

## ONCE I DANCED

without music,  
in a circle  
in a village  
at mid-morning.

One woman danced with me:  
the senior wife  
toothless and haggard  
of the smirking old chief.

And all the other  
wives  
and all the children  
watched.

And I in my jeans  
and my bra-less T-shirt,  
camera dangling on my breasts,  
wanted to stay.

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## WATCHERS IN THE MARKET (Kumasi, Ghana, 1981)

“Fear woman,” they said.  
She struggled in her green cloth print.  
Soldiers in grey  
on the grey floor of the market.  
Stench of fish and flesh.  
Vultures eating  
watching.

“Fear woman,” they said.  
Tore at the shawl around her waist  
pulled her child  
off her back  
held him by one arm. He screamed  
reaching for her  
watching.

“Fear woman,” they said.  
She makes too many profits  
selling in this market. We men  
pay woman  
she has power over us.  
They shot her before the crowd  
watching.

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