

## SNOW

to persist in the attempt. the strata giving way. the negative. the illumination. longer. heavier. darker. funeral in red light. to forget the name and remember only the word. nuclear fission. rejection. detachment. the fortified borders. rearmament. if the nerve gas falls into rebel hands. the announcement. the reaction. a filament of pain across the abdominal skin. the hand movements as he describes how they filled a truck full of rockets that failed to explode on impact. how steering remotely they drove the car straight into the camp of the government's army. images of snow. a grill in snow with skewers of snow. a collection of snow figures to mourn the dead. the dead man. in snow. the mourners. in snow. the ground covered. while the refugee camps are filled with freezing people. the tents bulge under the snow. esperanza. the boat. in the hell of hope. turbulence. the book in the river. in the aftermath. 23.15. oceanic time. the capital of pain. strait. movements. nicht. nacht. hush. echoland. the rations. the scales. what does it mean to give and take? he asks. and answers himself. sleep. and keeps repeating the question throughout the night. what does it mean to give and take. he hears the dying man through his sleep. his last words. what does it mean to give and take

wake up and see faces. t's. j's. wake up and look out into the winter night. the snow over the fields. the forest.to pass through the pain and know it

if he screams brother. or his name. in the film. is laid bare. listener she says. street cleaner. ten days later the attacks began. my legs trembled. the body. we laughed at all the jokes about solutions. all night the bombs fell. ceasefire. as it is breaking out. in the ringing of the phones. the conversations. a closed door. an open face. straight movement. the city between the bridges. not the bridge. suddenly flaring up. then sleep. long. Winter Way. Northern Lights Street. sonar. or the abolition of hunger. the white roofs. the whirling snow. the enigma in the language. no turning back. who says that. who lit this flame in us. what is this flame. the human difference. the difference. human actions. every night. each night. I will lie unsleeping and ask myself this question. zones of clarity. moments. my bare hands. wrists. a few points of contact. some similarity. woken by it. fell back to sleep. the inner figure. the flame. conscience. tenderness. living or dead eyes. at some point during our conversation I watch his eyes coming alive. some sounds he emits. physically. from within his body. when the eyes deepen. I feel it in the movement between us. that it is opening. feel the terror. the revulsion. a cold wind. the methods. the torture of the female prisoners. books are burnt in order to write other ones. the journey is dissolving. the boat on the river. the gaze out into the white light. what kind of creeping madness took over our town? I hear the voice on the radio. he is breathing as though he has fallen asleep. I look at him. walk over the bridge. save the book. do you want to smoke he asks

oblique light. oblique ray of light. wet snow

touch l's fingertips on the other side of the table. stretch them forward

you are my emerald he says

you mine

third body. the core of the relation. to say his name. forget. provoke. what the morning did not contain. or had enclosed inside itself. what vanity I laughed. no it's not vanity he struck me on the arm and said. not vanity. to be able to speak eleven languages. to walk in darkness. with both hands. stroking. across the scar. treason. the scar. its opposite. a wave motion across the letters. in the letters. I fell asleep for a microsecond. screamed he is here

he is not here. I did not betray him. was freezing the whole time. a pain in the body. to enter the skin. a moment. a few days. a rotation. of balances. cancelled out. sought for. independent and interdependent. the flow of money. the abrupt emergency brake. the riots in Europe. the poverty. the evictions. the demonstrations. the police brutality. prohibitions against taking photographs. recording. arrests of those who do. bruises on the hands. the legs. the boy's. the woman leant against a man I could not see. her half-closed eyes. slow speech. something flowing across the face. in the midst of. a distance. a worn jacket. maybe there is an opening. une communauté. a whirlwind. inner . wholly internal. the first snow. the white roofs. an Asiatic woman leans her head against the rail in the bus. as though completely overcome by exhaustion. while her two children. one in the pram. the other beside her. are completely still

Marie Silkeberg. From *Till Damaskus* 2014

Translation: Frank Perry