

If flames had a voice

to Sudabeh

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Our Lord
Hallaj
The end

Her ears can see

In the moment's stretch immeasurably beautifully
is the unfolding of her lips
if flames had a voice then she spoke
or else silence echoed deeper than in the mountains' roots
is the shaping of tomorrow
and the blue ocean
remains in the sea-shells,
she can see
the colors of tomorrow in a flame yet to be lit.
softly,
where something that has left our world
sprinkles fragments of its shattered voice to her ears
can see.

Yankee Clipper

All events, like clouds
dissipate in the distant air,
and years from now,
no one will recall ,
my train to Baltimore:
the Yankee Clipper.
He whistles loud,
rocking back and forth,
playing his only melody,
doesn't slow down or get tired,
neither do the trees,
standing here watching us cross
by the disconnected walls
full of fractures and graffiti.

The pretty girl,
on the other side,
looks far into the woods.

A little boat wonders on the blue river.
Years from now no one will recall any of this,
my train to Baltimore : the Yankee Clipper.

The flowery embrace

If I could go but one more time,
in the streets that know my childhood rhyme,
from the little house with light brown bricks,
with the little man who knew all sort of tricks,
we go and play his bamboo flute under the olive tree,
ride my red bike into the desert that made me feel free.
we follow the stream
from the waterfall
to the sun set's dream,
lay down on the ground till stars kindly glow
in the milky way shiny blanket,
thinking of snow
we fall sleep.
In gaze of the sun, we wake
to a thousand swallows dotting the clouds,
a thousand ants rise to each stone's turn,
together we trace
the early spring's flowery embrace.
leave darkness behind,
in the blue climb of the white rose's mind.

The black umbrellas

If today is pleasant rain
falling on the ground
on foggy fences
on fresh dense lawns
thus begins every moment which turns to the next
cold streams to the bay
to light
a lamp
which shines through its glass membrane
exuding hope on the evergreens,
condensed on lips
smiles
effortless, unwilling
in our foggy pondering,
we go on
our whole sphere moving unaware
the gradual tinkering of outmost perfection.
With darkness inside our bone marrow,
inside of everything,
lightness is darkness' shadow,
alongside, in never merging embrace
entering the ripe moment of the almond tree,
leaving in pursuit of a man who walks the footsteps of an old journey
to a place which is no more,
we have offered rain the black umbrellas' welcome,
Friends,
look down and see! as tall as freedom
is the waterfall we must bury.

The language of the pigeons

She walks in to end it all
to hold my hand and dissolve my flesh
in the brown color of her eyes
saturated colors of staled tea
separation begins in the Irish diner
her long fingers moving away from me
like waves retracting from a rocky shore
across the heavy table.
she leaves, my heart remains suspended
stretches out throughout the night
splashes on the wet asphalt.

Lord!

Forgive our sins
our careless passage by the broken man
on your holy ground holding oil and water
in its cracks and depressions of recent rain
gum wraps, crumbled napkins, old newspapers,
Lord!

we seek shelter
and a place of rest where man begins.

She says never hope!
I say there is tomorrow
she says never hope,
I say warmth will return with tulips set fields ablaze.
she says with life fragile to a moments decay
in time's persistent direction
like spilled water.

These bones that are hollow
these eyes that time has emptied of light
in a world shrunk to my wrinkled sensations
let us pass of life with matters unresolved
leave me here,
I was here before you came

where the old tree feeds the termites and shelters the tired bird.

The old tree said :

bring her under my shadow

rest under my shadow

her journey of generations.

rest and go

with the stream that goes to the meadow

with yellow petals in the autumn wind

when our whole world is a swan's perished wing

to a last kiss, we surrender.

the last breath of a tired bird,

in the blanket of snow,

like a feather in the hands of wind,

let us float

from ourselves be free.

we who are heavy with the burden of youth,

that gets heavier everyday

heavy as the train

that carries the body of the red forest

log by log from the brown river which has no oxygen left,

and freezes in winter

in crystalline fancies of glassy eyes

the slow dance of the red gold fish in fresh water

which pours out and forgets the bottle's memory.

she goes and I go to a day dream of the fountain and the pool

I search for a man who knows the language of the pigeons.

Fire Fly

The green, yellowish light pulsates,
I hope, I live, fading with each flicker.
You came after the dark,
your friend Jose asked you to come,
and watch the dance of the fire flies over the grass
hovering above soft gigantic folds that enclose the heart,
that yearns for rain.

The black rose says come inside my heart,
here, I hold a vision of the desert,
where the dry oak tree stands alone.
Hold his roots in your small hands,
from inside of him see the ages,
where roots end and rocks begin, find water.
Petal by petal the black rose wakes,
to the caressing of rain,
darkness everywhere expanding,
a flower stretched by the wind,
feels the roots that keeps him standing.

There,
I was hope,
when you mourned, and you were broken,
when your sky was dun and the clouds were thick,
I was the only light,
I shined among the branches, the leaves, the grass,
I danced on the glass.
Knock! knock!
open the window, open the door,
she has come to change the sheets,
take away your sweat,
the old woman says, "I am sorry".
She comes into your hotel room,
triggers the memory of the fading form
throbbing to the sound of a muffled drum,

the wings broken, against the storm beat.
At what pace? what face, can you place on the dying form?
At what pace, your regulated time measures my dying form?
Determines when the sun should rise?
how many times have you seen the sunset? the sunrise?
Have you seen the milky way?
In the desert you can see the milky way,
there I pulsate and fade away.
a star is the last thing to imagine.
Consciousness is a strange thing,
you are either part of,
or about, you know nothing.
The night beats to the humming of the air conditioning,
riding on the highway's white noise
like waves, journey across the seas,
in chains:
far away we sail from the weeping of our native shore,
to sweat and bleed on the cotton fields of a new world.
far away are dreams.
The "slave bracelet" screams,
it is time, it is time to wake.
It is time, it is now, it is late,
time to run and catch the train.
The orange line to New Carolton,
lines that are yellow, blue and green,
extend through the night,
cross, meet, imagine and then depart.
The sun crawls in from the cracks of the curtains and the walls
light diffuses in the air, the blue jay's song.
At dawn all darkness implodes inside her pupil,
sky to a blue ring,
that engulfs the mind in feminine intensity,
I absolve thee,
dream deep,
cross the twilight and rest in the land of asleep.

Dusty moon

She died a dream of dusty moon

(She did not die
one whole pretty girl by a bomb
she died yesterday
she died tomorrow
she died petal by petal)

maimed my heart.

My Swan

Under the trees,
their long branches adorned by fresh, moist summer leaves,
intensely green with youth,
under the white cottony clouds,
that pass by in shapes never the same, yet never new,
I wait.

Lotus floats on the lake,
bees go from one flower to the next,
I wait for my swan's dance of grace.
For her coming to the shore,
to feed on pieces of bread,
but today, she is nowhere to be found.

Nightmare and dreams

behind the gravel road
in the narrow depression of the ridge
black reddish creatures
with long sharp features
lurk in the park.
Stranded sheep?
a pack of wolves?
or a pride of lions?
is it evil that climbs out and creeps?
standing on its feet, a tall smiling Kodiak
flashing out his fangs
in the mirror's sudden ray.
(It is a car passing by)
Fear in the moonlight
the silvery sphere
is our heart exposed
we who have died
exhaled our souls
red dusty fume.
we who have forged
on the dark sea of time
the soaring colossus of the stellar faith
by breeze birds flurrying
star stream lights
flooded ruined lands in the new birth.

The Fire Bird

- I. The climb
- II. The transumption
- III. The conversation

I. The climb

High on a cliff of granite stone
stands alone in defiant tone
the brave heart of the sacred fire.
Serene forests circle the cliff
and extend beyond where the exhausted sun bleeds on the horizon
”creator of life, source of all light
pour into my sword a single ray
for a last blow against the night. ”
We came from the earth
from depths of the caves
of the grey dust,
bound to a frame
against the wall
we looked in dark places
searched the hidden traces
a long tunnel sloped upward
and in the end we saw your light
out of the cave
slowly upward, time elapses
darkness lingers in the long shadows
flowers perish on the cold meadows
a single seed became an orange tree
I cared for him,
he perfumed the air
a flower tree and a blue plant
my friend gave me
I cared for them.
plants are patient grow steady
plants get thirsty,
water is good
water is light condensed
slowly downward
water flows back
washes the dust, joins the ocean

dream of the ocean!
darkness blue, heavy and cold
I am the ocean.
Submerge in me!
dream on, do not be afraid.
man is mortal,
into the ocean
into a dream of nothingness you shall flow,
and the wind blew, then winter came,
then warm summers,
we were children, we played with soil and mud
and washed our hands as our mother asked,
my mother was pretty with long flowing hair,
but time elapses
propels us upward
by desire, by age
by growth explosive
distortions of bones
tantalizing movements
soft glowing eyes of youth without wrinkles
piercing eyes, piercing doubts
the impertinent questions,
doubt!
in all things assumed!
learn and inherit man's moral imagination.
Discover patterns,
learn mathematics,
order and chaos,
in the symmetry of a snow flake
freedom and order
in the growth of leaves.
I heard music in rhythm of heavens
but time elapses and turns men to dust.
when you wipe a table
oh! be gentle
for the dust you sweep once held my soul

when you walk on earth
walk carefully
for you walk on hearts.
on top of the hills men become eagles,
eagles turn to men,
Let the aged eagle stretch his wings
soar to the sky
high to a pitch
the air becomes thin
the air becomes dark
Oh! flap no more.
out of the cave with finger nails
we cut the stones and climbed the cliff
to see your light
on top of the world
where no shadow falls.
embrace my soul
speak my love.
Good night!

II. The transumption

Good night?
What good in night?
to dream to wake
to climb to fall
this oasis was sand
dream no more.
rise from the ground
encompass the earth
dragon of the night
here I stand!
sun's fallen sword in hand.
oh! tired arms
gather strength
from that source unseen
to a world unknown
burst out the flame,
force from within
despair with hope,
darkness with light,
with power oppose age of oppression
Strike! Strike!
split the night!
off the blade flies a spark
on the dry grass far below the cliff,
the world is set on fire,
Do not fear the pain !
embrace the flame.
flame and heat rush thorough the grass,
come up the cliff
I can smell my burning flesh,
I have become the fire.
Fire upon the fire
o! the endless desire
what music can capture the rhythm of these last steps ?

what bird can sing my song ?
hear my voice in the rain
when the evening falls
in the rain
when the young eagle
sings life's joyous song.

III. The conversation

No dragons to slain,
night was a time of joining
life and death are transforming,
change with the change of season
shed desire and reason,
light and souls are ascending
each beginning has an ending.
Submerge in me!

To you I have come,
from the depths of time
in ether of void
a seed I was
circular and cold
in lonesome perfection
then I imagined
symmetry broke
and thus there was light
space and time
galaxies dispersed
planets were formed
chain of molecules
gave rise to life
and death brought sorrow into the world.
to a flower I grew,
mortal I became
in self-reflection
infinitely resolved,
to you I have come
with you I am one
at rest at last.

The dark sequence

Night and night and night
the dark sequence.
under the symphonic constellations of southern skies
with reverence pondering
the worship of the lunar age
brave journeys toward the sun.
clouds of dust fermenting life
hyper-evolution of matter to consciousness
the ascent of man to the great congregation of the undying.
from nothingness which was all to parity with the almighty God.
into indistinctness,
from the dark sequence,
out of chaos tuned
crossing the southern cross
showing faith
to the first ones
who came from the milky way planet of the earth.
Stellar flowers! forefathers to your solar tombs,
we return
truth model maximal eternal
For a billion years, we kept faith.

Too heavy to beat

His heart is too heavy to beat,
too flowery not to perish,
his bones are too hollow to hold
the flesh that is too old not to rot away.
fingers too shy to open to show a star which is too far
to be near to see
a thing too fragile to be.

No bravery can climb out of fear
which is as deep as the grave that holds all the graves
which opened once and gave birth to death and closed.

I am here

(To Richard Feynman.)

I am here to see all the colors,
touch the clouds,
be a tree,
a drop of rain.
I am here to understand why an apple falls,
how a star is born.
an ultimate rule,
or folding layers like an onion
I am here to search and decipher,
I am here to dream,
dance with the waves,
in the mind of God ,
on endless planes,
searching for a way,
toward the windows of another world.
I touch the ground,
I fly away,
trees grow small,
horizon expands,
on edge of the earth,
I see the galaxy,
enormity extends,
deep into my soul,
but I suddenly fall,
before seeing it all,
and so here we shall remain.

Christmas

The mountains are dark, the valleys are deep
heavy with snow pine trees sleep.

on the far slopes the weary deer
graze on the grass that soil can keep
as lightness expands birth of a new day.

Merry Christmas!

Merry Christmas pine trees,
Merry Christmas to all the deer, black bears and the mice
to the oak trees that rest in a cast of ice
to the birches along the snowy roads
to the men who walk by windows to see the lights.
Merry Christmas my distant city!

You and forever

when I came, I heard you singing to yourself
dancing in a silky petal, embracing skin
eyelids, eardrums, moist membranes
my heart within
in a blanket of warmth, July's.
the first meeting of the eyes
the first arrival.
was it the way you twitched your lips
smiled inviting?
open pupils in a sphere of brown light,
rays that bees made sweet.
Do you have wings with white feathers?
like the doves that sat quietly on the wall?
can you paint a flower if I showed you how
pencil drawing and spray paint
lines that guide you,
notes spilling out of finger tips to rain drops
gathering on leaves,
butterflies shake their wings,
along the trail
a red rose stretching out its stem to touch tears.
red is the blood of the rose, cold flame,
rays of the moon in the nightly dew
pure out of the stem that wields its precious gem to the wind
life that is once
trees bow in unison the coming of thunder.

what composition of words
which combination of colors begin
to paint the odor of the last meetings ?
a bird passes by to a point collapses, dimensionless, colorless.
here, a man stood and to marble pondered
skin shrivels in the erosion of the age
and the rest are words whiter than the page. (you and forever)

The wedding gown

Never sleeps in the safe of waiting
the tattered dress of silk and diamonds
every night with a white bird flies toward the Alborz mountain
in the moonlight's yellow direction
crossing the deep blackness into a world beyond
where stars are nearer than the eyes
and on the vines grow perfectly sweet.

Chambers

I am in a chamber with many doors
each door a chamber of
heat or ice
You find your true self when submerged
life comes in scintillating lights
covering you in warm summer rain
realizing
who you love
who you loved and love no more
like the sudden nakedness of trees
one undeniable day
winter comes
I ride in a heavy truck
it is I
but of another time
from your house
to an impossible turn,
A vertical road
no people, no cars
an asphalt absorbing wall
no corners no escape
not even a quiet star
I stand alone
I am full of fear and hope
is something like a summer day
something far

Forsaken

After a long walk, I climbed a hill
with flowers white and lush and dense.
I saw two old women walking hand in hand
I saw a cross with a white robe on nails, blood flowing
a man carried it to the flower land.
"is this paradise?"
he said look again!
through a glass dome
I saw a pool, a bull-face man patrolling it with a rifle.
I looked up
A blurred image came to focus.
he rose high,
he rose in pain,
"Oh, father why have you forsaken me?"
I kept on walking and reached the shore
there mere men dressed as night
drained the ocean and lowered the sun.

Movies

Imagine in the blue
unbounded by the gray
and you sit by the clock
no hands on it to play
by flowers darling
can only you measure
pretty hours of Spring
yellow rising of the Summer
and where dusk has fallen on the sea,
we close our world by a million movies.

Thanksgiving

Bicycles on the bridge gliding
diamond fingers of metal
wave to the coming headlights
for this eyes were given
on the faces of lilacs
to blackness that remains
when all the stars rain
rays were given
and life was given to snow
there is no better place
than the blue
of this magical globe
eyes on the clouds above
hearts in the emptiness below
for this our thanks are given
for the everywhere snow.

Old plant

An old leaf of my plant has a new flower
though in spring it turned light green and wrinkled
as old leaves do after a year or two.
in a few hours it will burst
with a strong sweet scent
bigger than two hands put side by side
then perish.
my flowers live only for a night,
so I sit by the window and wait.
the evening is getting damped.

Light bulbs

little yellow light bulbs on the restaurant's ceiling
illuminate the red and white stripes
coming down from ceiling to the floor
coming down on a man who is uncomfortably tall
trying to be humble.
a blond woman with short hair and rolled up sleeves holds
a boy in a baseball cap
waitresses run around in red and blue uniforms.
light unifies us all.

Greenbelt lake

Greenbelt lake is the place of youth
here stars gather to meet
look at the earth with motherly eyes
and fall into the lake
and dance, make little waves
and bounce land in our leaves' green coffers
weightless lit liquid jewels
we comfortably breathe from every cell
holding in a few and passing the rest down the stream
for the frogs and the crickets shuffling quietly among the shrubs.
As far I can see,
and when the wind blows heavenward,
I see beyond the first beaming of the sun,
they all end up here
or get lost in the fog that hangs in between
white blue flames
all those petaled bright and winged things that grow by the day
and rise in the night from the sun set's dark rolling hills.
my roots begin here and grow all the way into the lake
in the starry expanse of life and becoming.

Mr. Littlebroom

Mr. littlebroom by the chemistry lab

-carries ten heavy books

Mr. littlebroom by the math building

-his weak chin protruded

Mr. littlebroom feeds the squirrels in the circular hedge

-he is slightly mad

Mr. littelbroom being lectured to

-he has misbehaved

Mr littlebroom in his funny hat walks around the campus .

-he is getting old

In Philadelphia

He drove me around the cell-sights
as I measured the field's intensity.
in the afternoon,
he told me that his father shot himself
after he lost his job and savings
"after school I came home to a pool of blood."
As he spoke
he saw it again through the windshield
with a child's horrified eyes.
"So no body is going to play me
I ain't climbing poles anymore
my body is broken at thirty
Yeah get up there, see how many we can do to day
Yeah stupid me ."
"I want to move my girlfriend somewhere nice
where your hotel is maybe
I hate it down here,
I need this job
I am tired of waking up to a pile of newspapers."
We passed by a fenced off green field
there was a horse in the distance and behind it a huge mansion,
I sang: " we are cell-site rough necks, rough necks,
we are two bad mean rough necks, rough necks"
like a single bright cloud coming over the horizon
of a great desert,
he smiled.
from here to the ghettos
a twenty minute drive.

The sand storm

Away from the sand storm
the horrified men run or ride on white horses.
they cannot speak but I read their intentions in their huge black eyes.
they want me to follow them.
We go down
inside a gigantic cylinder.
they turn to carvings as they walk in to the walls.
circle upon circle
holding up the weight of their gods
in enormous bronze carvings.
At night I leave.
the air is filled in a black powdery ether
in it a small sphere of light floats.
I follow it and reach a tent
a long and narrow man sits on a little horse
both made of translucent triangular purple cloth
put together like a sail.
he wields his sword,
he says that he will not yield to the weight of gods.

Lady of persuasions

lady of persuasions
round comfort of every dawn
that wakes my body whole
Visions of our long way home
journeys to forever land
in whose every flower of now, grows a weary man's new.

lady of incantations
potions of perfumed sweat
maze of desire I trace
from the flames of the purple rock
to a little black stone resting
in the cold water of the clear stream's bed.

Her hands

your hands say no to the offering of my hands
close the window to the coming breeze
they say it may be cold.

My hands close slowly loose and tired
we dream of your hands now on the other side of the passing cars
resting in their leather gloves, their proud languid way
coming down from that distant singular point
where all the stars converge
to shine on the valleys of the sea.

Truth

Truth is the heavy wooden floor
under the naked feet
breathing slowly and far apart
looking at the ceiling through a smoky wreath
tasting its chalky white
the sound of an apple's bite
only if my lover knew
that the chair's legs are feet
and every grape tastes sweet
then in every smile we could travel a mile
and go to a place where truth is our heart beat.
only if my lover knew
that the sky is blue
to a stranger's color of grief.
thunder applauds lilac's brave fragility.

Grey dots

Grey dots
green line
blue ring.
black rose
narrow hedge
coiling hose
pulling in the landscape.
The sand fall.
yellow sun through dust
a long road
fruit trees
a long line behind us
narrow first
thicker then
bigger now
many shoes left behind to see you
for your soul kisses mine out of me.
like fingers out of fist
you wake up my branches
to leaves of my true me.

For death is nothing

Though we were planted in a dark surrender
two faces of light by night asunder
in the golden climb of hope's eternal,
we roared with thunder
for death is nothing.

our fancy dangles in a thousand grapes
ever expanding knowledge of water.
every perished swan
a flower's laughter
for death is nothing.

if the stems of wheat
can wear the sun light
in a rose's mind
a bee can ponder.
if God can play me
and I can wonder
for death is nothing.

The eyes of the valley

The tint rose of the climbing sun
turns the snowy peaks of Damavand orange.
in the widening eyes of the dark valleys
the bright lit wings of the cold random air
rise to the streaks of the golden dawn
somewhere from the ridge
an eagle flies toward the valley.
somewhere in a village
a tall woman caresses her child
staring at the red charcoals
from the still night part of the barn
a rooster goes to his singing pole
red and yellow
the bread makers by the hearth's flame
their white cotton shirts glow.
a man with grey beard washes his face for the morning prayers,
a young man leaves quietly for the farm,
by the stallion's foggy breath with strong shaking of the head
to the soft caressing of his coarse reddish mane
we wake to search for new flowers by the pond.

The stones that stand

In a place with brick walls
I sit near the mulch.
something of the summer sun is left in this ground.
rain falls
smells rise in heavy fume
red liquid and dust
dead men mixed with oil.
in the graveyard,
this place of stones that stand like proud children.
They say "we do not yield,
so the rest may go on."
the moonlight elongates, exposes our essence:
of shadows we are born
and to shadows we return.
Yes friends we are in the shadow land
where his blood on the cross walk begins,
he fell from his motorcycle,
he fell
and all flowers fell with him
and rose in singing waves from the mosques' blue dome to the clouds
taking the warmth out of the day,
snow falls on the frozen pond
and the rest is too dark to see.

Roaming the stars

Looking out of the restaurant's window
I like watching smiling couples
through the orange neon pattern of the word "open",
walking with more purpose than they usually do
sitting down more slowly.

Left alone for a while,
stretching out my hand for the pitcher
I see with someone else's finger
the plastic cloth's yellow flower's dream
to bloom on the hills amongst the stars.

The blue of this land

I.

By the shallow river
we watched the red charcoals
by the deep lines of the old man's arms
sun burned,
barbecuing corn for the crowd
on his silver ring a singular blue shined in the dark
the blue of this land
the color of her mountains' heart
that paints the domes and the tiling of the walls
along the ancient caravan roads
by the shallow river
we touched the soft algae the and the stone's freckles and the arms branching
flowers among the kindness of the town's people
velvet flames, rustling in the August breeze.
That day, we had come from the mountain
I had seen a cow high above the see
and a dog that seemed menacing
but turned out friendly.

II

3:00 am
the gas station
is still warm
on the slippery ground
young men play soccer
under the street lights
those unbroken
through empty streets
with ease we pass pulsating yellow lights
half sleep in the back of the old car
I think of the day
purely
in its colors
absorbent radiant blue

light creamy browns'
dull comfort
to this the eyes turn to:
by the dry gutters
idle men sit in dusty shops and stare
in my heart something coils up and relaxes like a violin.

III.

a halo and a few lines remain of
a flower's white sleep on the black stone of heaven:
my city
on the runway
spheres of blue
illuminate our way to stars
my face on a naked tree
on the half reflecting divide
into the southern wind, we sail
away from the north star.

The tangled mass flowering

Stoic hearts of the plains wake,
in the ivory skeleton's of the white sand beat
flesh growing in peaches new
to breathe to sweat sweet rose water
to walk into the shade,
where the desert dew
drips and whitens and gathers to an oasis
under the mountainous angels above
the sky concave and rising
fiery blue.
A speck of light I am
from the deep
and rise and fall with the tide
and shift and ride on the hills
into the horizon's downward
like a snake shining and striped
till the river's end
climbing the rocky shores
to go on free
on the back of the whales
I am the rotten wood of the golden ship
and know its residents and the shark
and rusted nails, and a skull's frozen grin
rising to breathe
on the wings of pelicans
a bridge to cross: side by side the backbones the buffalo,
all the millions,
of rainbow this arch only remained
into the horizon's deep
the ravens shriek
from slit arteries,
red salmons
bloody progeny ejaculate.
Stoic hearts of the plains are

patient under the massive trains that
tear and rumble
by the muffled beating of their heavy feet
railing
the tangled mass of iron and concrete
on the bright moonlight's
open graves flowering.

Y2K

Year 2000 was a castle of ice in Denmark
a couple hiding under the sand as sea birds in China
the steel skeleton of triumph in Paris
sparking and lit
by the fiery laughters expanding over head,
under the evening's white canopy
we pretended and wobbled
to the dawn of a new age.

Lilacs

Lilacs did come with spring
dawn poured out its rose of tones
little fingers woke and roamed
fresh water on the stove
saucers flew, kettles moaned
Father's shirts dried on ropes
swallows came from distant lands
(lips so small never lied)
here I played, there I sang
chased my rooster on the lawn
found his wings, scattered dawn
did my doves get to their home
before it snowed on the loam?
(dark waters under the ice,
phantoms bombed us twice)
Lilacs did come with spring
but when they came we had gone
somewhere in the silver dawn.

The rocks wept

The marble floor
the milky white motionless sea
beneath the suspended dome's span
to the horizon's infinite end
men pose in welded limbs
on the lattice of vine
ripe blue grapes hang
in the center of spring
at equinox
a sphere's balanced.

inside fluorescent cubes
the cast of shadows move
in the winter's heat
and the summer's cold
by windows which cannot be opened.

Late in the afternoon the yellow sunset conjures up a dream
of two hearts floating
in a dark stream
on rocks they leapt and sang
"we who repel
have tender hearts
porous to your salty tears"

At the outskirts the orange lights begin
at the feet of the night
the glassed cubes in the dark glint
their marble floors washed by immigrant workers

cleansing on their knees the hollow handles
of the new alters

where waters darken
hearts are drained.

Meeting

The sounds are angular and jagged
grinding the brain
it's how I wake Wednesday mornings most of the the summer
the cleaning crew comes in like an army
on the verge of smiles
mostly tanned south American faces
flushed and content with hopes of youth
like early blue jays
going about their business
thinking in pictures through
straight and sincere wells,
looking down a pupil's glossy bottom,
it's how we meet.

Exile

cloudy blue seagulls hover over the shore
a polished tree whitened and cracked deep to its core
white and grey the endless sea seagulls shall roam
until the wind brings them faint fragrance of home.

Manikins

From the windows of the old shops
below the horizon's edge
a crowd of shadows marched
with intermittent life
the manikins' cinnamon eyes
sheer velvet and silk
under a trickle of blue light shined
moths appeared and disappeared in the halo of the fluorescent lamps
men on the side walks spread
up the pedestrian bridge
and fell
in the falling fountains foaming out flowers and boys and doves
who in their naked sorrow
mourned the last yellow beams.

Snake

Within my mind
experience grows out of the ground
white tree size worms with roots and shoots and vegetables
resting in the shade
the mid day's heat
a black snake compact and strong
a spine alone
by thick muscles rapped
no hands or feet
not a crawling by awkward limbs
but as easy as a breadth
head above the grass
pulling out the cool underground.

Unison bloom

Somewhere further than all our anguish can reach
under the night's dark curtain
on the long day's grief
on the gravel roads
grey chain-less bicycles
and on the blood dappled faces of the rock.
and if this world had walls
of clay and mud they would be
and all butterflies would sing and dance
and all red roses would in unison bloom
on the alters of the ruined temple
Here in white cloth
we gather to mourn
the extinguished flame
and our sweet princess'
drop by drop vanquished reign
down the towers of silence
Somewhere further than all our anguish can reach
to the slightest light we turn and pray
by the wailing walls of mud and clay.

The first time

I was calmer then
having seen that the world was intact after
the enormous screen was gone
the smoky void and the crowd in their trance
of the finger eating witches
comedy it might have been to my sisters
for me being only three
it was like the time the moon got bigger and bigger and fell down
on my head
but from this one I couldn't wake
so I gave them hell
they were all bent walking back home
The sky was clear and pleasantly scary
playing cards following me every where I went
jacks and queens and kings
it is how I imagined the constellations
I'll give anything now to be scared like that again
the way colored ice cream tasted
or snow took the shape of my fingers the first time I squeezed it
in the corner of the yard till dusk
which was a life time.

His ears can see

He heard voices in drizzling dawn
a flock of geese
whose colors he could not see.
He came over and touched the leaves
which spoke to him
held his hands to catch the wind
which became visible
though he could not touch what she closed
and she closed all the new branches of the old trees
in her most intimate fibers
hid the naked bosom of spring
for her all the rivers rushed
and the moon lifted the waves from the bottom of the sea
His hands were too small to encompass the world.

Severed wings

He said

”It could not have been here

For I saw the inside of a man and

that night the devil walked among us

and we welcomed him

I saw the angels’ wings bloodied and severed.

It took us the entire day

and 2 out of every 3

to cross the hill and reach the town

by the old folks

the wells were filled

and the young were planted

impaled flowers

on the main street

the rest taken away

we broke down and cried

and made a pact to take no more”

The red pumps

you rest beside me and bring me the moon
by your many clocks on the wall
too heart broken to speak
This morning we walked to your father's river pumps
dark red
which you insisted were black
the water was angry and brown after the rain
except for the white drooling climbing up the banks
imagining ourselves broken like a peace of salary
taken all the way to the sea
till next year
When spring arrives
and you walk in to the garden
and sit down on the swing
(like flying seeds
that search for a safe place to land)
till dusk puts you to sleep
in the winter's desolate field
where I climb against the storm of men
I do not know or hate.
(you wake to
three bearded men by our door
and mother kneels down
and mother looks down
and mother won't move
till
fading in black and white photographs
our faces float
away)

My little one

My little one
I am coming home
nothing can go wrong now
I will not allow it.
I will get on that jeep and land in Mehrabad
You
deep in the morning sleep, will not know it.
mother up for prayers
will open the door with a delicious grin
I will fly the stairs
stealthier than the invisible air
crawl in beside you
wrap around you like a butterfly around a flame
but you will not burn my wings
your eyes will open the closed world
all waterfalls not falling
all the little birds
beak in feathers waiting
all six of your clocks on the wall frozen
all the bright colors on the tree tops
of the lush garden
Your iris
will go behind the clouds
a rainbow from the mountain to the sea
I will sleep the entire day in peace.

My bride

you are there some where darling I know
(that first you of mine fragile and sweet
your lips of rain that kissed gentle and kind
and curled and stretched and twinkled and shined
with eyes that fluttered like doves
and "love you must" they said and love
I did.

Now you are far and cold
though the moon has lit
with magic and delight
this night
for lovers alone.)
if behind the mirror of time
my arms could reach
or the dark face of the moon
the sun beams could breach
and the arms of love are long
and sit and stare and preach
for you are there some where darling I know
crying below the pansies.

Broken symmetry

Warm liquid light of luminous leaves
intricately spreads to our finger tips
at the purple fruits
then down to the roots
the rotten mulch
is bitter and sweet
till the horizon's rock
grand ritual bleeding
(Nothing in this world will ever surpass
the beauty of this soft orange rim)
in the vivid now
the mirrored faces
of symmetries' lost perfection:
the fallen berries
the hidden streams
fragrant flowers
glowing on the hills.

The better man

You passed on to me
the seed of your goodness when you died
the one that made you hesitate to pull the trigger
before I pulled mine
By that burned tree
it was our destiny to come face to face
I the better soldier
and you
the better man.

Tarragons

Restless willows
garden tarragons
birds of gutters in
spring exuberance
befog and
stare at the clear water's hypnotic cradling
by the hands that stirred
the frogs amphibian cycle
and stirred
the merry faces
smiling from the deep
turn and see
our faces reduced
We are bloated men
chestnut furniture
too long left in the yard
soaked without veneer
roots remaining after the drought
pulled out to the air
we crumble down
a shower of brown sparrows.

On the willows

On this bed
you sat in front of me with a smile
and combed the fibers of my world
on the yellow of your blouse
the one with little flowers on the sleeves
and the garden was there
and the lost chick below our bedroom's window
which we kept in a box
afterward you made me tea
and hanged my shirt on the rope
I watched your smooth bright hands
as for me they labored
your hair was redder in the sun
your every step had meaning
for I must decipher always
the meaning of your moves
Will you give me in this world
what can be given
without persistence or lasting beauty
without intellect
without sacrifice
side by side
without the deep well that follows us beneath
or will you instead
shake your hands between us
meaning I must crumble
and your hand must brighten and widen to a flame
to hands that speak with fingers of spear
and can melt the very ground
that shields me from my fear
underground
though
I will not fall
I will remain here and wither

only my heart will fall
I will not turn from the last gesture of your hands
"be gone"
but stand on the willows
the stale humid furniture will cry for me
on all the window panes.

Sooner than bloom

"I sit on a stone in the sun
as if by the blue basin of the fountain near our high-school
with happy bubbles and sparrows around
we searched the slow white clouds
for castles and giants and birds
a touch of the summer was left in the air
but breeze threatened it all the time
afterward we walked as always along the office buildings
till that last intersection where you turned north as I kept on walking
it makes me laugh now how we arrived at school rushing for the warm pipes
early morning in winters
here hands hardly complain
with heavy boots they just march to brief patriotic chants
whose ends and beginnings merge
to mere reverberating sounds

and was it for this that we memorized all those Hafiz's poems?
sat in the classrooms year after year
gathered in the alleys to play
our voices thickened and muscles grew?
for this
we wept for the turtle with the broken back
and kept the green flies away from his wounds all the afternoon
made straw monuments to fallen sparrows
one night in your house before the mountains
imagined standing at the craters of the moon?
look at us now:
lifeless caterpillars tumbling down riverless banks.

the front is behind us by the night's retreat
past and future are blurred
every scorpion and lizard disturbed
the gentle earth dug up
and bloodied and scarred
exhausted under the heavy gear, we halt

no shade!
the decimated palm groves
would have broken your heart.

Our lord

Our lord walked in the gardens of within
bloomed every keeping to bring
our lord sat on the mountains of without
danced each winter to spring
on the heaps of vows and wants and shame and pride.

He built his castles high
higher than fear could fly
for taller than trees is breeze
and nothingness did hold the seas
and life is more sorrow than hope
and so our lord disrobed unshod
walked into another world
(birds flocked to gather his dreams
rocks rose to carry streams)
but hope was cancelled by be
our lord did die
more ancient than the sea.

Hallaj

I.

Orange neon

The angels sat on the tree of life
fluorescent blue and pistachio green
galaxies branched
the expanse of the world
till grass grew
men walked the earth
and God was there
the encompassing void.

II.

The sacred cloth hanged
an infinite swath
of wandering moons
in opposing ways
silent travels
all was nothing
but folded planes
and God was there
the sea covering quilt.

III.

Of absolutes

then men gathered

paint of shadows

out of the dark

they drew an arc

heavenward it went

downward it grew

fixing the world.

and God was there

merely his name.

IV.

He stood the line that defined the day
gifted the gallows
heartened our fear
he wiped in red
the pale and white
he shed his shell
but shed no tear
for God was there
his two severed hands.

The end

Our glorious day
shall end in decay
in the infinite distance of extinguished worlds
the crusting cinder of the mighty glow

then

an endless

woe.