

Surveillance from a High-Functioning Homo Proteus At Eagle Square, Circa Redacted by Njoku Nonso

I do not christen the cockcrow as ordinary or inconsequential.
The sun has come to manifest through the old cartographer's gold-plated finger
in the gull wing of August's ridiculous skyline—
boundless, iniquitous, something that ripples and stains the third world's
grand amphitheater. A downhill house made of glassform and wet marble
as unbelievably tall as an Egyptian pyramid.
Rembrandt lighting of the right-wing chamber.
White silk bed sheet and pillowcases stained of lantern oil and cum.
Hallelujah—Jonah's phantom is finally out of the shark's gnarled belly.
Witness how I—the black register of God's false experiment, alien blood
embryonic, comatose, thoroughly unmade—
gather my steel flesh and bone wires toward wakefulness.
Here: a standing ovation. Here: a Newtonian disavowal of the powder train.
Because the past hour seems longer than usual and mortuary-cold
and there is an orphan child half breath half shadow somewhere in it
flipping through a 60-page British novelette
about wise peckish rats that chew toenails and blow warm air in chorus
to numb the wounds. The rats know what Nicomachus fears to be true:
there are drunken times when pleasure and pain meet at a phone booth
and make out until one of them disappears in a whorl of dust devils.
I wash off mud and gunk from my bionic eyes, the diamond-shine of snake stones.
The street beneath reveals itself in a clock of snapshots
from bright to brighter disasters. A slow ambush of potholes like skeleton eyes.
Stiff-necked homo sapiens, high and blue on capitalist pills, streeling their feet
to their workstations. Yellow cars on a rampage, weather-beaten,
honking incessantly like the first migraine of first pregnancies.
Oh translator of coordinates oh twitching goldfinger oh Joulupukki of congenital maladies
I curse you in the brass voice of a dead Pharaoh
for the pixelated country you have bestowed to me, burning like paper wicks.
I do not take my gaze away when a giant hornbill crashlands against a tinted car window
parked by the roadside, the trick of an eclipse. I think this, too, is a prophecy;
Pontius Pilate washing his hands before committing murder.
What other ruin resides in the occupation of time?
Whose patient dog lies dead and rotten among the wreckage?
Tell me, when Lord Lugard opened his eyes to the rainbow lights of this country,
did he, too, like me, hiss and walk away
knowing yes, oh my god yes, we are beyond screwed.