

Lola Labinjo

Ayo

It was Thursday, the day for taking out the rubbish.

She tied it up in an extra strong black bag
and left it outside, with a tiny air hole for breathing.

It rained that night, as she sat in front of the mirror, twisting her hair.

She was tired

of avoiding the lone ọmọ ayò seed that navigated its way around
below the dry waves of the sheet on her sagging mattress.

“If I sink any further, I’ll need a ladder to climb out,” she thought.
She thought of many things that night. Not of it. Anything but it.

In the morning, she opened the window to let in some air.
She gasped and had to cover her nose.

It was past collection time
but it was still there

breathing and
wheezing, in short, asthmatic gasps:

“Ifede, Ifede, let down your hair.”
“I can’t!” She smiled “I’ve gone afro!”