

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.

Feminist Review No 30, Autumn 1988