

UNAWARES

By Mobolaji

Lockdown

It was just going to be for a few days-
At most, a couple of weeks.
Just lie low until the disease is contained.
It became the longest ten months of our lives;
All you needed to exist was shorts and a large t-shirt;
Showers were just by the way,
Hair care was not your priority;
Overgrown beards and the sudden realization of how
important barbers are;
Restaurant dining became a future to look forward to-
Order in, or get on YouTube to learn your next
concoction recipe.
Just sleep, feed and start a tiktok

Masks

Black is my favourite-
It became commonplace to not know what someone
looks like without their facemask up;
You just have to have some faith that the eyes you are
peering into would have great lips and a beautiful
dentition to go with it.
When a bus passenger sneezes, you hope that it's not a
tank of virus being dumped on you,
Or outrightly yell at them to get isolated.
Some brought the fashion out of the masks;
Others protested, holding on to their belief that
nobody should be mandated to try not die.
For me, it gave me confidence-
I could hide my expressions,
And so, I could indeed express myself,
Beneath the masks.

Living out loud

The mantra has since changed;
Face life as it comes-
Be reckless.
Live for now.

We never saw a pandemic coming;
Not in a hundred years.
We were supposed to be too sophisticated for it,
We were caught unawares though;
The level of unpreparedness showed that there is indeed
no order to our world,
And if an end was to come soon,
We would be caught as surprised as COVID-19 did us.

Distance

My favourite part-
The buses had to be decongested;
For long distances, just two people on a seat that once
squeezed five of us on to the hard leather.
No smelly armpits over my head,
No brushing of shoulders,
Most of all, no bad breath.
You didn't have to hug or shake acquaintances;
Chairs were distanced,
Conversations moved to the internet.
Now we schedule meetings online-
"Turn your camera on. Turn your mic off";
This should have been a zoom meeting,
We don't have to converge.

Living out loud

The mantra has since changed;
Face life as it comes-
Be reckless.
Live for now.