

**sudanese song for lost boys, opus one**  
**(in memory of James Mungwi Akech)**

**b.r.crandall**

i.

arriving, unread,  
    unwhite and blue  
from a journey of sandy solitude,  
from travel, to unravel  
    their own syncopation of history,  
        blistery, calloused, yet alive...  
        ...their drive without wheels nor temperate tears,  
            nor stolen years of boyish fears,  
driven forward,  
only trusting  
    there's  
a reason to hope....

an irish kennally once said,  
*i love*  
*to believe*  
*in hope*  
and this dope repeats him,  
before I'm six feet under, dead,  
yet living alive on this page.

ii.

we run onto the scene, barefoot and jeweled  
ruled by the moment of our dance, this dance  
that by chance was created by an intellectual drum,  
a jihad of Dinka,  
thumbprinting their way into a sudanese soul.

we run, fast, onto the empty scene, barefoot, and nude  
yet jeweled alive  
thumbprinting our feet into the sudanese sand...  
marking the land with permanent possibility,  
initiated with scars to prove that we're men,  
    when do we get to return home.....

iii.

asleep, side by side in Kentucky humidity,  
i wonder about Americana humility  
and of cultural extremity  
that deserts, jungles and sand storms  
make any sense of the senseless  
or shallow, solid sweat or arid heat...

there's no longer that threat...  
but is there?  
a threat longs to last,  
lasting to long...  
with a hold on the heart to remain strong,  
nomadically herding whatever may be left....

*I wonder what it feels like to starve...  
I'm starving to feel and wonder....*

*Alier* smiles,  
boyishly lost in dreams of *kakaday*, hibiscus juice,  
lost, suddenly sudanese,  
smiling, pleased, with global perspective,  
introspective, interloping in pain.  
the *Papyrus Palm* remains in the Sudd  
swamped to keep northern noise away...  
if not for tomorrow, then at least for today.

*Akech* tearing his out,  
in pain, tearing out mine,  
a soul,  
bullet from yesterday's crime,  
survived when a  
cousin is dead.  
Is there supposed to be  
a thread to this meaning?  
Instead I teach of clouds,  
black, and coming in three....  
when his car breaks down,  
and he clowns with me, my runner's attire,  
"I don't need to run," he whispers,  
"I've walked enough miles for the two of us".

*Muwait* sitting calm, without a fuss,  
wanting to know,  
to Americanly grow and find,  
within his curious, ageless mind  
which meanders in "tell me's",

believing fullheartedly  
this land of the free...  
will be a promised reality,  
for his opporunity to gain literacy  
which is uncommon for men back home...

*Panther* stalking stoically,  
stoically stalking sad nights, alone,  
trying to thread meaning to his loneliness  
with a kiss for his daughter  
sent serendipitously  
across Atlantic seas  
hoping the dress he sends will find her....  
with words written to be read  
with money, better left unsaid,  
for survival...

a life they once knew goes on,  
life, they know now, going on,  
is their elsewhere.

iv.

love thy neighbor  
neighborly love thee  
thy neighbor loves

Kenya can,  
because it could  
and did...  
does...  
what is, was,  
now  
now

*pressing on*  
*to other goals*  
*to win the prize*  
never despising  
nor compromising  
that fauceted drop of dreams  
in a heart  
that starts anew ...  
I'm lost, and you?  
Hallilieu

Hallilieu  
Hallileujah.  
we are rising,  
without you,  
God....  
rising, risen, raised  
beyond how hard you held us down  
animistic and proud  
in a land  
where poachers  
    seek salvation in an elephant's tusk,  
    before night becomes dusk  
    and hot *laban* milk is drunk  
        welcoming darkness

v.

homeless  
hymnless  
hopeless  
happiness  
hippiness  
homelesshomelesshomeless,  
unless home brings you hope.

the moon, elliptical in its eccentric epiphany,  
exists despite the flight  
vagabond fight  
vulnerable fright  
of African somebodies  
crying "why why why".  
There's a hymn of hope and happiness  
when the heart finds its home  
    below Egypt,  
    aside red seas,  
    threaded with white Niles,  
    and a marketplace of  
    famined *Souk*  
    where *Shariah Laws*  
    determine who to curse  
        out loud.

somebody say hello  
    in Dinka,  
        mother tongue,

that'll be just fine,  
taking you away from the whine  
of being treated as  
Muslim's African Whore...  
to the liberation,  
of an army,  
southern and for  
the people.

vi.

universal controversial  
american commercial  
biggerbettergreater  
playahata'  
hidden in corporate need,  
taught to us via greed,  
planted as a seed,  
yet it grows  
and no one knows how to stop it,  
maybe i should just drop it  
and charge you for my useless thoughts....  
this ought to be in pictures,  
don't you think?  
a box office hit  
or miss,  
yet so beautiful in the pursuit.

vii.

28 million scarred by  
undiscovered political ping pong,  
right, wrong,  
loss of Britain's strong political hold,  
getting old into Arabian human rights abuse,  
looking for an excuse your family is broken,  
and for a token  
of what you once knew....  
to your memories, stay true,  
and alive...  
driving forward with this dream,  
American, and sketchy at the seam,  
but solid in its patchworked song  
and law....  
*if i could see what you saw*  
*if i saw what you've seen*

in awe by what your eyes tell me.

viii.

lost in a walk, my journey of solitude and sand  
syncopating their history,  
calloused, yet alive in a blister,

driving forward, we humans must  
hope for reasons to trust

*hoping to love,  
i believe*

these homeless, irishly-drunk  
words born before they live,  
dead, like me, six feet under...

this page coming alive.

