

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## SURVEILLANCE: The Public Confuses Death with Pornography

Ashaki M. Jackson · Tuesday, February 16th, 2016

You sit in the violence Teeter  
 into the video from your safety  
 You are – each time – unsure  
 of what you’re viewing: Videos  
 of Black bodies crumbling so primitively  
 it is convincing

\*

You have long trusted  
 your vision Can recall the arch of Bathsheba’s  
 dark miracles  
 from your palace roof You are entertained  
 Watching this makes you faithful  
 to God and all of his craft

\*

You are cautioned not to interpret  
 what you see Told that the videos lack circumstance  
 You wonder what is off  
 screen What justifies these chronicled deaths  
 You are lucid and hidden You can see  
 the bodies fold and fold like dusky silk  
 but do not protest  
 It is captivating You watch again  
 aroused and trusting the beauty of the scene  
 What is called when you long for  
 images when you want more?

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For 10 weeks, we will feature one poem per week from *Surveillance*, the new chapbook forthcoming from Writ Large Press. These poems by Ashaki M. Jackson explore police killings of Blacks captured on video and the public’s consumption of these videos. Previous poems: [1](#), [2](#), [3](#)

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