

## POEMS

### Patience Agbabi

#### **The sign of the times**

Contact sex is for the élite  
for the rest of us it's a shot in the dark  
and the packet of 10% extra free  
and we stretch imagination until it snaps.

We are living in the rubber age  
civilization is at its peak  
women wake excited, wave  
the magic wand of men, condomed.

#### **Getting dressed for love**

He takes off his pinstripe shirt,  
peels away the office,  
the telephone calls, the bored meetings,  
while she unzips the stresses of the day,  
trembling.

Trembling  
she throws the blouse over her head  
and it floats to the floor like a ghost  
while he unbuttons her cares  
and they cling to each other for love  
almost.

Then rational, he fumbles in the drawer  
while she for the little flat box  
just to be sure. They embrace now,  
dressed for love.

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