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Great America! "Land of the free. Home of the brave." Home of the level headed—Hulk Hogun, Hugh Hefner, Marilyn Manson, Mike Tyson, Michael Jackson, Jesse Ventura, and Dennis Rodman. Free as the bald eagles, for she's not imprisoned by fear of guerrilla warfare, coup d'etat, revolution, tribal rage or carnage as in Burundi, Liberia, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, Sierra Leone. Not submerged beneath a stifling blanket of darkness, for she has sunlight by day and electricity by night. Cozy, for she has comforters, heaters and fireplaces for the cold and huge humming air conditioners for the heat. Like Moses in the wilderness, America gets cold or hot water from indoor waterspouts. At the click of a mouse, America receives information the size of the universe from the heavens and from the earth.

But I'm Eno Eegufer. Native of Akwukwu, Oshimili, Delta, Nigeria. Home of great Irokos, Mahoganies and Udalas. Nature and geography echo with voice crisp and clear: Great farmlands in Niger area. Rugged hills in the East. Thick forests in the West. Vast grasslands in the North and beautiful rivers in the South. Like a mailman on his route, I traversed the length and breadth of Africa: Abokuta, Agbor, Abuja, Benin, Calabar, Enugu, Ibusa, Ibadan, Kano, Kogi, Lokota, Ubiaja, Ogwash and Issele-Uku. Home of my fathers and habitations of hyenas, giraffes, crickets, spiders, soldier ants, Tarantulas and exotic reptiles. Delight of all mortals. We feast like Arabian royalties. Not on carrots, celery or lettuce head, but on fish head, goat head and cow head. Not on peanuts, prunes or pickles but on ox tail, cow legs, chicken feet and gizzards marinated with jungle herbs, seasoned with exotic flavors and spices. Mmmmm! It makes the nose drip slimy juices like a Kampala winepress. Our soup is not chowder, split pea or lentil but Agbonor, Ewedu and Egusi complete with Anu-Otta, Okpororo and Dawadaw.

Dessert is not Jell-O, vanilla ice cream or chocolate chip cookie, but Akara, Agidi, Molnol and Ube. No unhealthy colored sweetened water refreshments for there is abundance ofogogoro, kal-kai, bi-ukutu and tombo. No cocaine, heroin, dope or LSD for Arogbo, Gworo and Otoba transfer from generation to generation.

As the hills are to mountain goats, so are the jungles of Africa to me. I love its charm, its beauty and even its evil forest but not its raging wars and raging madness. Except for the ever increasing rivers of blood, our highways, byways and pathways are desolate. At every turn blood! Blood in Angola. Blood in Burundi. Blood in Cameroon. Blood in Dakar. Blood in Liberia. Blood in Nigeria. Blood in Sierra Leone. Blood in Sudan. Blood in Somalia. Blood in Uganda all the way to Zaire. Blood everywhere. Pools and pools of shed innocent blood. Like little Nwan-Nea I fled to America. I relish her peace, her quiet and her sophistication. I relish her technology: Internet, e-mail, faxes, pages, phones, videos, computer games and satellite dishes. But not her IRS and INS for both are like severe toothache. I love America deeply but not nearly as much as African Nsala, Ofes-ose or Isi-ewu.

I pant for Africa like the deer pants after the water brooks, but I see no way back, for hell and its demons of war, blood, destruction and desolation have taken the gates of the Land. Like a wild animal caught in a snare I am trapped betwixt Africa and America. Frozen solid like a piece of Kilimanjaro, I have become schizophrenic. In reality, I want America less but in practicality more. In reality I want Africa more but in practicality less.

In sleep and dream I live in Africa.

Inwardly, I am African but outwardly I look American. Despising and rejecting what I do have, I keep reaching for what I can no longer have. Inward turmoil leaves me stranded betwixt Africa and America as in the proverbial "rock and hard place."
Eno Eegufer
by Jones One

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African Authenticity personified. No heavy cloud of Calvin Klein, Oscar da Renta, Tommy Hilfiger or Avon perfumes. No toothbrush, no Aquafresh, no Crest, no Colgate, no Scope, no Listerine. No bath cubes, bath oil, foamable or bubble bath. No Dove, no Irish Spring and no Oil of Olay. Only Atu: great medicine chewing stick of the gods. All relationships, all feelings, all smells, very real, very strong, very natural.


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