

BOOTS

As Dr king once asked
I wonder
How a bootless man
Can lift himself by the boot straps

We be bare foot
On freshly paved roads
Reflecting the same smoothness
Of baby bottom
As if a new era has been born
An era that doesn't seem interested in the old
New businesses branching into our neighborhoods
That put chokehold on the roots already here
New homes for the people who don't belong here
Yet
Buildings that were monuments of my past are only memories
now
Public housing projects are getting knocked down and replaced
with luxury apartments
Churches are getting replaced by condos
Nothing's sacred anymore
I could go on
But it'll just make me more upset and sad than I need to be right
now

I am guh tho
There's all this new pavement
But still no boots

How can we be expected to gain ground
In this rat race
When we have to constantly start over

While others continue to run past us
Heads above the dust we were pushed into
Across the finish lines made for them
We're tired of brushing ourselves off
We're tired of the deliberate decisions disguised as our failures
We didn't choose mediocrity
We didn't choose despair
This pair of being oppressed and vulnerable
Be hell on the daily
But despite we still find ways to feed our babies

So I ask
When does this get to be fair
When do we get our boots
With the straps
Do we have to take them

Relax
We don't want yours
We want our own
All we ever wanted
Was our own