REFLECTIONS

The Destruction of Urban-Day Market

The Medics' Arrival
Ife, Nigeria

The market was open, the market of sand,
Of dust blowing down with harmattan wind
over pulp of a mango, pulp of a hand.

Fingers of smoke and ashes had fanned
Over bodies of people, burnt and pinned
By the market when opened, the market of sand.

Two tribes of Yoruba, claiming the same land
Of dry season fruit, desiccated and thinned.
The pulp of a mango. The pulp of a hand.

The soldiers had guarded, the Ife had manned
The gates of Urban-Day, its corrugated tin,
and opened the market, the market of sand.

Armed Modakekes with a list of demands
Forced the tension—an explosion of limbs,
The pulp of a mango, the pulp of a hand.

It must have been stirring; it must have been damned,
Their obsession with volume, the splitting of skin
Of patients when opened and salted with sand,
The pulp of a mango, the pulp of a hand.

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