

NOTTING HILL

Those old hips shake your pleated skirt today, aunty.
You are no church girl. All day you jamming
behind big truck, laughing, bottom rolling for so,
feet chipping, skirt swaying as if for its blasted self.

You are no church girl. No bells ring in the sermon,
no bible in you hand. No, the sermon is Kaiso music
and it sweet too bad, pitching out of speaker stacks
or sticks licking steel pan with a tin ti tin tin.

You are no church girl, as your feet trample tar roads,
belting out lyrics: *Audrey, where you get that sugar,*
darling, there is nothing sweeter, feting out winter blues,
like this music is a Pentecostal preacher and you body
testifying, like Baptist rhythm hold on pon you.

You were no church girl when that body fetched water
from standpipe in St David Street, bucket balanced on head,
hip undulating, humming kaiso, or you slipped through back room
windows to party in moonlight with fresh-faced boys,
dancing to Calypso Rose, Kitchener and Sparrow.

You are no church girl, yet no rum or strong spirit touch
your lips as your feet pelt hard slaps on pavement stone.
And is how much policeman you pinpoint, target
and jump on, bottom rolling back on black uniform.

Today you eyes freeze them fresh-faced boys
trying to move in slyly on me, you niece,
Move, leave she lone, she too young, that child not ready,
them eyes say, then you hug me up and wine.