Where Is Our Government?

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“We have a lot of insecurity in Nigeria. By road we are not safe. By train we are not safe”.

(From a survivor of the Abuja-Kaduna Train bomb; Mon., March 28, 2022)

Too many ills do a nation kill
Ills just as many as the corpses
That clutter every gutter
Of our callously mis-governed country

The roads are slaughter slabs
The rails only take us on terminal journeys
Every coach is a waiting coffin
The nation’s graveyards puke from unspeakable excess

“Bandits”, “terrorists”: a tardy government
Plays name-games while criminals
Rampage without restraint
Different name, same Nemesis

What do you call a nation
Where food is scarce
And peace is scarcer; where

Life sells at a thousand for one kobo?

Bandits raid the homestead
Bandits raid the streets
Bandits raid the schools
Bandits raid the temples

Bandits rack army barracks
Bandits pummel police stations. . . .
Our government fled long ago
Without leaving a forwarding address

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