly indigence

Which far transcends all worldly pride and pelf. (Emphasis mine)(Miller, 342)

Even modern preachers hide behind veils such that their real identity is not discovered. They are as patient as Tartuffe, until they get what they want. When they sin, they will quickly find an excuse, as does Tartuffe:

Elmire: All your desires mount heavenward, I'm sure,

In scorn of all that's earthly and impure.

Tartuffe: A love of heavenly beauty does not preclude

A proper love for earthly pulchritude;

Our senses are quite rightly captivated

By perfect works our Maker has created ;(emphasis mine) (Miller, 355)

Moliere wrote of such preachers using religion in their advances towards women then, this remains the case in Kenya today where several preachers have been caught on camera cheating on their wives. This therefore necessitates a constant engagement with drama, and literature on the same topic. This project will not only explore the topic of cheating of preachers through sex, but also explore the current ways in which such preachers cheat, be they Christian , moslem or of any other religion. Though Moliere's Tartuffe was created around the Catholic Church, its teachings are relevant to any society that encounters the same problem. I hope through my project to enlighten the reader and wider audience of the schemes of religious leaders so that they are enabled to judge with a critical eye, for as Tartuffe argues:

Tartuffe: if you're still troubled, think of things this way:

No one shall know our joys, save us alone,

And there's no evil till the act is known;

It's *scandal*, Madam, which *makes it an offense*,

And it's no sin to sin in confidence. (Emphasis added) (Miller, 370)

For as long as our religious leaders continue saying such things, humanity will suffer. And as long there is no one who comes out to let the act known, to make the act a scandal, and therefore an offense, preachers will continue taking advantage of their flock. This is where my role as a researcher and playwright comes in, to be a voice for those who might not raise it and through my writing, project lessons for a better person.

George Bernard Shaw has also written on this subject. He is especially concerned that religion and state support each other at the expense of the poor. Shaw does not like poverty and in his *Major Barbara*, presents a society that is steeped in hypocrisy. Barbara is concerned about her father; she would not like her father to donate to the church because he is involved in things that go against her faith, like gunpowder business. The sad reality she is unwilling to confront is that the church requires the money from the rich, which the poor cannot afford. In her pursuit of feeding those who are poor, she asks a good question:

Barbara: How are we to feed them? I can't talk religion to a man with bodily hunger in his eyes. (Miller, 720)

According to Undershaft, Barbara's father, all religious organizations exist by selling themselves to the rich. This brings out hypocrisy since in their preaching and teachings; at times they do it

against the rich. In his preface to *Major Barbara*, Shaw claims that church followers at times are not aware of the funding of their organizations.

In fact, Undershaft tells Cusins to “leave it to the poor to pretend that poverty is a blessing: leave it to the coward to make a religion of his cowardice by preaching humility: we know better than that.” (Miller, 717) Shaw is relevant to my project since the people I seek to depict in my play are of humble means, yet the preacher I center comes to take away what they have. His chief weapon is the trust these people have in religion.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

Sociological literary theory assumes that literature mirrors the society. Preachers are found within the society and what they preach about is gotten from the society. Literature is based on the society while it has the potential to inform and construct that society. This theory also postulates that all writers base their writing on the society from which they draw material and change it to suit their purposes. All writers are part and parcel of society and literature has a social relevance and purpose. All human beings are the products of a particular time and place (Welleck, 1949)

In *Theory and Technique of Playwriting (1960)*, John Lawson advances the argument that the theory of dramatic art holds that the dramatic process follows certain general laws derived from the function of drama. Some of these include that the play has an objective to pose certain issues to the society. He further identifies the structure and arrangement of the play as involving elements such as the law of conflict, unity in terms of action, the dramatic action, exposition, continuity, climax and dialogue.

Since drama deals with social relationships, a dramatic conflict must have a social conflict. Lawson acknowledges for drama to have a dramatic conflict which must also be depicting a social conflict. He claims that action in itself would be fruitless if it is not aimed at a particular social condition. He nevertheless argues that action is primary, and action 'however limited it may be, represents a sum of 'given relations' which is wider than the actions of any individual, and which determines the individuals actions.

Another theory that is important in my study is narratology. In their *Narratology* (1990), Onega and Garcia argue that narratology as a theory happens in various works of art such as films, novels, plays diaries among others. They define a narrative as the semiotic representation of a series of events meaningfully connected in a temporal and casual way. They further argue that each genre allows for a specific presentation of the fibula, different point of view strategies, and various degrees of narrational intrusiveness and different handlings of time. Drama as a genre generally tends to focus on a significant and clearly defined action, with a strong plot based on cause and effect. The verbal text of a play is only the basis for the actual performance, which is a different and constantly changeable interpretation of the text and in fact, on every occasion it is a new text for the audience.

The theory of stylistics has been propagated by various proponents in two major fields, literature and linguistics. The approaches differ slightly depending on what each is concerned with. Since this is a literary project, the theory comes in handy insofar as it explains the concept of foregrounding. Drama as an art is not ordinary speech but depends on the centering of certain elements. Even if it were to be ordinary speech, linguists would find stylistics quite appropriate in the study of my play. According to Widdowson (1975, 3) stylistics is "the study of literary discourse from a linguistic orientation". In his argument, what differentiates stylistics from

literary criticism is that stylistics is a bridge, a link to the two. In drama, though most communication is through action, the word is a powerful tool. The way the word(s) is (are) said therefore gives rise to the need for stylistics. The style component in stylistics relates to literary criticism, since in literature we are not only concerned with the written or spoken word but how it is written or spoken, thus how the drama is performed. In style as a deviation from the norm, it is noted that language is a behavior that is governed by rules and norms. When something is done in quite a different way from how it is normally done, then that is said to be a deviation from the norm. In drama, this occurs more often than not. A language also has many possibilities and these possibilities exhibit themselves in dramatic performances.

My play is constructed consciously from knowledge of how stylistics works. Babajide (2000) and Lawal (1997) agree on the fact that style is also a temporal phenomenon, and therefore there could be a style for a particular period of time, new and old. In this regard my play is cognizant of the fact that language of a particular time and place may differ accordingly. Characters in a play in a court setting will for instance be expected to speak in the way court proceedings are carried out, thus the style of the court. Since my play is focused on a church setting, it thus follows that certain idioms would issue from the play. This is quite as it should be, characters in drama, as in real life speak or act and their manner reveals some understanding of their nature. A lawyer speaking to his wife would speak differently from the way he would speak to his boss. Someone who has not gone to school would not use the language of those who have gone in the same manner, this is explained by stylistics. According to Matere Gabriel in his M.A Thesis (2013), “In the language world, there are Chaucerian and classical time, differentiated by features. Old English, Middle English and Modern English periods, Elizabethan, Victorian and Renaissance ages with peculiar features (literary and linguistic)” (Matere, 59)

1.8 Methodology

This study was guided by close reading of texts related to the selected theme, like *The Trial of Brother Jero* by Wole Soyinka, in order to establish what has been captured and what is yet to be captured by drama texts so as to be able to take an angle that fills the gaps. Critical works were handy as they helped shape the researcher's thoughts. I also read works on creative writing in order to be able to weave a narrative out of the collected data. My general approach involved library research, close reading, and observation.

1.9 Scope and Limitation

This proposal centered on writing a play that is focused on a church setting. The play focuses mainly on the weaknesses of the believers in so far as preachers are able to take advantage of them because of their problems. It is important to point out therefore that though many worshippers of varied economic backgrounds exist in church set ups, *Apollo's Will* focuses on believers that are struggling to make their ends meet. This is so because the poor are what constitute the majority in religious congregations, Christian, Muslim, Hindu or any other the world over. Such limiting enabled me focus on the preachers' machinations to benefit from the unsuspecting believers who are likely to believe everything told to them by the very preachers.

The play is limited in its portrayal of preachers for it is aimed at portraying their vicious nature as opposed to their virtuous compartments. Although virtuous preachers do exist, for the sake of exposing the many take advantage of their flock, this limitation is necessary. Though the play focuses on religious hypocrisy, it centers on the Christian and especially Pentecostal church movement as this is where many people are reported to have been cheated out of their fortunes.

CHAPTER TWO

APOLLO'S WILL

SYNOPSIS

This play focuses on an inheritance conflict in a church set-up, particularly in a clergy's family. It exposes the underbelly of hypocrisy, power struggles and greed in religious circles. Through drama, the play seeks to critique such malpractices rampant in the Kenyan society. The play is titled *Apollo's Will*, a title that speaks to the core of religious and political correctness and how it affects societal perceptions.

Paul and Lutu are sons of an aged preacher who is no longer able to look after his congregation. He is unwilling to relinquish his power despite being outspoken on the need for political and other leaders to leave power when their time comes. However, he secretly writes a will to leave the administration of the church to Lutu, his son by a different woman but whom he agreed with his wife to pass off as their first born son. Unknown to him, his wife stumbles by this will and also plots to counter it by making sure it will never be known to Lutu. Lutu on his part has been growing steady in faith and is the more serious of the two in the church. Some congregants endorse him to take over leadership, an act that infuriates Paul and his mother. They hire youths to interfere with the planned inauguration of Lutu as the new leader of their church, this leads to violence and destruction of property and eventual split of the church.

With the failing health of the aged preacher, the two brothers lead two factions of the same church, the height of the conflict is when Paul obtains a fake court order giving him leadership and ownership of the church and the piece of land it stands on, initially bequeathed to Lutu by his father. Amidst this, Apostle Apollo is suddenly brought into the church and is surprised by

the claims. He gets hold of both his will and the fake court order. His will is read and it confers ownership and leadership of the church to Lutu. Ludia threatens him by revealing a secret they have long shared. She reveals how they met with the preacher and how they have cheated the church thus exposing his hypocrisy, hoping that Apollo would be persuaded to give everything to Paul. A surprise owner of the land turns up with the authentic copy of the title deed that legally confers ownership rights to him. The two factions cannot believe their fate. It is revealed how the aged preacher took advantage of a widow congregant of his church and took her land. Unable to withstand the news, the congregation breaks off one by one, leaving Apollo to deal with his imminent arrest.

Characters

Lutu: Son to Lucy and Apostle Apollo

Paul:-..... Son to Ludia and Apostle Apollo

Apostle Apollo:..... Aging Preacher and leader of The Apostle's
Apocalypse Ark

Ludia: Apollo's wife, mother to Paul

Elder Rajab: an elder of the church

Elkana:..... Church secretary

Philemon:..... Authentic owner of land

Marita:Mother to Philemon

Lishenga:Doctor

Funga:Doctor

Apiyo: Attendant at the hospital

Bawabu Pesa: Guard

Muumini: Guard

Reader: Church member

Other Guards

Congregation

ACT 1 SCENE 1

Vigorous drum beats, jingles and whistles are heard. Soon congregants enter dressed in turbans and white robes. They enter from the extreme ends of the stage. Paul, his mother Ludia, Elder Elkana and some drummers from one end. From the other end enter Lutu, Elder Rajab, a few congregants and a church elder. The two groups try to outdo each other in singing. When one group stops singing, another starts singing in an apparent show of might. A church elder steps into the center and stretches his arm for calm:

Elder Rajab: *(Stretching his arm to both sides)* Amen men of God. Amen. Let us keep quiet for a moment after such beautiful singing and dancing for the Lord. Our God must be smiling wherever He is.

Ludia: *(In feigned pity)* How could you say that Elder Rajab? Is it possible that the Lord could be smiling when...when...? *(Breaks into a wail. She is held by Paul).*

Paul: See what you are up to Elder Rajab?

Lutu: What is happening Paul, I do not understand you and mum.

Paul: It is about....

Elder Rajab: Let us not turn this glorious moment, this wonderful time into meaninglessness. We are here to offer prayers for our apostle, Apostle Apollo. Since all of you have had private prayers...we are now going to give one of us a chance to offer a unified prayer on our behalf to the most

High. So that our prayers may be heard without any intermediary, one of Apollo's sons, Lutu... will do it...

Paul: Stop it Elder Rajab...when did we agree that it is Lutu to be offering prayers on our behalf?

Ludia: Exactly...and who mandated you Elder Rajab to speak for us?

Elkana: Enough of your protests. We should be by the apostle's side by now? Yet we can't agree on a simple thing of who is to lead the prayers....

Lutu: Let him lead us....

Elkana: Whom to lead us?

Elder Rajab: Ludia....

Paul: Elder, stop your jokes. This is no woman's business. If it were ,we would not be quarreling.

Lutu: Lord in the mighty name of Jesus Christ.

Paul: Lutu in the mighty name of Apollo....you shall not pray.

Lutu: Giver of life and wisdom...

Ludia: Accept not his prayer...

Paul: (*Leaving his mother*) Lutu in the mighty name of... I command you do not pray.

Elder Rajab: (To both sides) I will be by the apostle's side. When you are done, come with more prayers.

Church secretary starts a hymn which the congregation joins in. Some follow Lutu who is following Rajab, others remain with Paul.

Ludia: (Back to herself. No more pretense) Ha-ha. You will not have it Lutu. You won't. (To Paul) And you, you need to put up a fight... this one I have seen here is no fight? Are you a lesser son? Are you not a man like he is? For how long will I fight for you...?

Paul: (Embarrassed) Oh mum... But I tried. Can't even appreciate me for trying?

Ludia: Not now. The stakes are so high...and they are stacked against you.

Paul: I don't even understand you, Lutu after all is my elder brother...

Ludia: (Furious) Stop it son. Don't ever say that again. (She gets closer to him and pulls him by the ear to the edge of the stage. She whispers something into his ear.) Now if you don't understand that, never come close where I am. Your brother is already gone and we are still here...fools.

Exits .Paul follows her up to the edge imploring her to come back but she is gone. He turns back, laments about what he is supposed to do in a monologue.

Paul: Now you are gone mother...gone...and I don't know yet what you mean. Only ask me to be on your side every time Lutu is involved...why mother? Are you not a preacher's spouse? What is wrong? You even do

not encourage me to go to church...see what happens to me now? I can't even lead in prayer...It should be easy for me...oh...maybe I should just leave it to Lutu. Prayer comes to him so easily (*In deep thought*).But I am here alone. Where is every one gone to? What am I doing here? (*Rising from his reverie*) Mother...father...father is in hospital and I am stuck here with mum's thoughts? (*Recalling*) What was that mother you whispered into my ear? Could it...could it...? But I have to come to you mother...whatever happens. I am coming.

He moves to the curtains. Curtains open revealing an ailing Apollo in his hospital bed. By his bedside can be seen doctors, nurses and other hospital attendants. A clock hangs from the wall, ticking every second. Paul is visibly afraid on seeing this.

Paul: But where are they when my father is going? (*To audience*)Where is Ludia my mother, Lutu my brother, Elder Rajab, church secretary? I thought they would be here....I will join them in prayer.

Exits.

ACT 1 SCENE 2

In the operating theatre of a hospital. Surgical blades, stethoscopes, dialysis machine are visible. Two doctors, surgeons, anesthetists and attendants keenly attend to the patient connected to the machines. The atmosphere is serious; the doctors seem in an urgent and desperate rescue mission.

- Doctor Lishenga:** Be very keen guys, keen .We are almost done.
- Doctor Funga:** Did you say that our patient is a preacher?
- Doctor Lishenga:** Yes, the wife says so....Don't you know the church down town?
- Doctor Funga:** The Apostle's Apocalypse Ark?
- Attendant Apiyo:** Doctor Funga, keener, you will rapture the membrane...
- Doctor Funga:** Bring more blades attendant....
- Doctor Lishenga:** Why are you concerned about his occupation?
- Doctor Funga:** It shows here in the records and his appearance that he's an octogenarian, doctor Lishenga.
- Attendant Apiyo:** *(Handing over the blades).* Here doctor.
- Doctor Funga:** Thank you.
- Attendant Apiyo:** His son is out there...in the parking bay.
- Doctor Funga:** My concern is that this patient's liver is corroded...you say he been preaching for many years...

Doctor Lishenga: The attendant attends his church.

Attendant Apiyo: I do. He has two interesting sons...and a wife...

Doctor Funga: Do they drink?

Attendant Apiyo: What kind of question is that doctor? How would anyone survive without a drink?

Doctor Funga: I mean alcohol...

Attendant Apiyo: There is normally wine on special days....and for high ranking church members only.

Doctor Lishenga: I can see you are right in your suspicions doctor. The patient's left kidney is like a brewery...and the liver is failing...He is a high ranking member of the Apostle's Apostolic Ark?

Attendant Apiyo: Apocalypse...not Apostolic...and yes...The wine and other stuff are kept under key and lock. But I have never seen him drunk.

Doctor Funga: It is time to sew the membrane back .Apiyo...give us the materials as you tell us more about our patient...

Doctor Lishenga: At his age he should not overwork.

Doctor Funga: Right...not even touch the drink again...

Doctor Lishenga: *(Lowering his voice)* Our attendant is so full of praise for him...

Doctor Funga: And I am finding it rather strange that there are certain basic things in surgery he is not aware of. Is he in the right job?

Doctor Lishenga: He was forwarded here by the county government. The Chief Executive in charge also attends the Ark and the Apostle ordered him to employ...

Attendant Apiyo: Here you are doctor...will he survive?

Doctor Funga: Let us complete the work.

Attendant Apiyo: They are here to pray for him.

Doctor Lishenga: Certainly not in this theatre.

Doctor Funga: They can pray from wherever they are.

Doctor Lishenga: One minute and we will be done, Doctor Funga.

Attendant Apiyo: They shall see him in the ward.

Doctor Lishenga: That is okay.

Doctor Funga: Okay. Roll back the curtains. Let the patient be taken to recovery room.

The two doctors exit.

Attendant Apiyo: *(Calling out)* Recovery...patient...

Recovery room attendants wheel the patient away, as the curtains in this section of the hospital, theatre are closed.

ACT 1 SCENE 3

Outside the hospital. The congregants are listless. Some are in fervent silent prayers. Elder Rajab is seen comforting Lutu. Ludia looks on with disinterest. The differences seen in the earlier scene are evident. Paul is not in the multitude. Ludia keeps alternating her gaze towards the entrance for Paul's arrival and towards the entrance to the wards seemingly praying that Lutu is not the first one to enter the hospital.

Enter Paul frantically.

Paul: *(Almost out of breath)* You did not tell me which hospital he was in...I have been to almost each of those wretched places...

Ludia: *(Stepping forth to comfort him)* Paul...at least you are here. I was almost giving up. And you know how important it is for you...

Elder Rajab: *(Holding Paul's hand)* At least you have come Paul...it is important that you show your father that you are united, you and Lutu.

Elkana: And it will go a long way into soothing his nerves.

Ludia: I hope you are not saying this to persuade him not to lead the prayers.

Elder Rajab: We are at the hospital, not the church. Let us not bring our squabbles here.

Lutu: I am not against Paul leading the prayers now.

Paul: And I am not ready to lead the prayers mum...let Lutu do it for us.*(Entreating his mother)* Please mother .I will do it tomorrow.

Ludia: *(Pulling Paul to the edge)* Remember my words...you fool. Now go back and be ready to pray. *(Takes him back to Elder Rajab)* Now Rajab...this is so important that if Paul does not pray...I will square it out with you...

Elkana: Ludia you are not carrying yourself with the decorum expected of the Apostle's spouse. You will bring the Ark into public disrepute.

Congregants: True.

Elder Rajab: And some strong smell from one of you, Paul and Lutu! Who's been drinking? *(Smells the two's clothing)* Are you a winery?

Ludia: *(To the defense of Paul)* Now see. I told you. Lutu does not deserve to lead when he drinks a lot.

Elder Rajab: *(Confused.)* But it is Paul that smells of wine. And look at his eyes...they are almost popping out! How can you then accuse Lutu?

Elkana: We better ignore the sons and pray for the apostle. We are wasting time. The time for visitors will soon be up.

Ludia: It cannot be Paul...my Paul... *(Pulls Paul by the shirt and smells him)* See. *(Laughs loudly)* Oooh! Elder, do not confuse the holy spirit with drunkenness. Paul is filled with spirits ...and that is a sure way that he should be the one to lead us in prayer. Let us go Paul. *(Pushes Paul into the hospital)* You continue arguing. We will be done with the prayers shortly.

Elder Rajab: *(To Ludia)* May it be well with you. *(To the rest)* Now you can see that The Apostle is the one person that is the glue to the Apostle's Apocalypse Ark.

Elkana: Since he started ailing we haven't done anything without a fight from Ludia.

Congregant: The woman is a devil.

Elder Rajab: *(Reprimanding)* Hush Scola. That is harsh of her.

Elkana: Shall we follow them?

Elder Rajab: I propose we find some other time.

Lutu: But I must see him!

Elkana: Lutu...self preservation is as important as the preservation of your father's life.

Congregant: And besides, I can see you are the cause of Ludia's foul mood. She does not want you to lead the prayers!

Lutu: But why is she behaving this way Elder Rajab?

Elder Rajab: *(Comforting Lutu)* That is for another day my son. As for seeing the Apostle today, I think we are overtaken. *(To congregants)* If a simple matter of who is to lead in prayer for the Apostle generates this amount of heat....what about if...if...?

Elkana: If what Rajab?

Congregant: If the Apostle dies? Forget about that Rajab, elder. He is not going to die.

Another congregant: He is immortal.

Congregant: And infallible!

Elkana: Well ...that I doubt.

Rajab: His immortality or infallibility?

A hospital bell rings. A guard comes round whisking visitors away.

Elder Rajab: *(To the guard)* Be gentle, gentleman. We will be back...

Bawabu: Time is up. Come 4 p.m. evening.

Elkana: We are going.

Bawabu: *(Pointing at Lutu)* You...make out of that place. Clear or me arrest you.

Lutu: Just one minute I will be back.

Muumini: Not possible.

Lutu: *(Proceeds towards hospital entrance ignoring the guard)* He is my father.

Bawabu: *(Running after him. There is jostling between the two. Guard blows whistle .Other guards appear with their rungus)* Time for visiting is over. This one is forcing his way.

Congregants: But you have allowed others entry after time. Why not us!

Guards unite in whisking the congregation away. Elder Rajab pulls Lutu to his side. A hymn is sung as the team of congregants leaves.

ACT 2 SCENE 1

At the hospital, in the wards. Apostle Apollo is in one of the beds. He is on drip treatment. A nurse attendant can be seen busying with the duties of attending to a patient.

Enter Paul with Ludia, cautiously.

Nurse: *(Politely to Ludia)* Halo mum. I thought the time for visiting is up. Haven't you met others on their way out?

Ludia: *(Looking at the clock on the hospital wall, then to her wrist watch. Then with feigned ignorance).* Er...er actually sister I thought we still had time. My watch doesn't tally with your clock*(Points to the wall clock)*...and I think mine is right...

Nurse: No madam...that is not the way we work here, besides...our clock can't be wrong. If you don't mind *(Standing between the patient and Paul and Ludia)* I mean if you don't mind *(Gestures them to the exit door)*.

Paul: But sister...we are the family...

Nurse: You have not been here since he was admitted anyway.

Ludia: I brought him for admission.

Nurse: It was his church members...are you his wife? I was wondering if he had a wife and family.

Paul: *(Pushing her out of the way)* Get out of the way. You are being disrespectful madam.

Ludia: *(Quickly following Paul to the patient's bed).* You should know people!

Nurse: *(Losing balance. Calls out for help)* He-e-l-p please...intruders in the ward!

Enter guards

Muumini: What is it sister?

Nurse: *(Points at the two who are busy interfering with the patient)* Take them out.

Muumini: But she is the Apostle's wife and he, his son!

Nurse: Yet it is not time for them to be here...please take them out...this is a ward, not their house.

Guards converse among themselves in low tones. Look at the nurse, and while she is looking away, exchange knowing glances with Ludia and Paul. Ludia waves her wallet briefly and quickly hides it.

Nurse: I thought it is your job to execute orders from the duty nurse. Why are we going on and on?

Muumini: *(Moves toward Ludia and Paul reluctantly)* But sister, why can't you find out from the doctor? What does he say about this?

Paul: You are my guy...please find the doctor.

Bawabu Pesa: We are to attend to visitors at the gate.

Nurse: *(Enraged)* I did not expect this of you. You have not acted this way before. Please look for the doctor then.

Muumini: I am needed at the gate madam, look for the doctor yourself.

Doctor enters after this commotion. Guards recoil on noticing him enter. Paul and Ludia rise. Nurse moves closer to patient. For a moment there is eerie silence, as the doctor waves the guards away.

Doctor: What is this commotion all about nurse?

Nurse: Well as you can see Doctor, these people won't leave the patient in peace.

Ludia: *(Going on her knees, pleading)* If you don't mind doctor...a few minutes we will be done...

Paul: *(Lifting his mother up)* Doc ...he is my father.... She... my mother.

Doctor Lishenga: *(Politely)* That is okay...but the hospital has its rules and regulations. This is not visiting time...the nurse is employed for his care...you were expected much earlier...

Doctor Lishenga: *(Observing patiently and taking notes)* What is the progress so far Nurse? Is he doing better?

Nurse: Well, I have observed some positives...but I am yet to give him the prescription for the afternoon...I was about to when they came in...

Doctor Lishenga: I guess we shall give them two minutes so they can leave. At least the patient can speak today.

Apollo: *(Nodding his head feebly)* Not... so... much doc...tor.

Doctor Lishenga: *(To Ludia and Paul)* Be quick. We want to carry out our business.

Paul: Father...I have to pray for you.

No response from Apollo .Ludia holds Apollo 's hand raises it.

Ludia: Apostle, do you know us? We have come to pray for you...shall we?

Apostle Apollo: *(Groaning)* Yees. And ... and...where is Lutu?

Silence from the two.

Paul: *(Drunkenly)* He was busy...

Ludia: Paul, pray.

Paul: Dear father...I come to you with hope and faith, power and determination.
I ask that you may grant me, your faithful son, my wish...grant...my
father...good health...

Doctor Lishenga: *(Surprised.)* That is an interesting prayer...but be quick.

Ludia: We ask you to grant us all that we ask. Amen.

Paul: Amen.

Doctor Lishenga/Nurse: Amen.

Ludia looks over the patient's cabinet, searches for something. After a while, she picks the Apostle's Bible, flashes it in the direction of Paul. Smiles. Leans over the patient and pulls Paul by the arm. They exit.

Doctor Lishenga: Well...it has taken them such a short time...

Nurse: They might not have been after seeing the patient after all.

Doctor Lishenga: And that was the Apostle's Bible.

Nurse: His constant companion...I am informed he never leaves it behind .He does not share it with anyone.

Doctor Lishenga: Now it is gone. I saw a crowd shortly before they entered.

Nurse: The guard sent them away...I wondered how he allowed these ones only.

Doctor Lishenga: We shall find out. Attend to your duties now. You will remind me when he is due for the next dialysis.

Exit.

ACT 2 SCENE 2

Paul: Mother. You were so fast you wouldn't allow me to complete my prayer.

Ludia: You had already asked for what we wanted.

Paul: Not yet mother. I was going to ask Father to grant me a long life.

Ludia: And you did exactly that. Besides...you were not going to get all that time. Now come around I share with you what I think.

Paul: What mother?

Ludia: I think that your father might not make it...did you see how heavenly he looked!

Paul: *(Surprised)* Heavenly! What is come of you mother? He looked weak.

Ludia: That is what I mean.

Paul: But you seem happy about it.

Ludia: Not so happy. Paul...come to think of it. Your father is about to die. How is he going to leave me? How is he going to leave us?

Paul: Like they all leave...I guess all those who get promoted to glory. How do you want him to leave us?

Ludia: Don't be funny...am waiting for his death...I don't think his is worth being a promotion to glory. What with all he has done...

Paul: You think it will be a demotion then? Demotion to what?
Delirium...death...danger...drugs...?

Ludia: Did you know your father, Paul?

Paul: Did I or do I mother? He is not gone yet. But why?

Ludia: What you have mentioned strikes a chord...as if indeed you know the man. Any way that is for another day. Meanwhile see what I found in this Bible he never leaves down.

She gets close to the mother who is standing next to a stool that she placed on the Bible. She carefully picks it up, flashes it around for it to be clear that it is the Bible, and then hands it over to Paul.

Ludia: Go on ...read a verse for me.

Paul: A verse? I thought you had found something spectacular!

Ludia: You go through the Bible.

Paul: Which is your favourite verse?

Ludia: Blessed are the poor, for they shall inherit God's Kingdom.

Paul: And they shall be called the sons of God.

Ludia: That is what your father has used as a weapon, a tool, an incentive...

Paul: A ladder to his heaven

Ludia: Exactly...give me back the Bible.

Snatches it away from him

Ludia: Some people have eyes but they do not see.

Paul: Ears yet do not hear...

Ludia: Feet... but they cannot walk...

Paul: And hands yet cannot hold...but what exactly do you mean mother?

Ludia: That it is exactly you that is the context of my talk.

She extracts an envelope from the Bible and shows it to Paul.

Ludia: This here...is someone's...

Paul: What is it mother? Open and read the contents.

Ludia is about to open when Lutu enters with Elder Rajab. This forces her to quickly return the envelope into the Bible. She unsuccessfully but hopelessly tries to hide the Bible from view of both Elder Rajab and Lutu. This arouses the interest of both Paul and Rajab who politely but notoriously and comically keep moving towards the direction of the hidden bible, as Ludia clumsily tries to evade their gaze on the Bible in the ensuing conversation.

Rajab: So we were withheld from seeing the Apostle and the two of you had your way?

Ludia: Which way?

Paul: Our way? That is strange Elder.

Lutu: We have been to the hospital with all the worshippers of the Apostle's Apocalypse Ark.

Ludia: What do you mean all when Paul and I...

Rajab: And that is the exact meaning, all the worshippers at the Apostolic Apocalypse Ark.

Paul: Except the two of us...

Rajab: You are anything but worshippers.

Ludia is enraged but because she is trying to hide the bible, she dares not show the other side of her hand. Paul too is furious and is almost attacking Elder Rajab but is restrained by his mother using one hand.

Paul: Elder Rajab I have already seen you know which side of your butter is bread...

Lutu: We are from the hospital and the old man brings you his greetings. He seemed to be suggesting that you appeared to him in a dream.

Ludia: We were not there in a dream, Paul prayed for him.

Rajab: Did he ask for something from him?

Paul: Why?

Lutu: Paul...father is not mad...he saw you in a dream. Did you pick his Bible?

Paul and Ludia feel increasingly guilty. Paul ignores the question.

Lutu: Sure the old man talked to us as if he was in a trance.

Rajab: And on another plane as if he was saying what he saw. Look here all of you....and stop going around in circles Ludia. We need to talk.

Lutu: Yes. All the church members will be here in a short while... and we need to prepare.

Paul: Who has invited them?

Ludia: Don't they have something better to do in their homes?

Lutu: My father's house is also their home.

Ludia: *(Contemptuously)* My father's house is also their house...let them wait till he comes back from the hospital. Otherwise there shall be no more nonsense from the likes of you Rajab...

Paul: And as for me...my father's house is only my house...and beyond the house...what is his is solely mine!

Rajab: Enough with your impatient tongues! This is precisely why the church is coming here. As an elder I can at least claim knowledge of things yet to pass. Now as sure as the earth will come to pass...the Apostle can no longer discharge his duties as he has been doing. In his absence...the person who has presided over the last two Sundays has been Lutu.

Paul: Come to the point Elder.

Rajab: They are coming about tomorrow.

Ludia: What the hell is it about tomorrow?

Paul: Tomorrow is none of our business...do with it as you wish...

Ludia: Give us a break.

Lutu: Tomorrow is Sunday and God's people deserve service from this family...it is not only shirking our responsibilities if we insist that it has nothing to do with us...it is disrespectful to the Apostle...and immoral in the eyes of the Lord.

Rajab: The Ark deserves better from the first house.

Ludia: Find out from the Apostle.

Rajab: And I am glad it is what I have come to share with you before the multitude arrives. I have spoken with the Apostle and I have got news for you...

Song 'I have got news for you!'

Ludia: For whom? Me!

Paul: Me.

Lutu: *(Equally surprised)*. What do you mean elder?

In her surprise, Ludia forgets that she has been trying to hide the bible and she brings it in full view of everyone. She finally drops it on the ground. Paul responds with some scorn towards her but is unable to pick it. Lutu responds with certain realization and Elder Rajab with anxious curiosity. For some brief moment there is silence.

Rajab: Yes. I said I got news for you. And what a pleasant way for me to break it! First is about this *(Bends over and picks the Bible, lifts it up in the face of*

Ludia)...Ludia...ha-ha...did you know that the Lord works in mysterious ways?
That he knows what we plot in secret...?

Ludia: I just hope that you are not that Lord.

Rajab: *(Ignoring Ludia and moving on towards Paul)* Did you know that the Lord knows our innermost thoughts? Our silent fears? Our unseen blindness. Remember Paul?

Paul: *(Terrified and trying to run away from the elder, constantly looking at the mother, Elder Rajab and the Bible)* Elder do not come so close. Of course I know Paul of Tarsus.

Rajab: The Persecutor.

Paul: Well...the lawyer.

Rajab: *(To Lutu)* The Lord that we worship...did you know he was born in a manger, the humblest of all abodes...the most unlikely of all places...Did you know?

Ludia: It will be in your interest if you finished this business and went away.

Rajab: *(Surveys the Bible with a keener interest)* I wonder how this left the side of the Apostle yet it never does?

Lutu: But he was asking for it Apostle.

Paul: Be done with your business.

Rajab: *(Flips through a few pages but fails to notice the envelope carefully tucked between the pages)* I have come to prepare for tomorrow's Sunday service.

(Places the Bible on the stool. There is a sigh of relief from both Paul and Ludia, unnoticed by Rajab and Lutu) And now that part of you does not want anything to do with it, I am surprised. But I shall execute my duty anyway...

Ludia: Can you be over and done with.

Paul: Make it quick.

Rajab: I have told you I have been with the Apostle. For two Sundays he has not been able to attend to his service duties...he has been wondering what has been going on. He has now expressly directed me to anoint the person that has carried out his duties in his absence...to continue doing so, and that includes tomorrow, whether he (the Apostle) will be present or absent. And the person that has been carrying out those duties fortunately is present today. I must hasten to inform you that the Apostle does not know fully who that person is, the one to take over from him, he seemingly does not care whether it is anyone. But fortunately for the family...it is one of you. I now humbly request you, Ludia, Paul and Lutu...to step forward and kneel so that I may pray for this family...

Immediate protests from Ludia and Paul.

Ludia: If you want to pray for us, do not make it a must for us to kneel, at least not me.

Paul: What are you praying for...I thought you should pray elsewhere?

Rajab: I will be done with the prayer in a short while.

Lord the Almighty Father.

I bless you for you have been with this family all this while

I ask that you heal the ailing Apostle

And if he cannot be healed

I pray that you get us a suitable replacement

Not a perfect fit (for that would be difficult to withstand)

Bless this family to come to terms

With a change of guard

And fortune

Let them accept the successor.

Ludia: Amen

Rajab: Now I formally wish to hand over the tools of trade to the person I was directed to by the Apostle. Ludia bring the Bible....Lutu please step forth for a dedication prayer and to receive your tools of trade.

As Ludia notices that it is Lutu that will be the successor...she angrily clicks, gets hold of the Bible and protests.

Ludia: This is utter nonsense Rajab. There is not going to be any dedication prayer if it is not for Paul. And if you think that is nothing...let us which tools of trade he will use...your anointed one(*to Paul*)and you...what will you ever be capable of

doing? You cannot even protest...I do this for you.....come let us get going. *(To Rajab and Lutu)* The battle is on...no easy things!

Paul and Ludia exit.

Rajab: Oh my God. What do we do now? It seems like there is nothing good for some of us unless it is ours! Come on Lutu, the people will be arriving here soon...will find a gloomy place....no dedication...no anointment.

Lutu: Thank you Elder Rajab for steering this ship, even in the stormy waters. Calm will come again. Do not worry. We cannot be in a hurry...we must prepare for tomorrow!

Rajab: But against the Apostle's wishes. He wanted his successor anointed soonest.

Lutu: You are not to blame...there is no Bible, no witnesses. Besides, he has made up his mind so late in the evening Elder. Don't you think? Makes transition a challenge...

Rajab: *(After some silence)* God bless you my son. I can see you are already consecrated. You speak like a wise man. We have been promised a fight.

Lutu: We do not know how to prepare.

Rajab: We know not whether it is physical, social, economic...but we need to plan for your installation .So as a result of Ludia and Paul's acts, we have to cancel today's meeting. Restrategise. It is not going to be easy. Let's go to the church. There are urgent matters needing immediate attention. *(They exit).*

ACT 3

It is the following day, Sunday. Church service is in progress at the Apostle's Apocalypse Ark. Hymns rent the air before the celebrant, Lutu Apollo is presented to read the gospel and preach the word of God. Absent, as on two other occasions are Paul and his mother, Ludia. Their seats are unoccupied. The church Secretary is absent on this occasion too as well as a few other faithful.

Elder Rajab: Thank you very much praise and worship. We now invite the reader to read the Bible in preparation for the sermon from Lutu the servant of the lord.

Reader: A round of applause for the Lord. A reading from the book of Luke chapter 3: 10. I read: The Latest Decalogue

Though shalt have one God only; who

Would be at the expense of two?

No graven images may be

Worshipped, except the currency.

Swear not at all; for, for thy curse

Thine enemy is none the worse:

At church on Sunday to attend

Will serve to keep the world thy friend.

Honor thy parents; that is, all

From whom advancement may befall.

Though shalt not kill; but needs not strive

Officiously to keep alive.

Do not adultery commit;

Advantage rarely comes of it:

Though shalt not steal; an empty feat,

When it's so lucrative to cheat:

Bear not false witness; let the lie

Have time on its own wings to fly.

Though shalt not covet, but tradition

Approves all forms of competition.

Arthur Hugh Clough

Elder Rajab:

(Disturbed by the reading) Which version of the Bible is that? My King James Version does not have it. I always insist that you read from the authentic version, otherwise you shall mislead the people.

Reader:

Which is the authentic version? I think that a reading is just a reading. In any case, has it what the preacher needs to preach about or not?

Lutu: *(Reading from his own Bible)* It is not exactly what the reader read but it is from Genesis. *(Whispering to Elder Rajab)* It is true, but we cannot begin a debate on the version of the Bible we need to read from when our faithful have different versions. *(To audience)* Let us have a hymn as we prepare to receive the preaching. *(To Reader)* Please lead us. *(Reader joins congregants in singing as Lutu converses in low tones with Elder Rajab).*

Hymn.

Elder Rajab: I will introduce you in a special way today before you preach. But you have raised a very fundamental point...we can't expect to be united if we read the word of the Lord from different versions of the Bible.

Lutu: But Elder, I do not think that should be a concern really. Most of our followers do not even have Bibles to read from anyway. Even those with the Bibles only carry them to show them off, has anyone noticed that the reader did not read from the Bible!

Elder Rajab: You mean it?

Lutu: Do not dwell on it so much, the hymn is about to be over.

Elder Rajab: *(In a whisper)* I was thinking that we could solve this by requiring everyone to be coming to church with only one version, approved by the elders.

Lutu: How shall we ensure that?

Elder Rajab: Simple. You will declare to the congregation after your inauguration that in order to improve the Sunday service, the elders have agreed that all church members shall bring their old Bibles to the church and purchase the Authorized Version from the church bookshop.

Lutu: Won't this interfere with their attendance to the service given that some of them can't afford the Bibles.

Elder Rajab: We can allow them to pay in installments; by the way they are more than eager.

Lutu: Why, may I ask, do you want it this way?

Elder Rajab: *Mkono mtupu haulambwi* Pastor. And it is said that those who work at the grinding mill should get their fill there. Even so, you can see that it is not going to be easy to install you as the next leader of this ark. What will wipe off my sweat for sticking out with you? I think the only way is to get the proceeds from the sale of bibles at a hiked price and only from me. Deal? Remember I am to make a favourable introduction for you to have a good inauguration.

Lutu: *(Surprised. Reluctantly)* It is your time to introduce me, the people will be suspicious. We can...

Elder Rajab: Remember I hold sway over the people...deal or no deal?

Lutu: *(Anxious. Desperately)* Deal. Speak. They are waiting.

Elder Rajab rises and motions to the congregation to stop singing, they take up their seats.

Elder Rajab: Thank you very much church. Today is indeed a very special day for all of us. From the reading, the singing and hopefully, even the preaching *(congregation applauds)* ...the singing after the reading has been wonderful...it is not so easy to prepare for a new preacher on a second Sunday after being accustomed to the Apostle for all our lives.

Congregation: Amen.

Elder Rajab: The singing has allowed enough preparation for the sower to come sow God's mustard. As you all know...the preacher we await anxiously is the Apostle's special choice...

Wild ululations and excitement. Stumping of feet on the ground and praises.

Elder Rajab: Had it not been for the devil's evil plans yesterday, he would already be duly installed as the next apostle.

Congregants: Amen.

Elder Rajab: Well, that was called off at the last minute. But after wide consultations, it was agreed that after the sermon this morning, the inauguration ceremony shall be carried out. And that is why all of you were asked to come with special offerings... to fulfill the Apostle's Will. Let me now have the pleasure of introducing to you...your son...the anointed of the Lord...to preach to you. Lutu...

Lutu: Thank you Elder for such generous remarks from you. Your remarks are so reassuring and promising...and yet they don't cost a dime (*Wincing in Elder Rajab's direction*).

Congregants: Amen.

Lutu: I would like to begin off by appreciating the Reader for a good choice of reading. That was inspired. May the Good Lord continue giving you wisdom. I would also like to regret that the most significant event of the past few weeks was not able to take off because of ...Well; there is no need to dwell on that now that we are going to have the ceremony straight away from my preaching.

Elder Rajab: (*Interrupting*) Forgive me Pastor, but I have urgent information. If you don't mind, we can do away with today's preaching so that we can carry out the inauguration ceremony.

Reader: No way Elder. We are prepared to listen to the sermon, and then later on inaugurate the Pastor.

A member of the congregation: Indeed that is how we should proceed.

Elder Rajab: As I have indicated...this is urgent.

Congregation: Why the urgency Elder? Anything the matter?

Lutu: May I request that I am in charge for the meantime...

Shouts and boos from some in the audience, others cheer the pastor on. Elder Rajab moves to the pulpit to converse with Lutu and the Reader in low tones. For some minutes the noise is uncontrollable.

A member of the Congregation: I do not understand why we are confused these days?

Another: No. You should. The Apostle was such a strong leader...it will take time to fully master his skills...

Member: Really? Do you think it was his skills that steered the boat? I think it was his secretiveness and the dictatorial nature....

Another: You can't say that about him. But where are Ludia and Paul?

Reader: Fellow members of the church... we are interrupting our sermon in order to carry out the inauguration...

Voice from offstage: No inauguration for an impostor.

Everyone in the church looks towards the direction of the voice. Elder Rajab is uneasy. Reader and Lutu remain calm on the pulpit. Some start songs as they await arrival of the voice.

Ludia: You cannot carry out an inauguration on a person who is impersonating. He is not the one.

Elder Rajab: Why are you giving us all these pain Ludia? Why when you have not even been concerned with this church?

Ludia: If my husband is the leader, how can you say I am not concerned? When the head of a household attends church...he is doing so on behalf of each of his members...

Reader: But salvation is individual.

Elkana: Christ hung on the cross for salvation of mankind.

Elder Rajab: What do you mean Elkana? A whole church secretary! I thought you were with the Apostle organizing for a smooth transition.

Elkana: Yes and I have the anointment oil...step forward Paul for your inauguration.

A scuffle starts as Paul emerges towards the Pulpit. Those supporting Lutu block his way and call him names.

Paul: I am the rightful person. Why are you stopping me? I have the document from my father. How can you anoint any other?

Lutu: *(Moving closer to Paul)* But church has not been a serious concern to you until now, brother. Where do you get the courage? About the documents...we have our father's word from his most trusted servants...Elkana....and Rajab.....

Elkana: *(Nodding in agreement)* And the Apostle's will is, unfortunately for you Lutu, that it is Paul to be inaugurated the next leader of the Ark, and not you Lutu.

Elder Rajab: That cannot be, Elkana. Until yesterday, the Apostle, myself and you, were in agreement as to who the heir to the Ark's leadership should be. This was so until we cancelled it at the eleventh hour because of Paul and his mother. We agreed to meet in church today...where have you been?

Paul: How could you have decided the fate of the Ark without consulting the real stakeholders? Didn't you know that the church has stakeholders?

Lutu: The church is not a business to have shareholders...

Ludia: And that is one reason you are not qualified to steer it, whoever steps into the shoes of the Apostle should be prepared to run the Ark as a business...

Elder Rajab: And what qualities does Paul have over Lutu, even if we were to look at souls as shares at the stock Exchange?

Lutu: Elder Rajab, one of the qualities of any leadership position is sobriety, which I have in plenty. Another is meekness, Paul is not. Another is...

Paul: We cannot be led by those who are meek. Stop all these and anoint me, or I will be anointed by someone else?

Reader: Who has the mandate of anointing new leaders in this church?

A congregant: For a very long time there hasn't been any inauguration of any new leader, in fact this goes back to the establishment of the Ark itself. Apostle Apollo claimed he was anointed by God.

Ludia: He did not claim...do not blaspheme. He was anointed.

Paul: In the present circumstances, I must be anointed.

Lutu: I must be the one to be anointed.

Church: Anoint Lutu.

Elder Rajab: *(Addressing congregation that threatens to run out of order)* Dear worshippers. Let us give reason a chance. The Ark has stood here longer than the rest of the churches around. Was it because of lack of disagreements? That cannot be. Was it because of divine intervention? Well, we cannot doubt that and still remain hopeful in God, but it must be said that it is because we have remained united under the leadership of Apostle Apollo. But a time has come when we miss him...not because he is dead...

Elkana: As the secretary of this church, I think it is my duty to inform you of church records and plans. Even though the leadership of this church has remained stable for a long time, it is time we questioned whether it was because of the unity that Elder Rajab talks about.

Ludia: We need a courageous person like you to speak out.

Paul: Never has it been because of unity or faith...

Lutu: What do you attribute it to then?

Elkana: I cannot let this information to someone who I undeserving as you, Lutu, to take over leadership of the Ark. I am prepared to let the rightful owner have that knowledge.

Ludia: You better let this information to the Public now that they are here.

Elder Rajab: I wonder why Elkana and Ludia are encouraging each other on, is this why you have been absent from the church till now. Have you been bought?

Elkana: You might even say boxed. I do not care, what I care for is that right candidate is anointed.

Paul: And that right candidate is Paul.

Ludia: And from practice elsewhere and for us this is best practice...a scion from the same branch...

Lutu: Why are you speaking as if we are not from the same parent? Mum what is all these about?

Elkana: If you keep quiet about it, the better for you!

Elder Rajab: You have been tinned indeed Elkana, you are not just in it, in the tin I mean. No you are the very tin, empty to the brim and making all the noise.

Elkana: That is baseless Rajab. A case of the pot calling the kettle black. Why are you fronting Lutu?

Lutu: Because my father has informed him and you to inaugurate me. But you have turned around. You must know why.

Elder Rajab: We were just the two of us when we were given the instructions remember. It is you that is cutting deals.

Elkana: So you mean there is nothing in this for you, you swear!

Elder Rajab: Cheap turncoat.

Elkana: Yourself!

Reader: You are wasting our time. You know even if the Apostle didn't will it, most of the members here would agree with Lutu.

Cheers from supporters of Lutu. There are few supporters of Paul but he is not disturbed by this.

Congregant: We are going to carry out the inauguration and we shall be led by Elder Rajab. Anyone with a contrary opinion can go elsewhere.

They sing songs as they force Lutu to sit on a stool and hurriedly pray for him .Overpowered, Paul's group retreats towards the exit.

Elder Rajab: From today onwards, we bless you and venerate you as the leader of our church.

Congregants: Amen.

Elder Rajab: And though brief this ceremony is, we shall nonetheless respect your authority time without end.

Congregants: Amen.

Elder Rajab: You can now rise so we may anoint you.

Lutu rises and is Elder Rajab sprinkles some water on him and other congregants as they sing songs of praise.

Elder Rajab: Behold the anointed of the lord...

Soon war circumcision songs are heard from outside increasing in intensity. Elkana and Paul enter.

Elkana: Paul is the anointed of the Lord.

Congregants: *(Shouting and jeering)* That cannot be. We have Lutu.

Lutu: My dear brother Paul, we can still work together.

Paul: There shall be all for me or nothing.

Lutu: What do you mean? We belong together.

Paul: From what I have just gathered, no.

Ludia: The church, this land and everything shall belong to Paul if there is to be peace.

Elkana: And here. *(Takes out a note from his documents)* Read this out to these people if you doubt it.

Congregation: Read it yourself.

Elkana: You had appointed a reader, let him come and read it.

Reader picks the note and reads.

Congregants: Where from?

Reader: The courts. It says that the public and any other interested parties are refrained from interfering with the church leadership, property and ownership of anything that belongs to the Apostle's Apocalypse Ark. These orders are issued by this court to one Paul Apollo who shall in the meantime be the sole proprietor and leader of the church...

Congregation: That is outrageous. No court can give such orders.

Ludia: But this one gave.

Elder Rajab: That is a lie.

Paul: If you go against the order you risk being prosecuted for contempt of court!

Elkana: Why can't you allow the Reader to finish the statement?

Reader: I really doubt this order! Why should I trust it when the owner of this property is not yet dead! Am off this place...

He throws the note at Elkana and exits.

Elkana: Whether any one trusts it or not, you are forewarned, this is no longer for all of you to play about with. Lutu...

Elder Rajab can no longer refrain himself and he goes to physically strangle Elkana while Lutu goes for Paul. Heightened Tension as wails can be heard from the womenfolk. For a brief

moment, the place resembles a market day. This only dies with the sudden entrance of Apostle Apollo who is wheeled in by Reader.

Reader: Silence every one! I told you I would not believe the court order.
Hear from the Horse's own mouth.

Apostle Apollo is feebly weak though the congregation still holds him in awe. Only Ludia and Paul look as if they don't care about him.

Apostle Apollo: God be praised. I heard of the problems and have come post-haste.

Ludia: *(Shouting at him)* Why have you come to spoil the party? You have had yours and your time is up?

Apostle Apollo: I have preached to you day and night about the need for tolerance, about the need to care for each other. Why do you let me witness the destruction of these same values I have stood for?

Elkana: There is no destruction Apostle, we are only executing your will, *Apollo's Will*. Besides, as the gatekeeper of the Apostle's Apocalypse Ark, you should have done better...

Elder Rajab: It is good you are here Apostle... before this I had just carried out your wish. Lutu here is the next leader of the Ark.

Paul: I am the next, even your will says so.

Apostle Apollo: *(Surprised)* Which will are you people talking about... *(As it dawns on him)* So it is you Paul that picked my Bible.

Ludia: It is not Paul. I did. And in this Bible...*(Brings the Apostle's Bible from which pulls out the Apostle's Will)* I found this will. The will expressly directs that Paul shall be the next leader of the Apocalypse Ark.

Apostle Apollo: That is not what it says, if I am still alive that is, if I still have memory.

Ludia: Memory? Do you wish to remember?

Elkana: I think memory is a good thing...we are reminded of our roots and promised the fruits. So what is it that the Apostle remembers or does not remember?

Elder Rajab: *(Snatching away the will from Ludia who has been holding it carelessly)* To be alive is to be able to remember. Thank God you can remember Apostle .It means you are alive. *(Walking towards the Apostle)* Do you remember this? *(Giving him the will)* Was it not the one that was disturbing your mind?

Apostle Apollo: *(Looking at Ludia viciously)* Why did you have to get it away?

Paul: Read it. I believe what my mother told me. Your will declares me the next leader. When then did you commission Elder Rajab to carry out this purported inauguration?

Apostle Apollo: Do not worry son. Do not worry about my will. Where is the court note? I should have the court note and my will, to solve this. At

least I have there shall be peace. I am my own will. Forget the written one, Apollo's Will.

Congregation: We know the contents of the court note, read for us the ones in Apollo's will.

The court note is handed over to Apostle Apollo. He holds the two the court note and Apollo's will in his hands and surveys them keenly, nodding his head from time to time. He then offers the will out to Elkana to read it while he continues surveying the court note.

Elkana: *(Surveys the will before he reads. Ludia is very uneasy and tries to pinch him not to read)* I bequeath the parcel of land that I own PLOT NO. LR.E/Wasted Paradise/6530 to Lutu Apollo, my son. I also endorse him to be the heir to the church leadership.

Elder Rajab: Just as you had told us Apostle.

Ludia: You have not read correctly Elkana. What does Apollo's will say about Paul and Ludia?

Elkana: Further property that I own shall be shared between Paul and Lutu, when I am dead. Signed. Apostle Apollo.

Congregation: *(Confused between cheering and jeering).* You spoke Apollo.

Apostle Apollo: I thought my memory served me right.

Elkana: Why did you lie to me Ludia, you assured me the will bestowed everything to Paul.

Paul: There must be something wrong in the will.

Lutu: Please keep it well father, in any case you can make another one that will be more binding to us.

Apostle Apollo: That is indeed true.

Ludia: I want to remind you of the promises you made to me, in case you have forgotten Apollo. Is this why you bequeath Lutu and not Paul? What about me? Did your will change? Then this shall be your Apocalypse. Remember this?

Flashback. The congregation and other characters freeze as Apollo and Ludia enact the flashback.

ACT 4

In Sisters of Joy House brothel, one evening many years ago.

Apostle Apollo: You know how it is my dear. I am not completely faultless, and neither am I wholly holy. But I have desired you for a long time.

Ludia: What a way to woo! Ever passing by this trench, a dungeon... so many say. Aren't you afraid of what they will say?

Apostle Apollo: Hush! Of course I am my angel, which is why you should be fast in this business my dear. I don't have much time to waste. The longer I linger, the more problems I give to myself. Won't you accede to my request?

Ludia: You should publicly convey to the public what you profanely, or is it privately proclaim to me. Are you ready for that! You only claim so...but why are you apprehensive about being seen here?

Apollo: The trouble is you know what I need. Must you insist on waiting much longer?

Ludia: Two months is not such a long time, is it? Besides we have not been seeing each other continuously. What with your insistence on secretiveness and discreetness! You only see me in flickering light, only talk to me in whispers. Yet you claim I am your flower, angel, how do you even notice that I am a flower!

Apollo:

I know you don't doubt a moment about the fragrance you carry around your persona, the charming smile you are endowed with. One does not require light to smell a flower, nor does one require a room to notice sweetness of a tasty meal. This is manifest anywhere anyhow. You are one in a million...but I would love to have you as my wife.

Ludia:

But Apollo, you know my occupation....I mean you are ever preaching conversion to the righteous path. How will I cope with you... a woman who dwells in the Sisters of Joy tavern? Haven't you thought about that?

Apollo:

Of course I have thought about it. I know it is so difficult to come to my way of thinking...but believe me Ludia, out of the many eligible women, my heart yearns for you. I have never told you this...but to a great extent we are birds of the same feather.

Ludia:

I have not been flocking together with you!

Apollo:

I know you pay all your tithes despite your reluctance to join others in service on Sundays and other charitable activities.

Ludia:

How am I a bird like you! You clearly state I do not attend service like the rest. You do? Do you mean you also do not attend service? That would be scandalous, aspiring to church leadership yet you do not meet requirements!

Apollo: If you were a little patient, I would make you understand. In any case Ludia, that is exactly why I am insisting you are the right one for me. You of all the women I see in the church would keep my secrets.

Ludia: Secrets! Do religious leaders have secrets? I thought their lives, like those of politicians, are open books. Any willing reader is welcome to read and comment from as varied approaches as there are theories of reading. No Apollo, this precisely is why I won't accept your suit. I have too many secrets to warrant such a risky venture as being a pastor's wife!

Apollo: I know some of those secrets and I swear I'm the only man that would keep them in their rightful place. I know and can assure you that no other man can know and keep secret what he knows about you. Believe me!

Ludia: *(Alarmed)* What is it probably that you know?

Apollo: *(Hesitantly)* I mean....I have known you for more than the two months you think I have known you...

Ludia: For how long have you known me?

Apollo: At least I know that you ran to hide in this town...

Ludia: *(Shocked)* Stop it right there Apollo. I have never run away from anywhere. This is where I was born, grew up and where I am.

Everyone knows that including you (*putting her index finger on Apollo's lips*) Hear that? (*Momentary silence*) Where did I run from?

Apollo:

(*Realizing he has bitten off more than he can chew changes tact*)
Well...as everyone knows, you were born here and grew up here. Only some people silently ask why you pay a lot to the church but you never show up for communal gatherings. But publicly they praise you. Indeed, few Christians of this neighbourhood really know you.

Ludia:

That is good; I intend that matters shall stay that way. I keep my good name and deserve my respect. But once I get too close to them, they dig out all my past and I have nowhere to shield my shamed nakedness.

Apollo:

Your life shall remain private only if you get married to me.

Ludia:

Blackmail.

Apollo:

It is not. I am now the only one who knows about your past...

Ludia:

Remember I also know something about your regular nocturnal haunts in this Sisters of Joy House!

Apollo:

You know no such thing.

Ludia:

I could prove that you are more present in the brothel than in the vestry of the church you want to take over leadership!

Apollo: You shan't go on like that...hush...these are matters we can talk about.

Ludia: And that out of your licentious relationship with one of our sisters you have a son!

Apollo: Stop! (*Holds his head and first walks away from Ludia, then back to her. He is frothing with anger*) Ludia...I can tell that indeed you are a woman of secrets. You are a secretive vessel... (*Struggles to bring out words*) A Venomous vase. I don't want what you have just mentioned ever mentioned anywhere else again. Otherwise I will swallow you like a goat, and like a python spent many years immobile for you to be digested.

Ludia: (*Sarcastically*) So the aspiring preacher is a serpent through and through!

Apollo: Only to you am I a serpent. None of the flock in the church would believe whatever you will say against me. Even if you employed all the FM stations and social media to your side, I am the anointed of the Lord!

Ludia: (*Resignedly*) Indeed I can see. How many preachers have been exposed and yet went back to their faithful fellowship and were received not with boos but with celebrations as if they were being crowned. All you will need to say is that that is the work of the

devil. The faithful need not question whether what you did or what was reported was the work of the devil.

Apollo: You are a clever student. And before you blow out all the secrets that you have kept about me, be warned that I am not just a regular at the Sisters of Joy House, I am also a frequenter at Vigilance House...in fact I sometimes visit the sisters of joy with the IG.

Ludia: *(Not amused)* We do business with Vigilance house, for your information. When they are on patrol we keep them company. And at times too, we are the only source of information regarding terror threats...we are the leads. *(Silence)* I guess that satisfies you. Let's meet if you still need me!

Apollo: I still need you....I know why you ran away.

Ludia: I know you have a son.

Apollo: My son is motherless.

Ludia: At the moment also fatherless!

Apollo: The cause of my son's state, I mean, his motherless state despite his toddling stage...has been a puzzle that I almost unraveled recently.

Ludia: *(Concerned)* How does it concern you when you had instructed the mother to abort the baby?

Apollo: I did, and I even sent the money. But she never even attempted to abort. It was a lot of money and she guessed it would be enough to take care of her son and herself. Determined to change her life, she moved places, rented a house and had the baby.

Ludia: Where did you get all this information when you were not anywhere close to her?

Apollo: I was keeping close tabs on her, through intermediaries.

Ludia: That is interesting. Then she died.

Apollo: What is interesting, her death?

Ludia: Not her death, how you know about it. It is like you have people like us on loose ropes, we are puppets and you only pull the strings to make us do your bidding.

Apollo: You are vicious, and the only way I can tame you is by domesticating you?

Ludia: Am I an animal, a bitch may be, a mule perhaps, a beast ...

Apollo: Excellent...you have an interesting choice of adjectives for yourself. But more than that... (*Moves closer to her*) You killed Lucy!

Ludia: *(Desperate)* No....that is not true....she just died...I found her baby by the way and took it to the orphanage...I was helping out...I killed...no I did not kill....

Apollo: Why did you have to kill her? A poor woman struggling with her troubles? Why? Why Ludia? I thought you looked out for each other?

Ludia: *(Crawling on her knees begging)* I beg you, if you should find an ounce of forgiveness in your heart, please forgive me. I did not intend to, and I had taken the best care of her till then...she was a poor woman already dying of her troubles, of your rejection, of your suggestion to kill the innocent unborn and she was dying psychologically....I finished her off *(sobs)*...please forgive me...

Apollo: May I know why you killed her?

Ludia: You will know. But what are you going to do with me? I am not ready to go to jail, neither am I ready to die. Will you forgive me?

Apollo: As per now, that is doubtful...it really is dependent...

Ludia: Dependent on what Apollo? I thought forgiveness has no preconditions.

Apollo: Well that is interesting to preach.

Ludia: Not to practice ha! (*As if she has realized something*) I don't think you have got me to the end of the tether yet...I am a careful chess player...make your move!

Apollo: An empty threat.

Ludia: The greatest want of the world is the want of men, men who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men who do not fear to call sin by its right name, men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, men who will stand for the right till the heavens fall. Exodus 57:3

Apollo: You are using all kinds of weaponry I can see!

Ludia: You are addicted to hypocrites, cheats and seasoned thieves.

Apollo: But what is your point? Make me understand why you killed her.

Ludia: (*Silence*) You will know. I also needed to live. You can't feign ignorance of the fact that we had pleasurable moments with you, even in darkness. The only difference is she opted to have her baby while I have been aborting several times, your seed included.

Apollo: I gave you money.

Ludia: I killed for the same money. Hers was enough; I did not understand why she would get all that from you and none for me. I got the money. She got the grave. The orphanage got the baby and you got your secret! Do you still want to know why I killed her? Where

did you get all the money you were giving her? Tithes. Church tithes, since you had access. I was angry, I paid church tithes... she never even contributed a coin...and all these church funds found their way to her! Were they the same funds you were using to pay all the sisters? The same you use to hire your boys at vigilance house to provide cover for you? Come on! I have to spill out to all the media whether it will be believed or not!

Apollo:

Enough of your ranting and ravings. You made your case. Indeed you have confirmed my suspicions that you are a well of well kept secrets. It is only you I am counting on to progress as a church shepherd. Now you know so much....I know so much ...I make my move...you shall marry me or I am ready for all the secrets to be published. Remember I have enough people to buy to believe my story, while you barely have any, if at all may be me.

Ludia:

What do I have to do?

Apollo:

Just say yes to my proposal to marry you.

Ludia:

What of all these sour secrets?

Apollo:

They shall be cleansed, like sins, and forgiven.

Ludia:

And forgotten. You can't be serious, promise me I shan't hear any of it anywhere.

Apollo:

Now that we are on the same plane...

Ludia: We are not yet...what do I stand to gain from a marriage to you?

Apollo: Aren't the secrets enough?

Ludia: You know why I killed; I do not want to kill again...

Apollo: Every property I have shall be yours, but on condition...

Ludia: Which condition.

Apollo: You pick up the baby from the orphanage, Lucy's son and raise it as our first born

Ludia: And how shall we hold our wedding, wont he come in the way?

Apollo: I shall inform the church that my wedding shall be held away from here...that way, in disguise of studies for my theology, we shall come with him as our first born. Promise me.

Ludia: *(Embracing him)* Though it seems unlikely, for the mutual benefit of the two of us, I promise to take up Lucy's child, Lutu, as my first born. It shall remain so, as long as our relationship shall remain.

Apollo: Come let us look for someone to wed us off.

They Exit.

The characters resume their places as before this flashback. At this moment, Marita and Philemon enter with court documents.

ACT 5

- Elder Rajab:** Is this what has been holding us together?
- Marita:** Do you remember me Apostle Apollo? I have come back for what is mine?
- Elkana:** Ludia, you are also not genuine. What will become of us? And what do you want old lady?
- Congregants:** What do we hang on?
- Philemon:** *(Showing a title deed to the congregation).* We have come. This title deed gives me ownership of this plot of land on which you have put the church and from reliable sources, you want to put up further developments. Mother, was he not the man that took away our land?
- Congregants:** *(In disbelief)* The Ark sits on someone's land!
- Elder Rajab:** These must be end times indeed. Paul, a while ago you arrived with a court order. The court order gives you ownership and leadership...what do you have to say?
- Paul:** *(Guiltily)* It is a fake. We were getting this by false pretense. But I never knew anything about the will!
- Lutu:** *(Embracing Paul)* We have nothing to fight over. Everything is destroyed. We better hold on together as we seek a new life...most

likely away from here. *(Turning his father)* Father, thank you for rescuing me. May my mother rest in peace. However, in trying to save me you have destroyed many. See the end we are all coming to.

Philemon:

Lutu, not so much bitterness brother. We have been comrades and I did not know any of this, till my mother let me know the truth. I promised her we have to destroy evil by getting what is rightfully ours back. The court documents are genuine. The ones brought by Paul are inauthentic. Here Paul...I am sorry for all of you.

Marita:

Apostle Apollo. I remember your will to take over this land so much. But I told you not to play with a widow's savings. Not only has the Lord been for me, I have the law on my side. The police will be here shortly. You better organize your things.

Apostle Apollo:

(Without energy, sobs) I conceived the Ark with my own mind, established it with my hands. I gave the church this name: The Apostle's Apocalypse Ark. Now see the end. Come Ludia, forgive me...this is not my property... I have deceived you...*(the congregation dejectedly start leaving one after the other until Apollo is finally left with Paul, Lutu, Ludia, Philemon and Marita)*...Paul....I was not fair to you either...Lutu....forgive me my son...

Elkana/Elder Rajab:

Why did we serve you as trusted servants? You have brought us to a terrible end. We hoped for so much...

Apostle Apollo:

Forgive me too. But seek forgiveness as well...wish a good new beginning.

Exit Elkana and Elder Rajab.

Marita:

Now that I have what belongs to me, I also seek your forgiveness.

Apostle Apollo:

Forgiven.

Philemon:

We have no way to pay you back for your ills Apostle. But just so that others of your kind may not do so much injustice...we forgive you. But a warrant of arrest has already been issued, we pray this will do you justice...come let us give them time mother. *(Police sirens are heard as Marita and Philemon leave, increasing in intensity as the Act comes to a close.)*

Ludia:

(Gathering the two sons together around their father) .Lutu please forgive me. Forgive me Paul. Let us forgive the Apostle. *(They all form a ring around Apostle Apollo).*

Apostle Apollo:

May you all forgive me, for pursuing not God's will but my own will. As I get in, I wish that you remain united. Do not let me languish too long. Come and visit me. Wheel me

away from here, they should find me waiting for them,
ready to pay for my deeds.*(They wheel him away as the
police sirens reach a high pitch indicating the police
officers' approach)*

THE END

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