

Yusuf Na'im

## The midnight trade

At one am when sun was slumbering  
In its pouch and stars dancing in the

Sky, that's when the market booms  
With traders buying and selling goods.

The midnight trade by the invisible  
Forces sells better than our city shops.

The village watchmen have never seen  
them but hear their Hawking steps

And their melodious voices advertising  
Their wares.

The weekly market is deserted like a  
Bald head or like a college on holiday.

Because the market is traded at  
Night by the invincible forces.

If you seek them  
Come naked at one a.m

Bring four earthworms and two  
Giants snails

Strike them with Cutlass and splash  
Some red oil.

Remove your shirt and rub the dead  
Creatures on your chest.

They robed in black and red and held  
Red-oiled lamp carrying tubers of yam.

They have sunken eyes and lacerated  
Skin with moles but cute dimples.

Greet the forces and touch them not or you lose your teeth like a cornless cob