

## The City, a Double Amnesia

a cluster of consonants. consonant-packed words. you shook the blood. you glow on girls' eyelids. who cares about the laws of the land. he lays a hand on my back, leading me into the midst. but I shake my head. it's good he says. but I unlatch from his grip. in drizzle. darkness. nouns. repetitions. the handwriting. to write by hand. with your hand. every syllable. letter. let in the ruin. open to it. touch death. unlearning someone's face. you're standing on a razor. i hear the birds. it's raining. rains. rained yesterday. we smoked in the drizzle. it rained when we went out. it was cooling. the rain. it was raining when I walked through the park. it's raining now. switched off the movie. couldn't stand to watch all that precariousness. the threat. so hard to place. scaffoldings. the lack of safety. the falling body. I slip I slip. the brown arm. the falling body out of someone's hands. solidarity actions. one after the other. gone. gets fired. picked up by police. falls. early morning. autumn chill in the air. sun haze. thin shrouds of cloud gather and cover the sun. details she repeats. stuttering almost. as if tears could start there. any second now. details. a lost wholeness. a lost hope of wholeness. shattered land. divided. occupied. without connections. transits in space. how can one write after slavery. even. propaganda's image. a whole world's indifference. to speak against it. to be heard. details. to survive. just live. defeat. of great ideas. inner defeats

the fine migrations. of the souls. through the park. the arrivals. and partings. the place  
of. no. he says. to have touched. exactly that spot. a feel through the park. in the night  
autumn-dark. damp. the first day. got away. i can't any longer. my head is. those who  
could get out of the country. first through the park i realize it's the same place. of the  
frost crystals. he sits on the edge of the bed. i stand in the window smoking. when did  
we have this discussion. the self-hatred and the poem. doubleface. not only poison  
and healing. pleasure and pain. knife and flame. the poem and the executioner.  
handprint on the inner wall. when it razes. the hand halts. in a great openness.  
wonder

see a rainbow from the train window  
and then another one  
they fill the whole curve from earth to sky  
or vice versa  
i'm so tired  
i can't walk he says  
shows me the swollen blood-vessles  
on his hand, wrist

a white feather floats in the air  
between the houses  
in the sun  
the still hot September sun  
again  
and then another one

i don't understand it's the same  
if it is  
don't understand the day and the night  
nor the choke of tears  
nor the absence  
of it

hear the sough of large trees in the park  
through the open windows  
someone plays violin  
long  
such a lovely accent i say  
the floods  
of blue, red  
the eddies  
it rained incessantly  
a thick mat of gray rain  
from the gray sky  
it's the girl in the woods i think of  
long  
a different kind  
one hundred spices in the rice  
see the globe turning  
or the satellite over the globe  
on the screen  
madagascar  
sri lanka  
india  
ice  
turn my head  
see mount everest rise over the crust

pomegranate honey  
how you let the juice flow, darken  
sweet  
as pomegranate  
sourish  
as pomegranate  
the honey  
i didn't listen  
didn't hear  
didn't feel the taste  
saw steam disperse from the bread  
the altogether  
fresh-baked  
felt heat  
not the flavors  
there was a history  
the bullet  
it takes  
to  
justify  
lovers

galán de noche. fragrance. came in through the car window. a similar name in arabic.  
like the perfume he says. my mother planted it in our garden. it fills the whole space.  
fragrance. in the nighttime. city of jasmines. damascus. a whole forest full of thousand  
year old trees. that the president cut down. deforested. built dwellings on

the shifting landscape out the bus window. the red earth. the road. like the one  
between Damascus and Daraa he says. a volcanic eruption. a hard plateau. red soil. his  
eyes as if they all at once found themselves in bright light. he looks away

displacement. an instrument to measure distance. by the stars. seafarers. the floating  
image. life and death matter. hands in water. up to the wrist. the vastness of the  
world's synchronicity. in the body. the bodies. between

maybe I'm just a bad person

we all are

Marie Silkeberg. From *Till Damaskus* 2014

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