

Compromises

Racquel Koiner

Cool breezes blowing against your face
White sandy beaches, blue water, blue skies
Ackee trees, and soursop trees give shade from the smiling sun
Tourists and hotels everywhere where the fried fish and bammy spot
used to stand near
Warmth, sunshine, friendly faces, and dreams of America

Shanti towns with wooden and zinc lined roofs
Cornmeal porridge on Sunday
Cornmeal porridge on Monday
Empty pots on Tuesday
Gunmen breaking in on Wednesday
No color lines but political lines to separate the town
Naked children playing in the streets
Poor life, ghetto life, ahhh the simple life
Warmth, sunshine, friendly faces, and dreams of America

Crowded subways, busy streets, public housing, unfriendly faces
Snow on the ground, but the taste of opportunity in the air
Ambition, progression, education, cold and alone
Apartment living, rushing to school and rushing for the sake of
rushing
McDonald's for breakfast, Subway's for lunch, but ahhh curry chicken
for dinner to remind me of home
Don't even notice the warmth of the sun on my face
Dreams of home

Adolphus Lee Poetry Award, 2015 Literary Arts Festival, New York City
College of Technology, CUNY

Nominating Faculty: Professor Caroline Hellman, English 2000, Department of
English, School of Arts & Sciences, New York City College of Technology,
CUNY.

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