

A Photo/A Memory: Market Day

Moving through the crowd,

Bodies on
 bodies on
 bodies

A wall of human movement.

Torrential rain descended the night before,
Vehicle-sized holes now tiny lakes in the road,
Interconnected by tiny canals and improvised land bridges.

The spaces in between,

On the periphery

Now tiny islands of exchange.

Slow-crawl through traffic
Laws exist more as recommendations than requirements.
Vehicles jigsaw,
An amalgam of metal, rubber, and combustion.

Yoruba and English coalesce.
Speech becomes its physical manifestation
Sound. Incomprehensible at first, but audible.
Apply meaning, the physical becomes cultural.

There's an exchange.
A woman looking at me.
Arriving in Nigeria,
It's a familiar look.
I am distinct, no doubt.

A stranger.
 Few.
 Like me.
 This area, this region.

Maybe the color of my skin
or lack thereof,

I stand out.

It does not take too long to notice it...

The side glances.

Awkward looks.

The astonishing curiosity in seeing something new.

That look. *The look.*

One some

Are far more familiar with than myself.

Different. Outsider. Other.

Everyday lived experiences.

Transferred if only for a brief moment.

Lifetime in A Moment

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 from the past.
Inspiration for today.

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

Viewing them,
A familiar look comes to your face.

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

New memories.

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

Love Is

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 is absurd.
Love is cruel.
Love just is.

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.

I once knew this girl,
I told her I loved her and she just stood there.
I can still feel her cold stare.
She said nothing and said everything.
Love may never be.