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Translated by  
Leila Farjami

22  
Eulogies

Shams  
Langroudi

# ***22 Eulogies***

*In Month of July*

***Shams Langroudi***

**بیست و دو مرثیه  
در تیرماه**

Translated by  
Leila Farjami

برگردان به انگلیسی: لیلا فرجامی

1

My daughter,  
it was their tradition to bury you alive.  
You were killed;  
a whole nation is being buried alive.

Look how peacefully he rests his head on the pillow  
he who has earned his wage for killing you  
eats a Halal\* dinner.

You were only standing  
and observing optimistically  
to return to your home,  
but my daughter,  
you will no longer see your small room  
and the flock of joyful fantasies of future  
flap around its interior.

You fell into a trap  
like a Halal bird  
a perplexed bird  
who anxiously scrutinizes her huntsman,  
you fell into trap  
like a stomped grape bunch  
to ferment into the *banned* wine.

Who are these people?  
Hidden over windows,  
rooftops,  
who are these people?  
Barking in darkness  
at a domesticated bird.

My daughter,  
they killed you,  
they killed you,  
so that there will be one less,  
but how can you multiply  
to this extent?

Oh! My dear Neda!  
the red rose which had risen on your throat  
unfolded  
expanded  
and concealed the map of Iran  
in the melody of its petals,  
and the ones who have lost "Neda"\*  
are nightingales,  
millions of bodies have encircled a single flower  
calling your name.

3

This means that it's possible you will not hear their voices  
singing for you,

this means that they shut your window  
so that you will not hear the voice of your own triumph,

See how peacefully he rests his head on the pillow  
he who eats a Halal catch.

Halal: a term designating any object or an action which is permissible to use or  
engage in, according to Islamic Law. This term implies innocence and redemption for  
the act of murder in this poem.

Neda: also means "calling" in persian

Today is such  
that out of shame of death-bearers  
death itself flees to the streets,  
and the clamor that secretly reverberates in horizons  
is the gamboling of the dead  
who have seen your luminous arrival.

And now you have stood by the threshold  
observing Hallaj\*'s face contently  
smiling at you.

You became immortal  
and immortality is death indemnity  
granted to life;

in its name  
they wrenched all of you  
from life's palm.

Hallaj: Mytic, revolutionary, and pious teacher who was persecuted and martyred for his spiritual beliefs, mainly the proclamation: " I am God."

3

What are these angels busy doing?  
They carelessly cruise around the sky  
they receive their monthly salary,  
so, what are these angels busy doing?  
as they did not witness your death.

I wish their wings and feathers would char  
in the flames of a July sun  
so that with their coals  
we scribble street slogans.

So what kind of other wicked act are these aged angels committing  
besides spying on us?  
as no one is hearing  
our cry.

6

4

Therefore,  
name does not make much difference,  
Amir Abad\*,  
Karegar\*.

I have seen many cacti  
that accommodate desert birds  
within their thorn-studded bosom,  
a poisonous red rose,  
poisoned,  
I saw the way it had punctured your larynx.

Amir Abad, Karegar  
Amir Abad, Karegar  
Amir Abad, Karegar  
Amir Abad, Karegar

As for me,  
I name you Neda Street.

Amir Abad: the name of a district in Tehran where Neda was shot.  
Karegar: the name of a street in Tehran where Neda was shot. Karegar street is  
located in Amir Abad district.

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5

Gentlemen!  
Do not kill dragonflies,  
death brings death.

I am a dragonfly  
your helicopters are not dragonflies

I am a fish  
when reddened  
I supplicate through my glance,  
I am a red fish.

Gentlemen!  
Do not shoot birds!  
Death brings death,

now that through a single light-hole  
we are advising you,  
we own nothing else but our tiny feather  
yet the rocks that fit into our palms  
are not considerably bigger than your own heads.

Death brings death  
do not shoot us,  
you too  
will die.

8

6

*Yaghoub Bravieh was my student*

Death is flying towards you  
in a cloak, with a cane  
Yaghoub Bravieh, flee!  
Flee!

The glimmer of joy in your eye  
keeps you from seeing the face of death,  
Yaghoub Bravieh, Flee!

In praise of life  
you had taken to the street,  
they bestowed you death as a gift,  
Yaghoub Bravieh, flee!  
Flee!

9

Gentlemen!  
Do not shoot!  
Your bullets suspend in air  
one day, they will travel towards you.

Your bullets ravage this public shelter  
there is no trusting the cracked roof of the sky.

Gentlemen!  
Do not shoot!  
No one wants to die  
we escape you  
and alongside the streets  
we hide behind trees,  
like thousands of signatures below petitions  
which one can do nothing about.

Gentlemen!  
Do not shoot!  
Bullets close mouths,  
yet open  
a thousand other doors.

through the night  
You must have called our names  
yet, my dear,  
the living are unable to hear your voice.

All through the night  
you must have pounded on your heavy hatch  
and we were hearing the baritone sound of the night  
raining on an invisible flower,  
and a strange aroma from unknown flowers  
was permeating the night.

One can do nothing with cuffed hands  
the muggy night has tethered our hands and mouths  
and what you see is our dreams  
ascending like fog  
trickling back on rock,  
one can do nothing with cuffed hands.

Yet no one has the clout to tether our dreams,  
the dreams that enter the street at midnight  
recognize each other by their obscure gleam  
and speak of tomorrow's demonstration.

I feel I am speaking of you;  
I am lifting a delicate petal off your body.

How can I possibly speak of you all  
without picking you  
without detaching you from the stem.

I praise an ant's joy  
who crawls up the heap of your petals,  
so that he will get something home  
before the radiance of the sun.

I do not desire to pick you  
I wish to have been an ant  
who would lurk around you  
on your perfumed bloody roads  
and carry a bounty  
to the others' tables.

Who would believe you do not exist  
and that I am speaking *with* you  
yet *to* myself?  
as a stream with no water plants  
in wintertime.

Who would believe a train can walk  
and generate tracks  
through each of its footprints?

Is this world entirely born out of our dreams?  
and  
have you fallen in a deep slumber  
to unravel this game's finale?

There,  
we gather in the serenity of a strange garden  
astounded  
we laugh  
at our own blood-worn pasts.

11

This light asleep  
that has settled the ashes of a gone day  
on my shut lids,  
desires to meet you.

The hound dogs bark in a glass-thin tone  
and they run into bricks, winds,  
and they sink exhausted, shattered.

Yet, the wounded ones  
are not pedestrians  
they are *us*  
in our beds  
waking up wounded  
with tiny patches of your dream  
on our silent face.

14

12

It was a sad feast  
on the street.

Papers, leaves  
were frolicing in the air  
and singing folk songs in place of the rest

at nighttime,  
on millions of empty chairs  
we were speaking of bright tomorrows, feet stretched,  
when a bullet crumbled our peace.

We left all chairs  
and the only row of chairs gleaning under crimson rain  
was yours,  
a sad train  
heading towards heaven  
with the finial of our songs  
around it.

15

Joyful

we were gazing at the radiance of days  
at the bronze stars glinting  
gilding children's faces in their drops.

Beautiful boys

sketched their green clothes on trees,  
and in laughter saw the senile branches  
turn green,  
around the girls' necks was a ring of snow  
cooling off the air,

the wind was blowing from any direction you desired  
and carrying forth the scent of Northern fruits  
everything was like the initial days of the Promised Age  
yet, a few black drops had seeped into our clothes  
poking our bodies like a single needle

so we cried out,  
and we saw you fall to the ground  
with your incredulous eyes  
closed  
in immensity of sorrow.

What good were our eyes?  
We all lowered our lids  
we closed our eyes to the rest of life  
our lashes sank into darkness  
and now in the streets  
we are groping astray  
we brush hands  
and bid each other  
good night

The beloved of life's happy days!  
Good Night!

14

Now, you are my breakfast.

The cheese crumble  
that I take to mouth like bullets  
is on the sea floor.  
When your mouths had remained open  
like the mouth of a tiny fish on the shore,  
when I grab a piece of the bread loaf  
I am touching parts of your clothes.

My entire day is you.

Only at nighttime  
I have stood by the valley of silence  
like an invisible panther,  
and I see the cardboard moon glow  
and I hear the crickets  
chattering in their underground workshop  
and secretly seaming their faint chirrups  
and making it into an armor  
like a platoon of AWOLing soldiers  
through a prison's waterway  
on a spring midnight.

17

15

Not me, not brother  
not father, not mother

all are stunned,

like a crystal vase  
you shattered in a moment  
and flowed into our palms.

Yet, our flower was oblivious to its breaking vase  
and still scattered its scent.

It was late afternoon  
we had turned face from the bow of your laughters  
to evade your melancholic joy,  
summer had busied itself by dissipating the clouds  
so that we would interpret its incessant tears  
to be the rainfall,  
and thus  
return to our homes.

18

Are we mistaken?  
Were you sitting on this bench  
under these very poplar trees?  
was it not you who was waving his hand,  
and the ash of sorrow  
was raining down his whispers?

Are we mistaken  
that one day you also saw this house,  
street, bakery, fruit sellers?!

But why did you transform into a mass of candles  
on the wooden bench,  
beneath the trees?

and above your head,  
from your hair strands  
the silver smoke is rising.

By the motion of leaves on the cool pavement  
it is evident  
that you are the ones who step into the streets  
on summer midnights.

Dry leaves shift within their yellow soldier uniforms  
wounded in a battle against lasting thirst,  
then they lay their heads by the long water ditch  
and with thirsty lips  
slip downward.

No one is a barrier between me and these leaves  
but my own poems that rise  
and in your company collect leaves  
to insert between these lines.

What good are poems for me  
if they are not your undergarments in summer  
and warm clothes during winter's cold?

The poems of pure silk that people synchronically knit  
and hand me to fasten  
for you.

Do not blame Keshavarz\* boulevard  
for seeing their wounds  
while its many water fountains  
stayed shut.

Do not blame Keshavarz boulevard  
for why it did not release its remedial leaves  
its Simorgh\*  
from its little dark case.

Do not blame Keshavarz boulevard  
gaze at moon's spotlight  
and the chiaroscuro of its leaves,  
atop the chiaroscuro of each leaf  
an addict has slept  
whose sole living body part  
is his ear.

Keshavarz: name of a main boulevard in Tehran, means farmer in Persian.  
Simorgh: a mythological bird deemed to be omnipotent, means "thirty birds" in Persian.

Did they set them aflame  
to boost their own market?

Even the wind had ceased  
and waited for the flame to die out.  
Even branches refused to burn themselves,  
first-graders  
regressed before age seven  
to skip reading the fallacious figures and letters.

And as we returned from your funerals  
the handwritten papers by statues  
were trembling on the cracked marble stand.

Ashamed for being stone  
they had fled  
to wander the deserts.

This is the sound of us running  
in dust,  
we have no time to drink water  
we savor blood and quench our thirst,  
and we approach you  
where you have fallen asleep  
you are visible everywhere  
with your locked fists on your hearts,  
in your head, chest, air, blood,  
and you constantly alter  
like a point of illusion.

This baritone booming which echos on your dust  
is the hoof-beat of horses  
that have sensed the impending earthquake.

Hence,  
like the torch of liberty  
your candles are restless  
on your small tombstone.

There is no emblem or sarcasm,  
all newspapers are corrected  
lines are rows of mashed cockroach corpses in press.

Images,  
"graphic" illustrations  
over the counters of newspaper stands

it is as if people are looking at white newspapers  
and ruminate on their wishes  
and all that is bottled-up inside.