

The streets of Alex

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It was Friday morning, the sun was shining, the street was already full of people. As I was walking by 10th Avenue in Alex, I saw pink and blue flats. On my right were the smallest buildings, some painted white others with unpainted brick. I stood at the corner of the street watching the people passing by. I saw a beautiful young lady, light in complexion, tall and with curves. She was just walking, not sure where she was going. She smiled at every guy on the street. It clicked in my mind- is she going home or to work, or is she going for an interview? But the dress she was wearing was too short for a job interview. Is it to get men's attention?

As I was walking down the street all I could hear was bang, bang, bang. Even if you are just walking down the street they assume you want to catch a taxi. Again, while I was still walking I saw a black woman wearing a green and pink doek. What rang in my mind was that this woman is Tsonga. Did I think this because she was selling vegetables? Of course not. Simply because of the clothes she was wearing she was representing the Tsonga culture.

As I was still walking I saw a group of men carrying bags. My surprise was that they were not speaking Zulu or Xhosa or any other South African language. It was obvious that they were from Mozambique or Zimbabwe. They were in a rush. I could see that they did not want to be late.

I passed by another group of men, as I walked closer I could see a crate of coke around them. They were making a noise. They were not arguing, but enjoying their gambling. Another group was smoking nyaope.

As I was walking down the streets of Alex, I saw young children with different school uniforms—blue and white, grey and white and green and white. I saw children playing in the street—youth who do not see the importance of education.

I saw a young beautiful woman carrying two children. I could see she was 8 months pregnant. As I was walking I saw a handsome guy inside an expensive black car. I thought to myself what has he done in life to drive this beautiful car. I started to walk slowly, I passed his car with this admiring look. He could see that this young lady really liked his car. He opened the window with a confident look and called me in his deep voice ‘hey beautiful’. I responded ‘hi uncle’. He smiled ‘where are you going?’ I said ‘I am going home’. Then he said ‘can I take you home?’ I said ‘no thanks, I have just arrived.’ He could see that I was not into him but I really liked his car. He said ‘give me your number and I will call you tonight and take you out’. He even said ‘I can even buy you food’. I mean really, he kept on talking without stopping as if I was even interested. I wondered how big guys with big cars approach girls.

As I was walking I saw these big black and white rats running towards me. I was scared but I was surprised, are these rats really running towards me. I mean, I thought they were supposed to run away from people. But these rats do not even mind. They stopped towards the dumping site to look for food. I could smell dead rats and the dumping site.

As I was walking I saw a beautiful lady walking towards the shebeen carrying a Black Label empty bottle. She could care less. As I was walking by I saw old women carrying some black small bags. I thought they were having a meeting but they were waiting for the clinic car.

In Alex, even at night people will be going up and down and you can even ask yourself are they working night shift or are they enjoying making noise across the street. You never have the peace

of mind while still listening to people across the street. You can hear people screaming, the voice of a girl enjoying sex. You can imagine. You can smell the food of your neighbourhood. Today they cooking mala mogudu. Okay yesterday was fish.

You can't go to the toilet at night because it is 10 metres away. Once I had a running stomach. I was scared to go to the toilet because I could bump into a rapist or a drunken, violent guy. I decided to help myself in a bucket. Life is not easy but we don't have a choice.

Many things are happening in the streets of Alex. It is up to you to choose the life you want to live. It is up to you to decide what exactly you want in life. Do you really want to wake up each and every day doing nothing? They say time wasted is never regained. Tell yourself I do not want to die poor and that it is not your fault you were born in Alex. Tell yourself that you want to make Alex the next Sandton or any other beautiful place that you know or may think of. Start today and make it happen!



