

## Market Day

Crowd so thick it's hard to see more than a few feet ahead.  
It rained the night before.  
Vehicle-sized holes in the road, now tiny lakes.  
Interconnected by run off water, sewage, and trash.  
Traffic laws exist more as recommendations than requirements.  
Vehicles intertwine to become a cluster fuck of metal, rubber, combustion, and brown flesh.  
Speech becomes sound barely comprehensible  
Welcome to life in the developing world.

A mixture of Yoruba and English  
Reminds of something a friend once said...sound is physical, music is cultural  
I cannot force the thought out of my head...does that hold true for language?  
When meaning is applied, the physical becomes cultural.  
Asked and answered.

As we slow crawl through traffic, bodies, water, and food stalls  
I catch a woman looking at me.  
After arriving here in Nigeria 2 weeks ago,  
It is a familiar look.  
Without a doubt, I am unique.  
The only one seen in the area, perhaps the region.  
In spite, or because of, the history and development,  
Or maybe the color of my melanin...or lack there of,  
I stand out.

It does not take too long to notice it...  
The side glances  
The awkward look  
The astonishing curiosity  
The holy shit, I just saw what? face

That look. The look.  
One I am sure others are more familiar with than myself.

Different. Outsider. Other.  
Everyday lived experiences.  
Oyiboe. White man. America.  
Transferred for a brief moment.  
An immediate awareness of one's identity.

**Untitled**

I once knew this girl,  
I told her I loved her and she slapped me.  
I can still feel her hand crack across my face.  
How dare you! She said.  
Love is for children, martyrs, and the polyamorous.  
Love absurd.  
Love is cruel  
Love just is.

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I once knew this girl,  
I told her I loved her and she gently cupped my face with both her hands.  
I can still feel the way her pursed lips embraced mine.  
I love you. She said.  
Love is for those who feel it most.  
Love is pure.  
Love is humble.  
Love will always be.

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I once knew this girl,  
I told her I loved her and she just stood there.  
She said nothing but said everything.  
I can still feel her cold stare.  
Will love ever be?

**Declaration**

I will never pretend to be anything more than I am.

I will not apologize.

I am not here to make you comfortable.

With eyes wide open, I walk into this narrative.

## The City of Industry

Corporations      Big Business      Money  
Red Lining      White Flight      Urban Decline  
Gentrification      Greed      Corruption  
The City Beaten      Detroit      Never Broken  
Rock Bottom      We will Rise      Can't Stop, Won't Stop  
Rebuild      Revive      Reinvest  
Today      Tomorrow      Forever

**Untitled**

There's a box of old photographs sitting next to my bed.  
They are of a girl I used to know.

Some tasteful. Others, not so much

Will you show them to me? you ask.  
Your eyes light up.

Intimate moments captured,  
Now turned pornographic fodder.

It's all right, you say.  
We both know why I am here.

Viewing them has become a strange turn on for you.

You stand up,  
Turn around and face me.  
There is only one thing you need right now, you say.

New memories.

As you say this, you slowly unzip your dress.  
Letting it drop slowly to the floor.