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Translated by
Leila Farjami

22
Eulogies

Shams
Langroudi

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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.

7

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.

17

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.

20

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.