XAYMACA - for Lorne Macdonald

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Abstract
My wife is in the photograph, the ship is steaming away to the right of her shoulder, heading towards the horizon as she poses in the warm Caribbean sea.
The slave ship called at Ocho Rios.

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Behind me as I snap the picture Dunn's River waterfall, jammed with people climbing the ledges up its 600 feet, holding hands in chains.

'What did you think of Jamaica,' asked Linda Cameron.

The ship was enormous in the harbour a hotel containing the vacationers whose vacation was the ship. It squatted, the ship. It was an angel food cake. Layered with stories. It crushed the harbour sweetly. Inside were the rituals of captivity.

In Ocho Rios the human chains climbing the waterfall, in the town market chains of those too poor to ever leave the island selling to cruise ship vacationers, captive of the tour.

The tourists see those living off tourism, the locals see the tourists.
It's all authentic.

'What do you think of it here,' asked Claire Harris.

In the National Gallery Edna Manley's 'The Sun Goes Down' is a magnificence neither head nor nature a brown humanoid sun whose face is both rays and night, ours and not ours,

strong as Henry Moore or Giacometti but too female, too Jamaican, for fame.

A mobile also there, unauthored, grit dirt floor cig-butted littered leads counter-clockwise through corrugated iron panel walls covered with torn posters and graffiti ('lie down girl me stick it in') to a dead body and cast-off bottles lying in rubbish: a vicious spiral,

anonymous, Jamaican, unrecognized.

Thirty percent of Kingston population is squatters. A sign in shanty town reads 'MAN WHO STEAL HERE, HIM GET HEAD CHOP OFF.'

'Don't you always see me laughing?' said Eduardo the Kingston driver, as we planned the excursion to Ocho Rios.

he gave jolly comments on points of interest all along the way.

The sugar cane grew thick, fibrous, higher than men. It was harvested by slaves
captive to a money chain. It crushed the harbour with sweetness. It was a vicious circle.

Matthew 'Monk' Lewis author and slave-owner wrote a story about Jamaica, 'The Isle of Devils.' The devils are not plantation owners, but blacks. His blacks. His story multi-layered dark sugar.

He dies of yellow fever en route to England. Buried at sea his body does not sink, is last seen floating back to Jamaica. Lewis circles back to the Ocho Rios ship. His story sugar, white-layered.

Eduardo had smoked ganga at Ocho, I could see it in his eyes, he drove silently and viciously back to the hotel.