

Joan E. Bauer

London , 1974

I will call you Daniel
though your true name is forgotten.

You were Yoruba, a Christian
yet you spoke like a skeptic.
We were teachers on holiday, traveling alone.

A friendship, a seeming like-mindedness
though you said you'd never travel to the States.
Our gangster films convinced you.

What I remember:
Trafalgar Square , blood pudding, the Rosetta Stone,
Dickens & Darwin at Westminster Abbey,
warm beer & Indian food.

We differed on crime & punishment.
In my country, we cut off the hands of thieves.

You would be 70. Did you marry,
were there daughters?
Are you still living
in jam-packed Lagos , a safe distance
from Sharia Law & the Boko Haram?

But you'll never read this.
Your address lost with my luggage & photos
somewhere in Heathrow just before
the flight back home.

Joan E. Bauer is the author of *The Almost Sound of Drowning* (Main Street Rag, 2008). With Judith Robinson and Sankar Roy, she co-edited the international anthology, *Only the Sea Keeps: Poetry of the Tsunami* (Bayeux Arts and Rupa & Co, 2005). In 2007, she won the Earle Birney Poetry Prize from *Prism International*. In 2018, she was a finalist for the John Ciardi Poetry Prize from BkMk Press. For some years, she was a teacher and counselor and now divides her time between Venice, CA and Pittsburgh, PA where she co-hosts and curates the Hemingway's Summer Poetry Series (www.hemingwayspetryseries.blogspot.com).