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Where are the

BEAUTIFUL ONES?

When growing up in my sweet place of birth when we gathered from all parts of the village with radiance on our faces and broad smiles evolved into laughter of joy and profound friendliness bound on the true neighbourliness, an offshoot of love that comes from the heart. The ambience created by the collective positive thoughts of us all, the purpose, just to play and be very happy, and the end be nourished and healthier.

Then mother was a mother to all in the community. A man old enough to father us was not questioned if he whipped the nonsense out of any one who erred. Our parents were happy to be the guardian to other's children. Suspicion was not in the catalogue of words. Hatred was a negative emotion not quite common. Envy was still far from our little country home. Competition among the woman folks was healthy. People celebrated other's success. The evils of westernization had not yet berth by the banks of the river with clean and sparkling water-natural and fresh. The only reliable source of water then. Unfortunately, she is dead due to negligence or replacement with the Whiteman's *whitefuel* that gushes out from metal, iron or plastic pipes. Then the public pipes are no where to be found. Their place taken over by borehole only affordable by the bourgeois.

The moon nights come and go like every other night unwelcome. Our fathers have abandoned the fire place during harmattan and folk tale sessions amidst sips of fresh tapped palm wine rich with its medicinal content of yeast said to be good for the eyes, for the city madness called public or night clubs. Love well shared and professed among the folks is now very scarce and where it is available it comes in season and expressed intrinsically only for selfish rewards and attachments.

Our small community was a delight to savour, a perfect rhythm of wellness was indeed the experience. Harmony was the

breathe of life and achieving balance was not difficult. Life happened because there was beauty in the souls of men then. The drift is a very large gap that must be bridged else the cliff would become steeper, deeper and more dangerous to look down from or take a jump, a liberal attempt to tempt God.

Amazingly, the frills and thrills of the bonds of the days gone by, still sustains a lot of us old or young. We always look forward to that re-union without which our memoirs are incomplete, uninstructive and uneducative, a remedy for the colossal lost of value and favour for the norms, imbibing the culture and identifying with the philosophy of the community. No wonder! If we can love our neighbour as self, the craze for power and material things would make the undertakers look somewhere else for their livelihood.

The farm and river were kilometers away from us. In a group, we do as many trips as possible. Then Lucifer was still holding in his cages kidnappers and rapists. Today, the beauty of wetting one's face with the dew tapped from the leaves on the way to the farm or the river has faded and set with the sun of yesterday.

The joy and inner peace experienced when helping an elder climb the hill by unburdening her of the clay water pot is better felt than read about. The memory is boundless. The prayers make you lighter ready for a meeting with the being you can not touch, rekindling the urge to do more. Respect for elders was a way of life. In the city, no one bothers about you. It is only your business. In fact greeting a neighbour's husband or wife can put you into serious trouble, even death. The situation is as bad as that.

Matches was not common. It was an excitement and thrilling to walk a few houses away from yours to take fire with a lamp made of a broken clay pot with a piece of cloth which served as wick soaked in palm oil as the fuel. This can serve better use than the *oyinbo* lantern. It worked well, no power

outage.

Times have changed. The things of modern days as driven by science and technology and information technology and communication has fused the world into a village smaller than a man's palm in the globalization process. No doubt, its pains are as numerous as the gain. Interestingly, the tunes past time are sung and danced to by the unimaginable beauties abound in the environment. The structure and system do nothing but just work in response in the sustenance of balance as designed by God.

Experience has shown that beauty of nature is the uncorrupted rhythmic flow without collusion of frequencies as would man in his egoistic approach in reaction to the acts he can not understand. The reason being that we have lost touch with the actuals, expression of the beauty within, love that findth no gains. Where are those ones who within their inner beings exit the fineries of godly and natural beauty that can sacrifice to quench another's thirst on a hot afternoon. Where are they who labour to cultivate others farmland for a mere cup of water, or palm wine with a plate of food, at times none. They arranged the thatch without demanding for reward. Fetches firewood for the elderly, widow, childless ... or helping to build a whole house

Where are the angels who fed the headmaster and the student teachers, even the priest? So sad that the media is awashed daily by the taking of hostages of the clergy. Our youths must look back a little and walk the rope of honour and dignity, disassociating violence...

If we must live our name, a time has come for us to hunt for those men with the heart of gold, with unblemished beauty because the work to be done is enormous. No more should the vampires be allowed to suck us dry. Woman!

Your strength is intimidating, 2011 is here. Wake up, knowing that beauty within is the only thing that time cannot change nor harm. Arise. Act and shine.