When The Sky Splits

I can smell it in the air. Sweet and musty like tuskers and damp transport seats. Here in Kenya, when the sky bursts, everything rejoices. Rain clouds loom above me, looking down, beaming. The clouds here aren’t the same, or so I’ve come to notice. They glide through the air, plump bellies ripe with rain. And when they’re ready to come to term, they give

Kenya life. I can feel it in the air today. Kenyan mothers soar above me and I can see their swollen stomachs, I can sense the coming showers. When the clouds give, life comes to the Mara. The locals feel it too. Birds fly to shelter under the acacia, antelope stop their grazing and tilt their ears to the sky. Kenya knows it’s coming. Rain. The transport rumbles along and the sky rumbles with us. Young mothers waddle to their homes and boys herd cows into pastures. The village, the Mara, the red Kenyan soil is pregnant with anticipation of the first drop. It falls to the ground. A single moment passes, the clouds split open. And with that, Kenya is drenched. Red soil turns to red muck and I can feel the tires slipping beneath me. Somewhere in the distance, lightning cracks the marble sky, beyond the clouds. There’s something about the way they’re shaped like tufts of candy floss and painted like watercolor. Something about the way they keep to themselves until they find the Mara on the brink. Something, and when the rain stops, the sun breaks through.

Kenya is red, green, and doused in light.