

Wilderness House Literary Review 20/3

Renata

Translated by Dr Huwaida Issa

A woman's night in the morning

1

The dawn took shelter in the window,
so I cried:
there is no place for scandals!

2

I polish my trembling desire,
beneath my fingernails
with black varnish;
while you are locked:
you neither
repay the debt,
nor release the
dragonflies

3

Let me plow the face of the morning,
lurking like a crocodile,
hanging on the hair of its agitated sun,
between its wide-open jaws.

4

The table between us speaks louder
than silence itself.
Your chatter is
like drops of dew,
quickly fly away,
while I sip my coffee,
my pleasure, always.

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5

Because I'm deeply in love with your eyes,
thinking of the rose, in the golden vase,
not wanting the soil, the play of children, or passers-by

6

Don't say you are the wind
and I am the rain
Don't exaggerate in deception
while kissing my fingers
and igniting the moans underneath my cloth

7

I munch the false street-apples
with two tireless feet,
from the soap of your words,
and the venomous slaps of the passers-by.

8

The truth is not a jasmine
on the neighbour's rooftop,
nor a talisman moaning in the perfume,
with which I bind my breasts.
Here, in my blood,
a chorus of sleepless bees.

9

I want us to breathe together on the sidewalk—
to peel you from your heels
and fling you...
To poke the sour grapes
into
the eye of the officer,
Rushing to arrest
the naked woman on the street

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10

No
to the candles' tears.
On each side blood is slain.
No
to the relatives
and the dry ones.
I set the book aside
onto the ashes...
And the decorative lamps,
and I rekindle the breeze

11

Either escape or death.
While I sip my coffee, slowly:
I examine the contents of my bag.
I secure and lock my mobile phone.

12

Laughter,
howling,
slogans:
I push my bicycle
against the wind.
I write a garden
and I go

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A Light Smothered by the Lace on Your Chest

The first woman,
our mother, life!
This silvery glint in the
eyes of gazelles,
the pulsing in the
claws of beasts,
the vigilant in a barren Noria.
An absent-minded heart, swaggering,
like a madman, impaired,
wandering among the sideburns of sheer disappointment.
And the meadows of errant longing,
broken in the mirrors of shadows.

The first woman,
our mother, life!
You, who are emerging from a fountain of blood-daisies.
Fifty light-years away and two billion years ago.
Adorned with serpents and red coral,
with treacherous napkins, and the shriek of a pluck of jasmine.
With the moaning of pleasure,
during "Sham El-nessim" festivals.

Our old mother:
the seductive, the sacred, the crafty, the coquettish, the plump and the
strong.

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She spins with her clumsy, delicate fingers,
(immersed in the whinnying blood of meteors,
the purling cracking laughter of melancholy,
overflowing with the henna of weddings),
the sickles of light,
diminishing our statures,
as she seeks bravery in
flocks—butting and mewing,
guarded by the absurd spikes of grain,
yearning for my voice, my image and a mountain of water.

The first woman,
our mother, life!
It was not for me to say:
Step forward!
For fear had lifted its breath into my blood,
at the thought of your response,
until I found myself,
drowning in it.

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The House Mirrors Are Blind

On the dry road, there are no crossroads, nor signs:
the withered grass,
a scent sealed in a coffin.
No escape for the lover,
when eyes sharpen their coldness to sear him.

The fire of the world gathers in a woman's palm.
To reconcile Prometheus and the vultures.
Oh wind! How spoiled are you?
How many spans in your way?
A panel lies heavy on the chest,
wrapped in a flint stone.
Obsessions do not carry water.
Do not cast it to the buffaloes—
submerged in the cracks of our skin.
As the fruit rots and bursts open, a new sprout emerges from within.

And the blue eyeliner with the clay of the norias,
slumbers unveiled on the banks of darkness.
He waits not for a cup,
un-mingled with narcissus,
clinging with their molars,
to the marble blossomed-knives.

Walking to nowhere.
Existence of clamour,
tying the knot of its neck-tie.
A fishing hook without bait.
Creatures of tobacco,
bleeding their heat,
sailing through dark ink,
guarding the no place.

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Do not say we are unable to walk.
None of you weakens, except the content—
searching for stars in windmills.
Its deceptive steps do not straighten,
greedy for the bamboo waist in the sky.

The crooked traces in the snow are black—
heated with fear.
The mirrors of the house are blind.

Those who seethe within their cloaks,
shine like grilled butterflies,
an autumnal insomnia—
drifted through a space
immersed in thorns,
wilderness, and crimes of honour.

I push the door
and hear the sound of it closing,
on the other side of the water.
I think of the dead—
of a murderer amusing himself with my corpse before breakfast.

On the top floor of the canopy of forgetfulness,
A friend taken by the confusion,
eating his own fingernails,
fearing joys and demons.
Another is an academic, flatter him
with the softest of whatever his creativity offers,
injected with paranoia.

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The graves that have not yet been...
And those who died but are no more...
Each is haunted by a haven,
His finger sketches finger in the ashes:
the fallen, the hawk, the scattered, the impaled, the meek, the burning,
the pimp, the laughing one, the playful, the shackled, the lurking and the
trickster.
Beneath the swords
whose rust blaze in the prepositions.

No matter how I fasten my coat,
the cold strikes me.
Shattered, but unable to sleep,
I scatter coffee onto the genies and the books.
No spring is hoped for,
in the shimmer of this maze,
suffocated by the orchards.

An exile without walls.
A soul fettered to a lamp,
emerging from the adornments of shadows.

As if you opened the sealed door
in dust and silence.
As if, in passing,
your thigh touched my head,
protruding from the salt cabinet.

The white sheet sobs, dotted with the watchmen.
And you stumble on my broken promises,
on the tiled floor, clinging to the sidewalk.

Like hens, both of us—
we have wings, but cannot fly

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How much evil does one need
to shield oneself from evil?

Here,
the storm writes nothing but itself,
fiddling with the tranquility—
sinking its dull claws into the ashes.

The storm does not suffer from cancer,
it does not falter from drunkenness.

It does not seek paradise,
nor does it eat the serpents,
nor does it raise a sword,
nor does it chew a banner:
spreading its wings as transparent as hypocrisy.

Here:

On its knees,
I stretch myself out and sleep.

If the night is mute,
then why does the day not speak?

Thus, emptiness pours down like waterfalls,
showering its melodies upon the lungs.

I do not wait for anything,
no one waits for me,
beneath this ancient, ever-changing dome.
Like the heart of a bird,
with yearning, that bleeds upon fire.

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How much it became distressing and disgusting
this marvellous morning!

How much I can no longer distinguish between
serenity from grass,
from a handful of soil!

As if within me, an earthquake grinds dreams, leisurely.
As if within me, a season, where he birds peck at the clouds of their departure,
and die from hunger.

As if the fruit are no longer the fault of Sinbad,
nor the lamenting fingers on the door?

As if your fleeing steps beneath the light,
weave an illusion for an ailed soul in the autumn?

As if the night is a godsend,
wearing out the sap and distracting with the details.

As if the narrow house, with your spiral spindle,
is a losing gambling-game—
having neither a competitor nor a partner.

As if I am like that—the wind lost in thought because of me.

As if the evening, leaning on senseless words,
is on the verge of shrieking:

gloating, angry, laughing, mourning, and senile...

stuffing sleep into its pockets,
and flying away.