

AUKuwait *Review*

ARTS & LITERARY JOURNAL | SPRING 2014 EDITION, VOLUME 8



*A Decade of
Accomplishments*



AUKuwait *Review*

THE AUKUWAIT REVIEW **ARTS & LITERARY JOURNAL**
SPRING 2014 EDITION, VOLUME 8

AUKuwait شيكو

الجامعة الأمريكية في الكويت، مجلة الفنون و الأداب
نسخة ربيع ٢٠١٤، مجلد ٨

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William Andersen

Marcella Janush-Kulchitsky

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Reader,

It is with great pleasure that I present to you the 8th issue of the AUKuwait Review! After a year of hard work, the editorial board and I are able to put together a unique issue that exudes the talent of the AUK community in creative writing and art.

This year is a special one for AUK; as it turns 10 years old, I am determined to publish an issue which includes a section dedicated to my university. After much deliberation, I proudly introduce the 'Tribute to AUK' section which is found at the end of each of the three categories of the Review. This section includes the works of students, faculty, and staff that celebrate AUK. The featured pieces show the strength of the bonds within the AUK community, along with striking images of the campus.

It has been a privilege to work with this year's editorial board. I would like to thank each of them for their incredible hard work and commitment. I would also like to thank the amazing faculty advisors, our talented designer and supportive staff for their helpful input and much appreciated hard work that has brought this issue to life.

I am extremely proud of the 2013-2014 issue of the AUKuwait Review, and hope that everyone finds the work included in this edition to be entertaining and full of talent. We are excited to publish the works of returning Review writers and artists, and to also include ,new contributors as well! It is your talent that makes the Review as accomplished as it is and represents the level of skill which AUK is known to house.

Sincerely,

FARAH ALI
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

رسالة من رئيسة التحرير

عزيزي القارئ،

إنه من دواعي سروري أن أقدم لكم الإصدار الثامن من الأي يو كويت ريفيو! بعد عام من الجهد المتواصل أصبح بإمكاننا جمع إصدار مميز نعرض فيه مواهب الطلبة والمحاضرين في الجامعة الأمريكية في الكويت في الكتابة الإبداعية والفن.

إن هذه السنة مميزة للجامعة الأمريكية في الكويت، ولأن عشرة أعوام قد مرت على تأسيسها، فقد أصرت على أن ننشر إصداراً فيه قسم مخصص لجامعتي. بعد مشاورات كثيرة، أقدم لكم بكل فخر (قسم تقدير الجامعة الأمريكية في الكويت) وهذا القسم ستجدونه في نهاية كل من الأقسام الثلاثة من الريفيو. هذا القسم يتضمن أعمال الطلبة والمحاضرين والموظفين التي تحتفل بالجامعة. النصوص المعروضة والصور المدهشة، تُبدي مدى ترابط الطلبة والمعلمين والموظفين في الجامعة.

كان شرفاً لي أن أعمل مع فريق عمل هذه السنة. أريد أن أشكرهم جميعاً على الجهد الكبير الذي بذلوه والتزامهم. أريد أيضاً أن أشكر المستشارين من المحاضرين، والمصممة المبدعة، والموظفين الذين دعمونا كثيراً وبذلوا جهداً هائلاً مما أعطى رونقاً لهذا الإصدار.

أنا فخورة جداً بإصدار سنتي ٢٠١٣ - ٢٠١٤ من الأي يو كويت ريفيو، وأتمنى أن يجد الجميع أعمال هذه النسخة ممتعة ومليئة بالموهبة. نحن متشوقون لنشر أعمال لكتاب وفنانين سبق أن شاركوا بأعمالهم في الريفيو، وللمشاركين الجدد أيضاً! فإن أعمالهم هي التي جعلت من الريفيو إنجازاً، كما تعرض مستوى المهارات التي تحتضنها الجامعة الأمريكية في الكويت.

مع تحياتي،

فرح علي
رئيسة التحرير

CONTRIBUTORS

AALIYAH BEHBEHANI is a 22 year old student who is studying graphic design at AUK. She enjoys writing poetry in her free time especially when the moment strikes and she feels the need to release the heavy lifting that she's been carrying in mind for what feels like so long. She also speaks her mind through free writing because it's easier for her to express her thoughts in depth, to understand the subject better and much clearer than what she already knows.

ALIA MUSTAFA AREF graduated Magna Cum Laude from AUK in 2012 with a B.A in English Literature. Currently she is studying to get her M.A. in Comparative Literature at Kuwait University. Among her interests are Feminist theory, Psychology, Art, and Batman. This is her fifth contribution to The AUKuwait Review.

ANAAM ABDUL RASHEED is a 20-year-old student at AUK and is majoring in Graphic Design and just finished her minor in Communication and media. She is preparing for her capstone this semester. Some of her hobbies include playing badminton and exploring and experiencing new stuff. She also likes doing adventurous stuff and she recently participated in the bungee jumping event held in Kuwait. Other than that she loves spending her free time in volunteering activities especially those involving working with kids.

ANFAL AL-HARBI 22 years old, Marketing Major, has a love for learning languages and is fluent in Arabic, English, Spanish and French. Has a limitless curiosity for everything life offers. Her interests fall under painting, poetry, cooking, dancing, reading & obsessing over historical heroes (i.e. Muhammad Ali). The poems that she has submitted were written at the age of 16 and have inspired her to delve back into writing.

ANTONIA STAMOS is an Assistant Professor of Art History at AUK. As an art historian and archeologist, she sees the inherent beauty in all things ancient. Photography allows her to capture her little parts of the world in timeless portraits.

AYAT ABDULLA is a 17 year old student who is studying Communication and Media at AUK. She has been really passionate about music since a really young age, which is why she started writing lyrics and poetry at the age of 11, and still continues to do so.

AYAT AL BLOUSHI graduated from AUK in 2013 with the highest honors and a Bachelor's degree in English Language and Literature. She is currently a translator at the National Council for Culture, Arts, and Letters where she gets to do what she loves, such as reading and recommending novels to be translated to Arabic and translating different types of documents. She has vowed to never stop learning and to spread as much knowledge as she can. Ayat always says that she refuses to simply exist; she contributes and inspires.

DANA MAAN is an 18 year old Syrian living in Kuwait. She writes passionately to forget about the troubles of the world. Writing, to her, is everything she needs in order to be happy. She is majoring in English Literature and minoring in Communications and Media. She is a perfectionist and this gives her a hard time. Dana's proud to be a part of the AUK community!

DIMA AL SURAIIE is a 20 year old student who is studying English Literature at AUK. Her hobbies include playing piano and designing. Most importantly, she loves photographing. She started photographing when she was 18.

DIANA BEDROSSIAN is a 20 year old student from Armenia and she is an advanced flutist. She has an ongoing curiosity toward lighting design as well as digital and 3D design. She ponders the development of an installation design through the use of light, graphics and motion.

FAJER ALKHALIFAH is a senior that will graduate with an English Literature degree from The American University of Kuwait. She is very passionate about her major, and she loves to read and write; at some

point in her life she wants to become a writer. As well as writing, she also likes to draw smiley faces whenever she gets the chance.

FARAH AHMED is a student at the American University of Kuwait who studies Marketing and Finance.

FARAH ALI is a senior at AUK majoring in English Literature. She is the current Editor-In-Chief of the AUKuwait Review, and a member of Sigma Tau Delta. During her spare time she enjoys reading murder mysteries and writing poetry.

FATEMEH EBRAHIMI is a 23 year old student at American University of Kuwait who is majoring in Marketing and Management. She used to write poems only in Persian when she was in high school as one of her hobbies and this is her first time writing a poem in English.

FATIMA NAYEF is a student at AUK.

GEEHAN AL ANSARI is a student at AUK, majoring in English language and literature. She enjoys reading and writing in her leisure time. Recently, she has been inducted as a member of Sigma Tau Delta and hopes to publish journals in the future.

GHADA AL-SAYED is a 21 year old student who is studying accounting at AUK. Her hobbies include playing many kinds of sports but she prefers swimming out of all. She loves to travel a lot, and unfortunately gets bored and irritated very easily. Most importantly, music is her passion, and she is the type of a person that explains herself through it. She loves photography and tries to practice it every now and then.

HASSAN SHAH is a senior student at AUK, majoring in English and minoring in graphic design. After he graduates this semester from the AUK, he aims to become a writer/comic

book artist. His hobbies besides writing are reading (anything as long as it's not a love story unless he wants to nuke it dead), sketching, collecting comic books and action figures, playing video games, and watching TV shows and movies. Other than that he's quite nerdy and labels The Joker as his favorite super villain.

HAWRAA AL-AWADH is a student at AUK.

HESSAH AL-ENEZI is an 18 year old student who is studying English literature at AUK. Her hobbies include watching movies, shopping with friends and cousins and recently writing; when her IEP instructor Mrs. Alison Koushki started the fire in her.

HIRICINTH VERONICA BUCKMORE is forever the college student, the never ending senior who has yet to fulfill her destiny, who dares to reach for the stars even when she only touches the sky.

HUSSAM HELMY is a ruthless perfectionist, so how he let himself submit a piece of writing is beyond him. Many other things are beyond him, which is why he loves reading philosophy. He is also an English major, so he can't wait to graduate and start working on his welfare application.

IQRA RIAZ is a 20 year old student who is majoring in Graphic Design at AUK. She loves photography, painting and playing basketball. Photography is her all-time favorite hobby and she clicks pictures in her free time to get better and better at it.

KATHY NIXON is an Assistant Professor of English at the American University of Kuwait. She earned her Ph.D. at the University of Virginia. Her passion is travel and her goal in pursuing that interest is to visit all 50 American states as well as all countries in the world not at war or in internal conflict. She has been to 45 American states and nearly 60 countries so far. When not touring she reads Victorian novels.

KHALED HUSAIN is a student at AUK.

KHALID MOHAMED is a Computer Engineering student at AUK and a student worker. He loves animals specially monkeys and has many hobbies such as swimming and photography. He Started swimming since the age of 6 and still swims in his free time when possible. Khalid's best quote is "Success consists of going from failure to failure without loss of enthusiasm" (Winston Churchill).

LAILA ABDAL is a second-year student at the American University of Kuwait, majoring in finance. She is interested in all the arts branches, especially the Arabic poetry, and the Arabic literature. Writing is her favorite job, and she has some modest poetry and prose writings in both Arabic and English, she would like to share them, and hopes her writing gets your admiration.

LISA LEE WAITE teaches in the Intensive English Program. She has enjoyed teaching in the Middle East for the past three years. She holds degrees in journalism, television production, communications, education and TESOL. She enjoys visiting new places, capturing the personalities and characteristics of different cultures. Lisa spends her summers with her family and friends in Michigan, USA.

MANAL AL-AZMI is a student at AUK

MARCELLA JANUSH-KULCHITSKY is an Assistant Professor in the Graphic Design department at AUK whose areas of specialization are corporate branding, as well as environmental and way-finding design systems. Professor Kulchitsky received her BFA from the University of Michigan, School of Arts in Ann Arbor, MI and her MFA from the School of Visual Arts in Boston University, Boston, Ma.

MR. S. BERLIN has been teaching English at the university level since 1990. He currently teaches in the IEP Department at AUK. His passion for travel and photography began with

his first trip to Korea in 1988. Since then he has traveled to more than 50 countries and photographed everything from African elephants to Abu Simbel in Egypt.

MUBARAK AL-MUTAIRI is a strong, independent Arab man who needs no biography.

NADA ABDOU is a 17 year old student who is studying Graphic Design at AUK. Nada is a very expressive student who loves listening to music and shows her emotions and desires through digitally drawn art and poetry since the age of 10. She is an adamant web surfer during her spare time, where she otherwise aspires to be the best student she can be.

NAJD AL-MUHANNA, a 24 year old AUK alumni, graduated with a bachelor degree in English literature in 2010. She proceeded with her masters in Birkbeck, University of London in 2011. With her passion for identity exploration, she accumulated research on women identity and representation. She graduated with an MA in Cultural and Critical Studies in 2012. Najd is now working as an academic advisor and support specialist in AUK.

NAJD TAHER is a student at AUK Neda Shirazi studies English Literature at AUK. Her hobbies include reading, hiking, photography and writing. She loves Islamic art, architecture and calligraphy as well.

NOHA MOUSSA is a student at AUK.

PELLEGRINO LUCIANO is an assistant professor of anthropology at AUK. He was conceived at sea and enjoys floating above the highest mountain peaks of the Atlantic Ocean.

RAWAN ABDALRAHMAN is 19 years old, and an IEP student at AUK. Her hobbies include swimming and reading especially about horses.

ROLAND LOPES is a Web Developer in the Public Relations Department at AUK. He enjoys traveling, music production, art, history and architecture. In his free time he either DJs or crafts music in certain genres or travels, feeding on the history and architectures of the host city. Sometimes he DJs where he

travels to, bridging his love for all that he enjoys, creating a deeper and profound synergy of an aural and visual experience. “We travel, initially, to lose ourselves, and we travel, next, to find ourselves. We travel to open our hearts and eyes. And we travel, in essence, to become young fools again—to slow time down and get taken in, and fall in love once more.” Pico Iyer.

SARA AL-SAYED is a student at AUK.

SARA BABAZADEH is an Iranian student who is studying graphic design at AUK. Her hobbies include drawing, painting and photography. She also loves travelling, watching movies and reading books to know about different cultures. She cares about handmade artworks, and she tries to do some handicrafts such as artificial flowers in her free time.

SHAFEEQA HUSSIEN is a student at AUK.

SHATHERWAN AL-MUTAIRI is a student at AUK.

SUMAYAH AL-BAKER is a student at AUK.

WILLIAM ANDERSEN is currently an Assistant Professor in Studio Arts/Graphic Design at the American University of Kuwait. Andersen received an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship to continue his research in Taiwan and Mainland China before moving to Kuwait in 2008. He has exhibited his artwork throughout the United States and internationally in China, Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Malaysia, Kuwait and Dubai.

YOUSEF NAYEF is a senior student at AUK majoring in English Literature. He enjoys writing poetry, in Arabic especially and also short plays and stories. His hobbies are singing, acting, and reciting Quran. Yousef hopes to become a playwright and a poet.

ZAHRAA ASADALLAH is a 20 year old student who is Studying English Literature at AUK. Her hobbies include reading books and cooking. Most significantly, she loves Photography and designing Photos. She started taking pictures when she was 13, and still practices her hobby in her free time.

ZEINAB WASFY is an 18 year-old with wanderlust. She would take a trip, destination? Everywhere; while she's at it, have books for breakfast, make art for lunch, and banter with poetry for dinner.

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English Poetry & Prose



It was the last day of school. As the bell rang, I took a good long look around me and tried to put my vivid memories, both good and bad, of my school days together. As I thought, everyone else sprinted to the playground. Our teachers never seemed happier. One teacher yelled across the corridor, "I am so glad I don't have to see you for three months, James Scott!" The playground was clustered with students hugging, kissing, and crying. Usually, I would not be so emotional about school. However, this time it was different. I would not be returning. I bid farewell to my friends and looked back fixing that scene in my mind forever.

Time passed. It was a cloudy Sunday morning in August, not exactly the right time to start a new adventure. Nevertheless, I got up early and cooked myself a yummy but heavy breakfast. It was time to pack to move to a new country but I procrastinated. I laid on my bed gazing out the window feeling terrified about the move. I was worried that I would not be able to see my friends, aunts, and uncles for years. My two sisters were also agitated. They started to jump up and down like little clowns. I tried to make no fuss about the move as I knew I was too young to put an end to that disastrous decision. I finished packing, grabbed my bags, and got into the car. And now I was on my journey.

A NEW BEGINNING

GEEHAN AL-ANSARI



¹ Andrea Dimera is the son of my former teacher in Kuwait

It was 2006. I was sixteen years old, pretty but stubborn. We were headed to the city of Dundee, Scotland. My family moved to the country. It was a whole new level of luxury, rich in wildlife and greenery. My parents had bought a house in Dundee. The house looked much smaller than our house in Kuwait and I couldn't imagine living in it. I looked around and noticed all the houses in the neighbourhood looked similar. They were very plain, simple homes. But our garden was breathtakingly lush.

Many families owned dogs and I would make a fool out of myself by running as fast as the wind every time I saw one. I had to admit that even though I felt isolated in a strange country, a part of me did have hope for a better future. I spent a couple of weeks exploring the city and I was astonished by the significant differences in the standard of living compared to home. My first experience on the beach was amazing. The beautiful, glowing sun rose slowly above me, bringing a gleaming light to the calming sand and sea. The sun rays warmed me against the cool coastal breeze that hit my face. Looking around me there was nobody else to be seen, only a couple of animals scattered randomly. I could hear the 'whoosh' of the sea and the wind blowing gently. I called Scotland the 'land of the free'. The only let down was the weather; it rained quite a lot.

Then suddenly it was the first day of school. My three months of summer vacation had passed like a dream. At school, the playground was swarming with pupils. Near the door, I felt someone touch me on the shoulder; it was the head teacher. She welcomed me warmly and showed me the way to my class. During recess, a few girls gathered around me. One pulled my shirt; the other pulled my hair and I started calling me names. It was a nightmare. The clock struck thirteen. It was time for English. As I entered the classroom I didn't quite see our teacher. He was facing the board but the back of his head looked very familiar. He was bald and had a bump on his head. In fact, I recognized that bum as he turned slowly. It was Andrea Dimera¹.

A WALK TO REMEMBER

FAJER AL-KHALIFAH



I walk the halls of the old building
Where the walls and the floors aged
through memory,
White, with clean smudges of history,
And in remorse of the feeling
I walk the halls in a longer path
And smile at the steps I take,
And smile at the path I make –
That mirror each other as I pass.
I touch the old railing, as I go up the stairs,
Smoothing the memory of all the fingerprints
That were traced in the blue with dints,
And walk by the door of senior student affairs.
I pause.
I stare at the wood,
And the full holes in that door;
From years of knocking. I smile to the floor
Gently at my shadow, and stood
To take a picture, a screenshot,
A new memory of the moment
I came back to school after three years
of abandonment.
I blush, I turn around, and I leave my spot.

AMALGAMATE

ANFAL AL-HARBI



Spaghetti. Splat!

Let's twist the fork around. Spin it. Spin it.
Toss it off the plate and stretch the strings with
our fingers.

They're out to get us. They're hunting for us.
With their steak knives and yellow fangs.

We're crawling on the floor, now.
Laughing at their irritation. As they pull us off the
floor, up on the kitchen counter.

And cut off the locks off our hair so they could
sell it for a dime.
So they could possess us with a dime.

Squeeze the bear. So the honey could ooze on us
and the bees can suck off of us.

We're laughing hysterically and running around.
They can never get us. They can never get to us.

Jumping on the sad, black road now. With the
thud from our combat boots.
We wave at Jenna who used to be Jamie The past
doesn't make sense but the looks she gets off her
red, hot pants.

And now we're twirling round and round. Dizzy
and the rush of sound.
We could use some medication. We could use
some sanity.

Look at the pretty colors, waving above us.
I feel quite starved. Let's eat grapes off
the wall.

Fire! Fire! Let's hop on our juggernauts and
fight the fire.

Against the grain, amidst the smoke.
I'll be there for you in white suspenders.

What a delicate boy?
I would die for you. 'Cause I am cold,
blue ice.
And you're spilt milk.

And all you have to do with me is roll
around on spaghetti, on the floor and giggle.

AT DARK

AALIYAH BEHBEHANI



Every night
Before I sleep
I pray to God
With all that I keep
To make me strong
To cross my wrongs
Even though sometimes
It feels like I don't belong

BEAUTIFUL MEMORIES

AALIYAH BEHBEHANI



I've moved on
We all have
It's been so long
It's so sad

At least we have something to keep
A reminder at night before we head to sleep
A peaceful memory to keep in mind
It's something beautiful that can't be defined

BEAUTY'S TRAGEDY

ANFAL AL-HARBI



Maybe someday I would find myself
In all my glory
Looking straight at my own lense
With alluring eyes...
Full lips and defined locks
I could smile and mean it
I could know
I could comprehend and accept life and death
I wouldn't have to be afraid
Because God has a plan for me
In a place called Mars
Or maybe Pluto
Where everything is so beautiful and so clean
I could sit on the crescent moon in a chiffon
white dress
With the train flowing in the dark,
mystic universe

With the stars twinkling like fire flies
They'd gather together and dance a
Viennese waltz
With burgundy hair, hair
Gallantly flaunting legs
Looking up and breathing without hesitation
Flaming tears wouldn't be a waste anymore

BROKEN COMPASS

*HIRICINTH VERONICA
BUCKMORE*



The journey of life is never an easy one, especially when you find what you want the obstacles are hard to reach or often times hard to keep as people question intentions even when they are pure, as sometimes no matter how hard you want to prove such intentions are not wrong and they are for the right reasons, you still come off badly as life itself laughs when you do finally find something fantastic something precious, there is an obscenity that gets in the way, there is a hardship flung leaving you a flutter gasping for air where the fear overcomes you because that which is beautiful is the hardest to keep, to protect, and to have from falling amongst the abyss of life never being able to grasp the thing hard enough to feel safe, to feel secure when all you want is to have a firm footing so you are no longer lost.

²Frida Kahlo's Self Portrait with Cropped Hair was drawn after Khalo divorced her husband, Diego Rivera. The portrait shows Khalo dressed in a man's suit with her long hair cut off, she sits holding the scissors and some locks of her hair as an emblem to her femininity sacrifice. The verse which appears on top of the portrait, "See, if I loved you, it was for your hair, now you're bald, I don't love you anymore" states that Diego Rivera admired Khalo for her long hair. After the couple divorced, in 1940 Khalo made the portrait as a way to express her desire for the freedom and independence of a man.

CROPPING THE CURLS

HASSAN SHAH ASWAR



Silently, she was fixated to her obsession,
A Frida Kahlo's portrait with a cropped hair and
masculine attire.

She was moved by the verse:

"See, if I loved you, it was for your hair, now
you're bald, I don't love you anymore"²

Her curls is her beauty,

She fantasied the image of her freedom,

In terms of cropping her curls and donning the
garments of a chap.

Aware she would deprive her
feminine magnetism,

And she will smell of a rotten axilla,

At least no sinner would dare meddle under her
chastity belt,

And society wouldn't differentiate against her.

Should her chance for liberty fail,

The hell with this invidious world.

CYNOSURE

*HIRICINTH VERONICA
BUCKMORE*



Thoughts, like a compass, go mindlessly in all directions.

As you move one way, a whirlwind of ideas go with you, flinging you into a lost abyss in an uncontrollable way.

Red or white, needles jab every which way taking fleeting ideas into eternity.

DIVINE

FARAH ALI



Embraced by the arms
of the Divine, upon faith
darkness shall wither.

EYES

NAJD AL-MUHANNA



Life moves on
We move on
Nothing stays as it is
Rigid words
Truthful as can be
Change our world
And our entirety
We are looked at
Watched by those eagle eyes
We're the prey
The desired in hay
You cannot be
What the image
Perceives the whole
Motionless in tremendous agony
We keep on moving... believing
In a story to be

FACES

ALIA MUSTAFA AREF



Masks fail to hide,
The truth that lies beneath them,
You are not worthy.

Walking through the haze

A faint light entices my steps towards the blaze.
I know everything yet I know nothing.
The mist thickens with each step
Taking me deeper into the abyss.

Deep within the haze

Embers fly against me and seize me in all
my fervor.
I stare at a barren immensity,
Bearing nothing but a miscarriage of faith.
The light soars higher out of my reach and I
am lost.
Ignorance is bliss, but there is no bliss in ambition.
Conquered by a bitter thirst, unable to be quenched
by the blistering blaze.

Looking down, I see a path that leads me
to eternity.

A path corroded by infinite footsteps,
But I am careful not to stumble
For I refuse to conform.

Astray amid a deep ocean of nothingness, save for
the faint light.

Unable to fulfill, I throw my shackled arms
to heaven
And beg
To be united with them, whose halos have earned
them the eternal grace.

Beyond the haze

A world of mortals wait to kindle a legacy,

HAZE

FARAH ALI



HOLLOW

AYAT ABDULLA



Every single chamber of my heart is hollow
It's funny to think that all this sorrow won't be
here tomorrow
I've fought for so long,
I've grown weary and tired
Pain is seeping through my soul and it's oh
so slow
I wish you were the one to make it all go away
Heal my wounds
Please
Before I start to decay
I've shed my skin to show you my scars
I wish you were the one to make it all go away

Everything was blurring the moment he opened his eyes. He doesn't remember whether or not someone knocked him out, all he's aware of for now is that he's partially blind and cannot feel any pain in his body.

As soon as his vision was coming back to him, he realized where he was. It was his dormitory, a room with a view looking out at a nearby graveyard. *Something is not right*, he thought. He might be in his place except that his surrounding is not what it seems. Normally he would wake up to the tireless sound of the birds' chirping outside his window, or at least one of his guardians banging on his door to see if he's up but not this time. Everything was lifeless! No sounds and not a single soul were showing a sign of life except him.

He searched around the house only to find the place just as normal as his bedroom, except that no one was around. The street itself was as deserted as a ghost town. *Where is everybody?* He wondered. It was even stranger when he had to walk far from his place, only to find himself back at the beginning line. Back at the house, he either turns on the TV or attempt to make a phone call only to learn that both are dead as the rest of his environment.

Time itself appears to be frozen still. The hours must have moved forward yet there is no change in its period. Because of this, he has lost track of how many days or months have passed since the

IN LIMBO

HASSAN SHAH ASWAR



world died on him. Keeping himself busy was not even an option as his art and writing tools failed him to mark a blank paper, the typography in his books was rearranged, letters were distributed around the pages out of order and appeared gibberish.

What is the meaning of this!" he cries to himself, and nearly at the brink of losing his mind. Couldn't help but trip himself down the stairs, falling down on each step, and nothing! Bizarre how a fall like that is enough to break his neck or kill him, and not only is he still alive but he also can't feel the pain in his body.

Walking down to the graveyard did not cause him a limp. He wanted answers, and the dead seem to know the answer to his question. A headstone clutched his attention; this one had the only clear typographic letters that can be recited. That's when he realized the truth.

The world did not die on him. It was he who died on the world.

Memories come back to him, and he knows how he died. Though he knows now that he's not in heaven or hell, he asks himself how long will he be in limbo? How long can his mentality stand this feeling of isolation and unconsciousness?

God I'm alone!" he pities himself

Death has entered the door to many,
However, never did I expect it to come to a near friend
of mine,
I always thought I would live for years and years with her
by my side,
However, death is a visitor that comes without
an invitation,
Death has taken away a true, trustful and valuable person
to me,
It has showed me the other side of life,
The side I never wanted to see,
The side where darkness lies,
I was so busy with life's surprises,
Never thought it would surprise with such a harsh shock,
That has left me with me dull and pale,
Will she ever come back? Will she ever come to lighten
my day again?
No, no is the answer to my question,
Once something has perished on this earth there is
no return,
That is what I have been taught after her death,
And life goes on...

LIFE GOES ON

NOHA MOUSSA



LONER

HASSAN SHAH ASWAR



Born a loner, I will perish a loner,
Without fear of dying a loner.
What will company do for me if they take me
for granted?
To be with company,
To be with charlatans,
Lonesomeness is the companionship I need,
Leastways it never takes me as a pawn,
And my ghost is free of sin.

MIND REFRESHMENT

AYAT AL-BLOUSHI



A book is now closed—
The scent of fresh paper flies;
to the mind it heads.

MIXTURE OF LIFE

NADA ABDU



Open up

The jar of smiles

And put one in a bowl

Take your dreams

and a pinch of hope

that's what life is for

to make a mixture

of all that's well

and you can add a whole lot more

don't forget, the tears of sorrows

and the ambitions you have for tomorrow

and the laughs from your past

and finally for the last

a loving, beating heart

that's how you have

the mixture of life

which is a gift from God

its endless

but don't be reckless

and use it the best way

embrace it

share it

because that's why it was made.

MY SIDE

KHALED HUSAIN



A number of stars
over the skyline collide
The beautiful dust
all over the earth glide
:Sea screams
it waves on a high tide
Calling my name
they are my guide
sheltering me from
the demonic side
of myself.

PRETENSION

FARAH ALI



Fragile is the soul
of one bearing the hawk's stare,
devoid of passion.

PRICELESS

AYAT AL-BLOUSHI



You laugh, and I smile—
a joke is capable of
keeping me alive.

TEMPORARY NEEDS

*FATEMEH EBRAHIMI &
PELLEGRINO LUCIANO*



The birds trembled in trees,
as grim clouds poured over the ocean.

Looking for peace and freedom,
They sang in plumages of likeness.

Beaks together, eyes to the heavens,
They watched,
Black, grey, blue.

After the thunder passed each forgot the other
beyond the sea.

THE DOMINION'S TRIUMPH

HASSAN SHAH ASWAR



“

Born with the gift copied from the ones
before me,
Ambiguous whether I should be grateful or not,
For it became my source of invisibility.
In solitary,
I slave away for my God given knack.
Deserting the flair would call me back into
its grasps,
And the dominion triumphs,
Leastways I know I'll never be in recluse.

THE FRAIL SENTENCE

HASSAN SHAH ASWAR



I woke up startled by the ringing of my cellphone alarm tone, *Requiem* by Giuseppe Verdi. Lazily and yet intimidated, I slide the screen turning off the alarm and went to wash up before putting on my school uniform.

Mother was waiting for me in the kitchen; she must have wakened too early. Silently with a strange expression of paranoia on her face, she prepared what could be my last meal. Her hand trembled as she poured orange juice into my mug, spilling over the table. I grabbed the carton from her and carefully put it next to my mug. I used my napkin to clean the mess she left. I helped myself to some eggs, sausage, and pancakes. I ate hearty in case this was my last meal.

Goodbye, mother!" I called out before" leaving with my bag.

Mother did not reply.

She just sat in her rocking chair, praying repeatedly as if she had just committed a crime, and was desperately begging the judge to spare her life.

The school bus was crowded with the likes of me; boys and girls with heads shaved clean and dressed in similar prison uniforms. A number instead of a name identified each person. My number is 17. One of the few other common things I share with my peers is how we're

displaying our expressions; we're all showing signs of trepidation as we head to what could be our final destination.

The school building used to be a maximum-security prison until a riot forced the government to close the prison and turn it into an enlightenment center. However, that doesn't change much of the place's structures judging from the security watchtowers, the electrifying fences, and extra security by the waterside.

Dead children were scattered around the grass area, attracting flies to the smell of failure. It is the rule that was established before I was born, they called it "The Frail Sentence." The commandment is simple, "One fails the final test. One is too fragile to live." And just like that, an *F* on a final will result in getting a child executed and then roasted for not meeting the country's expectation.

I don't know what life was like before that law was established or why anyone would give children a death sentence should they fail their final examinations. Guess that in order to keep the republic prospering, one must be fit enough for the country's sake. Otherwise we would get banged for nearly triggering another great depression.

Workers are also attached to certain laws by the government but I was not informed about these laws. I'm not even certain whatever happened to my old man except that he simply disappeared two years after I was born. That left just me and mother looking after each other, yet I'm feeling troubled about her. It's not her fear of losing me to "The Frail Sentence"; it's her nights of coming home either from the income collectors or work. She limps home in tears and shame judging from her expression, smeared makeup, and tattered clothes.

God! What did they do to her? I wondered.

Number 13 was the first "frail student" to receive the death penalty for failure. That year when "The Frail Sentence" was established, the faculty's sentinels took the boy away to the school yard to be witnessed by thousands of his peers for a public execution. He was positioned under the school's flag; a hangman's knot

was wrapped around his neck, and to everybody's shock he was lifted up to his death next to the flag. Until this day, his body serves as an ultimatum to those determined to fail.

The headmaster, a tower-heighted man with a face of a totalitarian that one might compare to a historical figure in a textbook, greeted the whole school as he stood under the flag.

"Welcome, students!" spoke the headmaster in an authoritarian tone, grasping the gathering's attention. "You are all assembled here at this ground to display your worth for our great nation. Beware that failure is weakness according to our saying, *'One fails the final test. One is too fragile to live.'* I wish all those fit to last."

After the speech, all the numbers were directed to their examination chambers. The rooms were like any ordinary classroom save the security measures: armed guards at every door, bullet-proof glass for doors, and knockout fumes to maintain order.

As soon as every one of my peers entered the examination chamber, the glass door automatically locked us all in with our instructor. The teacher passed the examination papers around every table, and at his command we started to prove our worth for living.

I remembered most of the answers to my questions until my nerves went loose once I reached the difficult part. The ticking timer, the paper flipping sound, and the pen clicks distracted me and I was about to lose my edge. Time was nearly running out and I was desperate so I just answered the rest of the questions at random not caring whither I receive "The Frail Sentence" or not. For all I knew even if I passed the test, in the future I might suffer the same fate as my parents or whoever shared their boat.

If only life was kinder to men and women.

Two weeks had passed since taking the final examination.

Parents and children were summoned to the school for the verdict. The headmaster announced the fit and then the frail. The fit would witness the execution of frail as a reminder of the penalty for failure.

Surprisingly I could not believe my luck. I had passed the test!

I don't know how this could have happened, I was certain that I did not do that well but somehow I got lucky. Mother was relieved, that meant she would stop making a mess at the dining table and we could both have a normal life.

Despite my success I felt sorry when the frail students were dragged away from their parents to fulfill their sentences. One of them happened to have been my friend, Number 4. The last I saw of him was his eyes brimming with tears before he was blindfolded.

The executioners loaded their rifles, aimed, and ... BANG!

THE OLD MAN AND HIS SONS OR, (THE LEAVES OF AUTUMN)

HASSAN SHAH ASWAR



The old man decayed like a leaf in autumn,
Two sons he had from his consort one spring,
And now he sees his youth in his reincarnations.

The first son bloomed to achieve the desires that
his predecessor never dreamed of,
Flourished with the glory of his prestige,
His only companion became vanity,
And his kin went history.

Never reached the triumph of his brother,
The second son drifted downhill,
Not the world noticed his existence,
Saving his guardians.
Self-grieved,
Humiliated,
He damns fate over his sardonic ending.

Alienated and forgotten by his first son,
A heavy burden to his second son,
Abandoned by his consort's departure to the
Elysian Fields,
The old man wails for his isolation.
When autumn has fallen,
His time of passing has approached,
Leaving his second son mourning over
his mausoleum.

Gratified throughout his years of victories,
The first son remained under his limelight,
Until he was forgotten by the world when time
has beaten him.
Grizzled,
Senile,

And forgotten by his offspring,
He felt his predecessor's melancholy.
When the next autumn has fallen,
No one was there for his cremation but his
bogus friends,
Dying for his last wishes.

Never been acquainted with the rest
of humanity,
The second son lost touch with his
only relations,
Leaving misery deprived of company.
When the last autumn has fallen,
No pastor knew of his passing,
Except the Parcae, the Dark Angel, and the wraith
of his bloodline.

Away from my birthplace I went, gone is the
nation that once was. I was told I took my
first breath of life here, in Kuwait, but every
benevolent breath I took since then was that
of goodness and generosity, my Egypt. I was
fed the forceful culture of others, different than
my own. To Egypt, the mother of all nations
and nationalities; home of ancient sands and
pharaohs, I reminisce the days that were and are
now gone. The closest I now feel to my home is
through prayers; I pray for Egypt's replenishment
and for suitable service of justice, for the wicked
to fall under the serving swords of law. I pray
for the fallen faces I see on the recorder of life,
many fall and reunite with the repressed soils

TORN FROM THE ROOTS

ZEINAB WASFY



fitting perfectly into the jigsaw of earth. Over the years I witness life deteriorate and devolve whereas I strain to be beside my loved ones a thousand miles away. Kuwait is literally a thousand miles from Egypt. I feel the menacing misery of impotence engulfing my soul at the moment I hear the words of those who boast about their birthplace; for boasting is an action from which I am estranged. How can I express my real passion for patriotism when the way I live outside of Egypt causes me suffering, where is the love I longed to luxuriate? The tenderness, the trace, I took since infancy

Here I bleakly sit trying to balance a life I temporarily have, I stay in a place I would not dare call home. A place cold and ceasing of warmth I visit vividly every night; a place they call home. Living creatures pass by everyday all of whom are confined in the comfort of a homely house. I do not diminish the position I acquire here, I would nevertheless promulgate the urgency of rewinding life as it is and starting from new, only this time acquiring an astounding position where I truly belong. To a daily trial I awaken with growing hope in my heart that today's journey ends joyous and jolly. To my thoughts-quarry bereft and bovine-like I walk to the responsibility I owe myself. Like an outsider I promenade to my permanent post as a student, daughter, sister, and friend. I keep ignoring the indulgent aching that has been initiated by my ostracized body.

I listen to others speaking a language I do not assimilate, the language of amazing affinity. When will the days of loneliness disappear and dislodge from the life of a mere student? And until then do I sit silent and keep record of my inner definite dispute? The sky was breathtakingly blue with the innocence of children who grow now ruined with hatred and hostility. To whom do I direct the songs of my heart? How the air was uplifting and unifying, to imagine breathing in the same air a brother took, now ruined with echoes of memorials made for the soldiers in the grounds; for they are the souls who fought and continue to fight fiercely in their underground homes. If war soils spoke of gore and gullibility at those who are no more; life would find a voice through air, sand and silent swish of hope, for Egypt has become a land of what is gone. Hearing the breeze sighing in sorrow in the ears of those who have seen the past nation and its phases, a sigh of great trouble and torment flows over many of those who roam the night roads only living on god's torch by day. What misery it is to silently watch a nation in its great existence

fall and face finality slowly, but greater torment forms when one is forced to watch a nation of one's own fall and not be able to comfort it as if it were truly a part of you.

Like a thumb-sucker, I become ineffectual, vexed and vacant to what I owe my begetters of tenderness and care. As the box of events serve a pair of sight makers guiding my heart's cave to what events occupy my real home. Through white-trees and a million markings, I fathom disorders, and through paper scrapers, I envision the energy of the limited lives away from me. What emotions I feel are those of change and challenging supremacy, where pride and personal principles were shot with the gun of dreams and desires. To spill the blood of those who bravely brawled leaving red stains on our crisp blue skies and rooted cuts in our sandy grounds mapping the death of each entity. Waiting for generations to grow and raise our ancient country to its feet; feet with the strength of the battered billions buried in its Earth. What a leader who thought little of us, abysmal akin to a fox he was, left a nation broken. Like a funeral Egypt became, like a soldier without comfort whether he is bid to return to his caring human-cave. Like a storm unwilling to subside the silent cries of the condemned souls began.

How I wonder what it could have been once a leader was chosen, once the right leader took the tall throne of all ancient leaders past. Then fell anguish and animosity upon us, since our chosen leader forced his religious views and beliefs into the baleful brains of those who call for final freedom. With the tyrannous-creature, a promising priority set before our nation. His deception began the downfall of the mother of all nations.

What became of those legible leaders who are gone, breathless women and sorrow filled hearts. How Egypt's paradise has been buried in the past becoming a land one can only reminisce. I anticipate returning to my true home after a long life of living in exile. Until the eagle from Egypt's flag flies in freedom over our rustic roofs, creating exuberance once again. Being born here, in Kuwait, what I crave to have when I commonly cease is to rest in the silent soils of my true birth-place, where I belong and where I become whole again, Egypt tames the wild wrath that grew within my beating member.

TRANSPARENT

FARAH ALI



The motorcycle came to a screeching halt in front of a small gray, brick house in Salwa. Hamad looked around in puzzlement at his neighbor's driver who usually gave him a disdainful look while lecturing him on the importance of wearing a helmet. Hamad, as usual, would scoff and tell him to mind his own business. But this time Mohammed was just leaning against the black Grand Marquis and stared at a rock on the ground.

Hamad whistled and called in a cheery tone, "Hey Mohammed! Look my head isn't broken!" Mohammed continued to stare at the rock, completely oblivious to Hamad's bait. *That's strange*, Hamad thought, he has never seen Mohammed look so upset before; he seemed guilty and defeated.

Hamad reached into his pocket and pulled out his key to the front gate but noticed that it was already open. He looked behind him and realized the line of cars that were parked all around the neighborhood. *My mum must be hosting one of her usual gatherings to investigate another one of my sister's suitors*, he thought as he rolled his eyes.

As soon as Hamad stepped inside the house he knew that something was not right. The air was heavy with dread and the curtains which were usually open in the morning to let the sunshine in were drawn, making it cold and dark. He took a few steps towards the living room and suddenly heard a sound that stopped him in his tracks. He

put his hands to his ears and closed his eyes against his mother's piercing scream. Crying and moaning followed the horrific sound and Hamad stood still in complete shock. *What happened??* He took another step forward and heard his sister try to comfort their mother, telling her to calm down and take a sip of water. But his mum refused, saying that it wouldn't bring him back. *Bring who back??*

Hamad decided to go into the living room and find out exactly what was happening. He marched through the hallway and other noises became clearer. He could hear more muffled cries and whispered prayers. He stepped into the room and opened his mouth to speak but the sight in front of him left his jaw open in shock. The room was filled with women draped in black whose faces were streaked with tears. He spotted his sister with her arm tight around their mother's shoulder. Hamad walked up to them and asked, "What happened?? Who died? Who are you mourning?" But neither of them replied. "Answer me!" He said with a raised voice. His sister continued to hold their mother and neither of them would even look up. He turned around to look at the other women but the grief prevented them from noticing him. He started to panic as he felt his chest tighten and his head spin; he had to find out what was going on. He turned to walk out of the room and passed by the large gold-framed mirror hanging on the wall; he stopped and stared in disbelief. He did not see a reflection.

UNPREDICTED TRUTHS

NAJD AL-MUHANNA



In a world where nothing is predictable
You hear my voice hoarse and impeccable
My cry reaches those unknown to my soul
While those who lie in the midst of my whole
Vanish, dissolve
Heart full of sorrow, sorrow it is
Aching not from bleeding veins
But from continuous negligence

UTTER SILENCE

ZEINAB WASFY



Pure silence and utter stillness
Like the sound of those last droplets of water
leaving the tap in a silent room.
Love. Ambition. Joy all gone.
None of those feelings belong
Till the blue tides wash out jungles
And till time makes dust of diamonds
Till cities crumble to the ground I'm still here
But with silence I'm condemned
Her cries go unheard
But her tear drops fall-- creating chaos as
they land.
All shall see That little beating plea
I belong where?
I belong in that little beating plea.

WHAT LIES BETWEEN NATURE AND LIFE?

DANA MAAN



Trees stood behind shimmery waters and bent
Flowers stood beautiful in a world of dirty deceit
People stood behind the blessings that were sent
Stars stood shy under the brightness of
their purity
The world stood behind me, and I stood behind
my self

Do our souls collide with the wind and steal
the suffering?
Do we live in a life full of fake thoughts?
Is satisfaction overrated or is it a dream we
never catch?

Our paths grow shorter as we swim within the
waves of destiny
Our lives grow stronger as we stumble and fall
beneath rocks
Let's roll over on the bed of life and hug destiny
and fate
For the world is not full of colored flowers
But black roses full of depth and mystery.

WHAT PEOPLE CALL, "LOVE."

DANA MAAN



We are non-significant creatures in the world of
dominating emotions

We are birds that try to sing but fail and end up
whispering

We are children in our everyday actions

We are made of our past and our mistakes

We are sculptures of solid vulnerability

I am me, and you are you.

WOE OF A WORD-SMITH

HUSSAM HELMY



A cornucopia of crass cross-cultural invective invites itself to inflict injury on my inventory of ideas. Pen to paper is sword to soul. This is the woe of a winded word-smith.

Two purposes predicate my printed-passages: my own and my grade-givers'. Ordered in chronology but not in priority, long gone are the days when they were at parity, longer still from when personal projects possessed primacy.

I wrote when I was sad, and I grew glad. The word broth in my thought-cauldron, agitated by anger and alienation, fused into cohesion, bonded together by strong emotion. I wrote on religion, irreligion, Kierkegaard, suicide and God. I wrote about my first heartbreak. I kept an intricate, insightful thought-book.

For a time I wrote well on both war-fronts, both front lines: the place of book-learning, and my mind. But the days of bravely battling blank paper I have never seen again. Out of the hue, my muse morphed into my tormenter, projecting misandry onto her share of my memory, stabbing open wounds she helped close. My savior turned siren, my sanctuary turned purgatory: what mockery fate made of my pleas for pity. She kicked me back to my Cliff and I hung there, left hand gripping the edge, right hand between booze and ball-point. I guess you figured that I didn't let go. I don't care to tell you why (if you're smart, then you already know too much).

Now, where was I?

I could no longer write for myself without seeing her form: Matriarch, meta-stable and menacing. A la Palahniuk, my power animal went Marla. Except she didn't tell me to slide.

She told me to die.

I quit my Cave,

And trembling,

I quarantined that quarter of my cortex.

And so stripped of progress but seething with scorn, I funneled fury into furnace and for a sun-orbit fulfilled my function as word-sponge, as paper-filler. The grade-givers grew glad, and I in grace for their guidance.

My fortune faltered and fate again felt free to flick my feeble form like a fly. Where gone are the days of heaped praise? Where dwell the jovial Jameses? Cunningham! McDougall! Why have you forsaken your promising progeny? I weep for the fathers of my thought but they are farther than my thoughts. They nurtured my notions and nourished my needs, they followed me closely and sprinkled my seeds.

The fury and the summit gave way to the frustration and the plummet. The fury faded and the Voice grew louder and clearer. The harrowing whore-son harangues and hounds me, habituated to haunt me. It is me yet not me; it is the imprint of another's, ubiquitous till I thought it was no-one other's. It is the part of my will that wills me unwell.

I can say no more. The Voice is slippery; it slithers to skirt my sortie to sketch it; it plagues me every letter of the now. Behold: as I gorge myself on a Great Gatsby, it grows in gall, speaking as though my own:

*In what forge do word-smiths weld their wonderful works? **How can I ever compare? I should just st-***

“

She. She never changes.
She's a mind-set that will last forever.
She worries and she's skeptical.
She's a little too neurotic.
She. She never changes.

There's Katherine. She wants to make a difference. How? I'll tell you how. She enforces and spells out knowledge yet all the Bettys and the Crawfords will never ever listen. Because conformity is expected and individuality is obnoxious.

Ooh, there goes long legs and Camel cigarettes. She's so cool and so provocative. She'll toy with your emotions and laugh at silly notions. She's so cool and so provocative. Oh, yes she is. What's that you say? Mrs.

Perfection has got it for you. She thinks she's right. Of course she's right. Because to conform to society is a choice to be acknowledged. Why do both? When I can apply all I've sweat and bled for, for incompetent garbage!

Flaming dramatic!! Poor little Connie, you've got your world spun by maniacs. They'll push you around and always bring you down. But honey-pie, they really do care for you, their opinions mean the world. Oh, yes they do. You're a favor but later will you cater that you got a gut for your own and everyone can burn and reap what they sow!

WOMEN

ANFAL AL-HARBI



Mrs. Prim and Proper. You are your mother's daughter.
You play the role of authoritarian amongst your peers but no one knows that you drown in tears. Appearances are everything, yet you wallow in misery but still seem to keep your cool. You're sadistic and sardonic but honesty is more common.

She. She never changes.
She's forever immature.
She thinks too much. Period.

YOUR THUMBS ON MY THROAT

AYAT ABDULLA



I'm deep underwater, suffocating
Your hands like weights pushing me in.
Trying to swim as hard as I can
But I'm like a submerged watermill,
I'm floundering.
Out goes the air,
In goes the water,
And there, my body is left to disappear.



*A Decade of
Accomplishments*



CELEBRATING *TEN YEARS*
OF THE AMERICAN
UNIVERSITY OF KUWAIT
(A PASTICHE OF A VISIT FROM ST. NICHOLAS)

KATHY NIXON



Twas AUK's tenth anniversary and all through the campus,
Faculty, staff, and students were ready to vamp us.

Dean Rawda day-dreamed as she read,
With visions of forms to sign filling her head.

President Nizar in his suit and tie,
Busily checked budgets and heaved a great sigh.

When in front of the administration building arose such a clatter,
He leapt from his desk to attend to the matter.

Away to his window he flew like a flash,
Setting a new record for the 10-yard dash.

And what in courtyard did happen to appear,
But a procession of the faculty that AUK holds dear.

The instructors and professors made a rainbow of garnet and gold as they came,
Dr Nizar smiled, then looked happy, as he called some by name.

Hello Drs. Mohammed, Antonia, Craig, Farah, and Roman,
Hello Drs. Sharon, John, Raymond, hello every man and woman.

They marched to where the wolf pack symbol is painted on the wall,
Yella, yella , yella they shouted to students, come gather you all!

So to the place indicated they all flew,
Students, staff, and a few visitors too.

At first there was silence but then a sound arose from the place,
The words of the university's new school song did our ears grace.

After singing that song ended, many professors did say,
Their good recollections over 10 years of AUK.

Some who were at the university in Kuwait from the start,
Begin speaking of fond memories, reminiscences sweet and not tart.

Dr. Ghazi's fondest memory that first year was of a dinner,
Thirteen faculty and Sheika Dana attended, that night was a winner.

Dr. Kym liked the university's egalitarian feel best,
Her fondest memory was the retreat "Build on Success."

Dr. Monique found her division small and cozy,
That welcoming atmosphere made her feel rosy.

Dean John recalling Kuwait's weather, not wanting to be bold,
As we British would say, "it wasn't quite cold"

Dr. Chris started a group with students to discuss and debate,
The one tackling stereotypes in Kuwait, he thought was just great.

Dr. Kathy enjoyed learning a new culture from the campus in Salmiya,
Among her favorite things are Arab coffee, good students, and
shopping at Souk Mubarakia.

Dr. Ghlan found his colleagues impressive and their professionalism good,
"They take a lively interest in teaching and academics," as good faculty should.

Dr. Marcy thought the university housing lovely, the landscape quite a view,
Like a Bollywood movie it reminded her, and you might think so too.

Dr. Rawda's long work on accreditation had been keen,
In term 2012- 2013 she became the interim dean.

In term 2013-2014 Ms Debra took over IEP,
She leads many things including levels one, two, and three.

Lots of people, like Dr. Carol, would have many nice things to say,
Ten years is around 3,650 days or 87,600 hours of our AUK.

I could have named more folks and their recollections of AUK time,
But have pity on me dear reader, it is so hard to rhyme.

Thus the spontaneous singing and recollections came to an end,
It was a fun day, but the time to leave had arrived, my friend.

As all headed to the gates many were heard to say,
Happy 10th anniversary, a decade of excellence, let's keep it that way.

LONE WOLF IN THE WILD WORLD

HASSAN SHAH ASWAR



Never imagined separating from the pack,
Flashbacks come back to me,
Of when I first joined the family,
It has been a decade, I felt at home.

In cold sweat, I fear for what lies ahead now that
I'm to roam the wild world,
The outer surface may not be tame,
It may devour my pack as they go their
separate ways,
Must my old wolf pack request my hand in the
time of need?
Howl to me and I shall return the bay,
Never leave a wolf forlorn in the wild,
You are my bloodline.

STRUGGLES AT AUK

TALAL AL-HAJRY



After my first love, high school, abandoned me,
I find AUK, and pray to god that she would set
me free.

Oh AUK, why can't you be as simple and lenient
as high school?

She was a better lover than you; she did not
stress me nor did she depress me.

When high school left me, I thought AUK would
bring me joy and I would be merry,

Yet she brought me grief, and troubles me very.

She assigns me work that I cannot bear; work so
hard that at my books I must stare.

Too much research she wants me to do,

And not any research, but scholarly too.

Away my Arabic goes, and English my tongue
only knows.

Yet she, AUK has taught me well; to think
critically, and much to tell.

Oh AUK, I never knew English until we found
each other.

Now after many years, I graduate and we must
leave one another.

Sometimes from all my heart I wish high school
had returned,

It might bring happiness but I would lose the
knowledge at AUK I learned.

Now that I am finally graduating,

I will miss AUK, but the work world is waiting.

I learned a lot but now that my time has
finally come,

I must work harder to leave and be done.

My father wants to retire,

I must work instead, and my siblings to inspire.

Oh Shakespeare, Milton, and Steinbeck, it has
been good, but now please set me free;

Essays about you, leave me alone, and let
me be.

HIGH AS A KITE

HUSSAH AL-ENEZI



It is not an ordinary day when you walk into the dean's office. However, Dr. Rawda Awwad, the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences of the American University of Kuwait (AUK), is not an ordinary dean. I came up with the idea to interview Dean Awwad with the help and encouragement from my IEP colleagues Fatmah Al-Atar, and Fatmah Al-Shayji.

It all started on an ordinary morning in fall 2013, when, at about 7 a.m., I headed for The Diner for a coffee to go. I walked Dr. Awwad, fresh as a daisy at that early hour. When I left the diner and headed for the elevators, coffee in hand, I noticed that Dean Rawda took the time to sit down and join the Scrabble tournament held by students. Suddenly, I got an idea, and "high as a kite" I couldn't wait to share it with Mrs. Alison Larkin Koushki, my IEP instructor. Her eyes lit up when I said, "if only I could interview Dean Awwad. But in my mind, it was passing dream that seemed impossible. But hey...a girl can dream, can't she?" Mrs. Alison encouraged me to go for it, but self-doubt and shyness pushed the idea firmly to the back burner....for a while.

My dream was revived on Halloween when I put on my reporter hat and interviewed the audience at Mrs. Alison's IEP "Bring Reading to Life" Dracula event. I scanned the crowd for Dean Rawda but did not see her. I boldly made up my mind then and there to email her to request an interview. Thinking, of course, that the dean would be far too busy, I hit sent anyway.

Minutes later – 9 minutes to be exact – Dean Rawda asked me to schedule an appointment for the next Thursday with her assistant Mrs. Magdalene. “High as a kite,” I did just that.

I was very nervous as Fatmah Al-Shayji, Fatmah Al-Atar and I headed to Dean Rawda’s office. I was to conduct the first part the interview and the others were to ask their questions later. However, when we arrived at the office, we could not interview the dean right away because of a scheduling conflict. We had to reschedule the interview for two hours later that same day. By the time interview time arrived, my mom had arrived at AUK to pick me up. Dean Rawda very kindly invited mom to sit with us during the interview. We started by thanking Dean Rawda for her time and then I asked my questions:

Question 1: Are you aware of our novel-related creative activities in IEP, such as artwork, drama, music, and dance, and do you feel they add value to student education?

Dean Rawda: “I am very aware,” stated the Dean, “and we don’t expect anything less because we know what we are offering concerning education. Therefore, we expect a certain standard that goes above and beyond the average standard, and such exceptional creative activities reflect that standard.”

Question 2: Do you feel these novel-related creative activities can increase interest in reading among students in Kuwait?

Dean Rawda: “Yes of course, the Dean answered. “Reading is not a global pastime anymore. Interest in reading has dropped over the decades. When I was younger, the older generation complained of our lack of reading though we used to read on average of a book a week. That wasn’t enough for the older generation, but nowadays they measure it as a book every year!” she laughed. “This is a global concern. Visual entertainment and television have taken over reading in the day to day activities of the younger generation.”

Question 3: Can you think of any way to encourage reading?

Dean Rawda: "Reading habits are established first in the home. For most children their role models are their parents and to make reading an accessible pastime, parents need to integrate reading in such a way that it is a natural act of daily life as is eating, as is breathing, as is conversing. This is how you bring young people into the habit of reading."

As I questioned the dean, I noticed that the atmosphere in her office was so informative, friendly, and fun. The discussion was enlightening as our half-hour appointment stretched to 34 minutes, easily. When we finished the interview, glowing and empowered, we did not want to leave the dean's office! But it was time to go. Moreover, we would like to thank Dean Rawda Awwad, for her love of students and her open door policy.

WE ARE HERE

*SHAFEEQA HUSSIEN &
RAWAN ABDALRAHMAN*



We are here, we are here, we are here in Kuwait

We are here, we are here, we are here at AUK

I'm Egyptian

I'm Kuwaiti

And we are here at AUK

A

What is A?

American

U

You mean you

No, no, no I mean university

K

Ya, you are Kuwaiti I know

NO, no, no I mean Kuwait

Ah I got you

A and K

And in between U

It's the American University of Kuwait

Is it an equation?

No, it's a combination of

A combination of

Of, of what?

It's a combination of

Education

Activities

Social life

Social life!
Ya, social life that contains

Great professors
Great students
All as one
And all that is one place
That we are here, we are here
The students of AUK

LEARNING AT AUK

*MANAL AL-AZMI &
SHATHERWAN AL-MUTAIRI*



At AUK, we entered a new world.

At AUK, we learned a lot of things.

We learned that now is not time for playing, but it's time for real action.

And the teachers will always be there for us.

Also, studying can be fun.

We learned that we must make our future plans before we take our first steps.

Achieving our dream instead of our families dream is the goal, because in the end it is our future, our life.

Studying what we feel passionate about, it will make us rock.

We learned that to change the world, we have to start changing ourselves first.

We learned that with every locked door there is a key to open it.

With continuous practice nothing is impossible.

We learned that we are never too old to get an education.

Learning and knowledge never ends, more thinking more progress.

We learned that meeting people is easy, but making a friend is hard.

And that working in a group is better than working alone.

After hard work, the dreams will come true.

After hard raining, the rainbow will show.

We learned that even though we have difference cultures, we all have one goal.

Here, we began our first steps.

Here, we will move forward.

Here, our wishes will come true.

So, we will say it over and over again.

AUK is the beginning for our future.

Artworks



"HOME"
HIRICINTH VERONICA BUCKMORE



“PEPPERFUL OF RAINBOWS ”

HIRICINTH VERONICA BUCKMORE



"SUMMER CANDY"

HIRICINTH VERONICA BUCKMORE & JOHN CLARK



"GOT LUNCH? LION STALKING ZEBRA IN BOTSWANA"

KATHY NIXON



"LEOPARD", BOTSWANA
KATHY NIXON

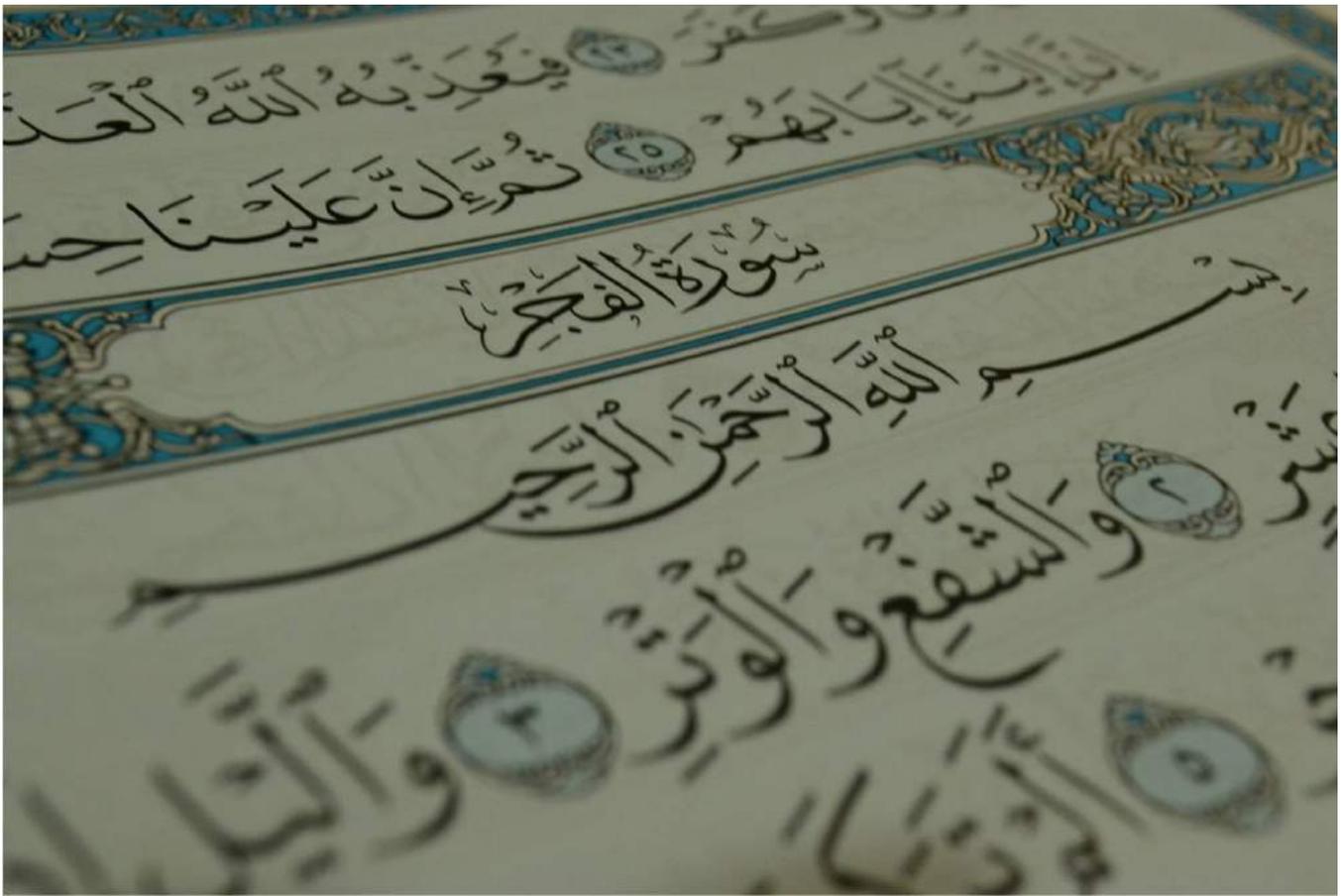


"CAPTURING THE MOMENT"

SUMAYAH AL-BAKER

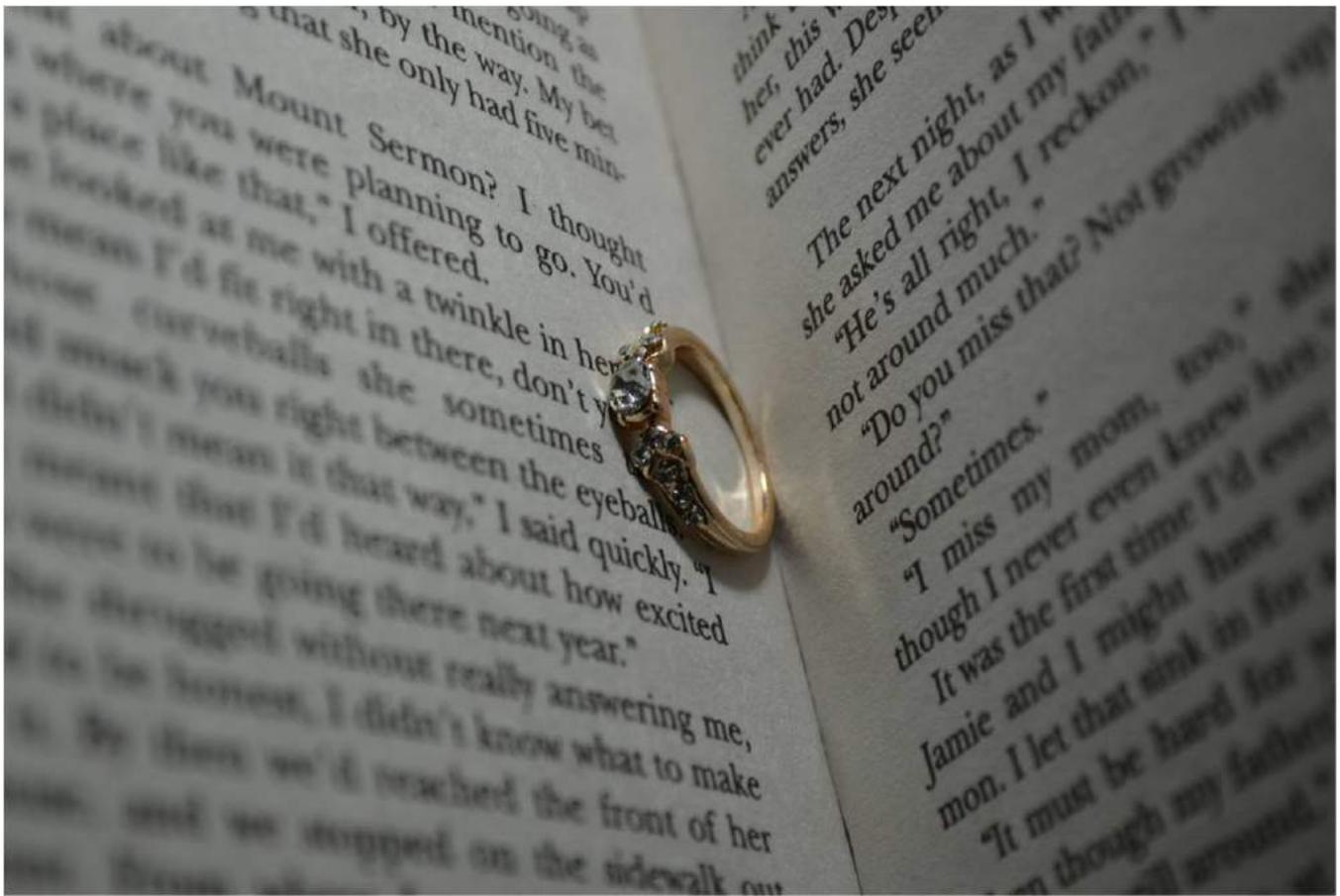


"AL-FAJER"
FAJER AL-KHALIFA

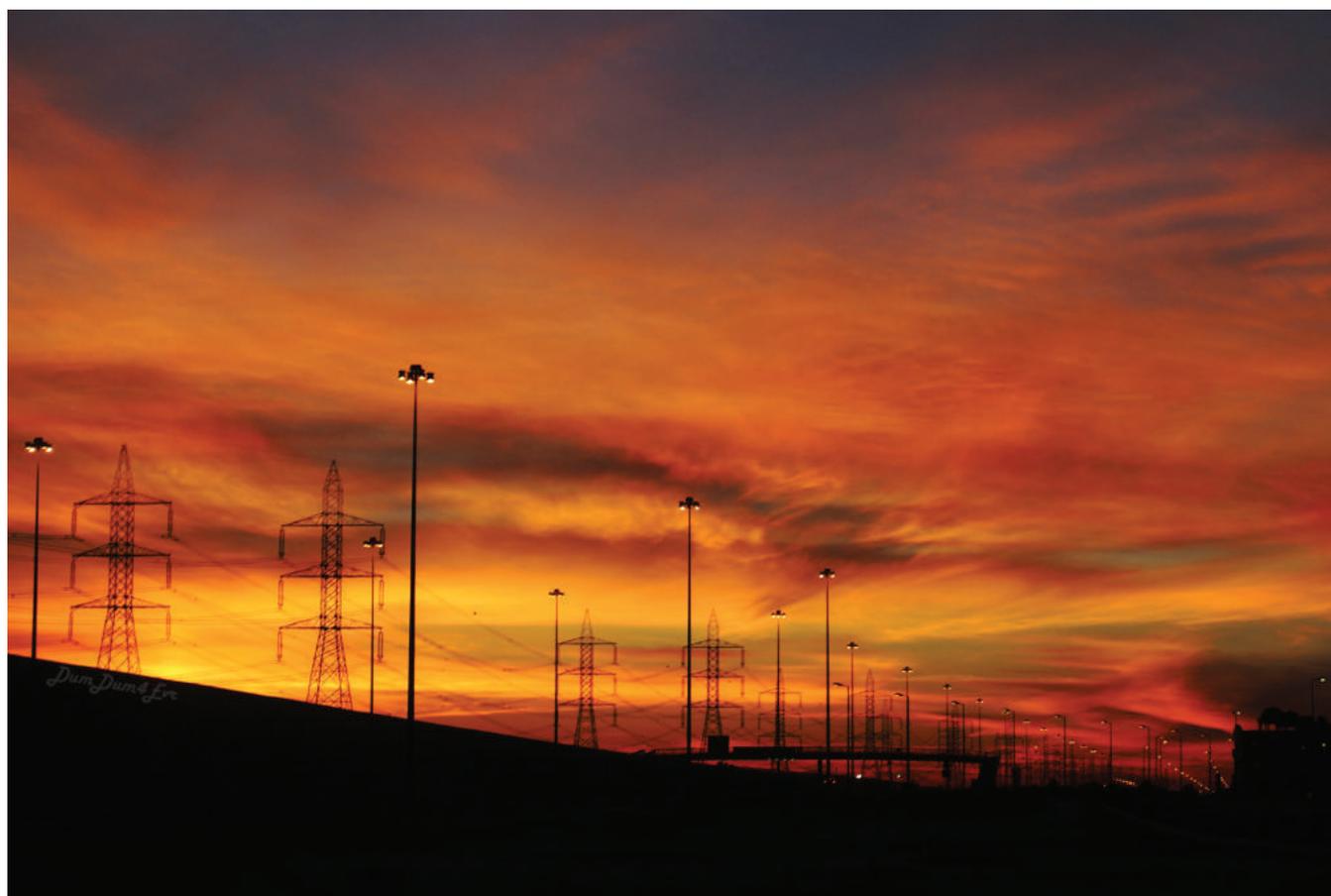


“COMMITMENT”

FAJER AL-KHALIFA



UNTITLED
DIMA AL-SURAIEE



UNTITLED
DIMA AL-SURAIIE



Dum Dum & Eye



UNTITLED
DIMA AL-SURAIEE



UNTITLED
DIMA AL-SURAIEE



"BLOSSOM OF FALL", IRAN

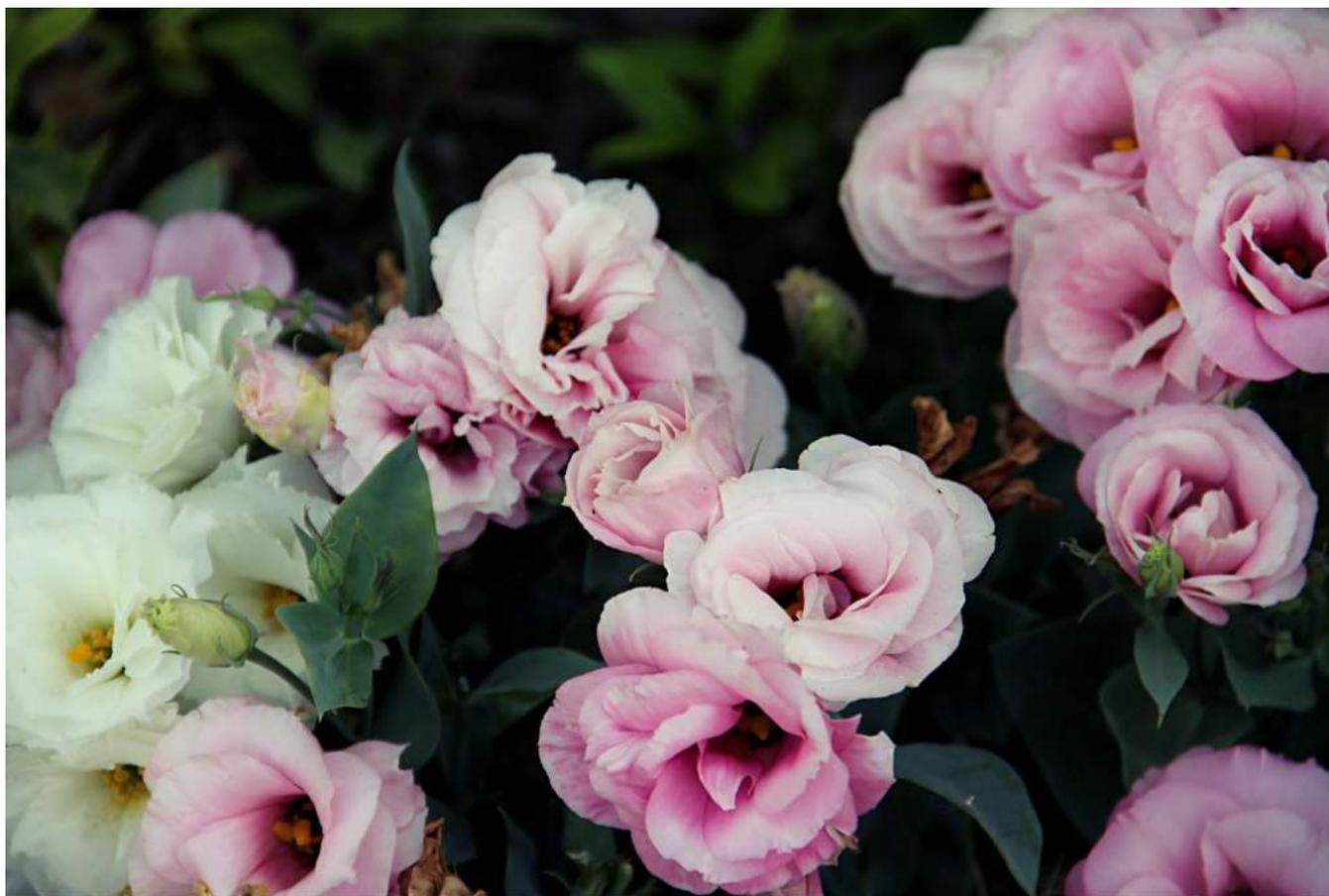
SARA BABAZADEH



"BRANCHES OF WISDOM", OMAN
SARA BABAZADEH



"DELICATE BLOSSOM", IRAN
SARA BABAZADEH



"ILLUSIONS", OMAN
SARA BABAZADEH



"PEACEFUL MOMENTS", IRAN

SARA BABAZADEH



"THE POWER OF LONLINESS", KUWAIT
SARA BABAZADEH



"CHILDISH PERCEPTION OF LIFE", KUWAIT

NEDA SHIRAZI



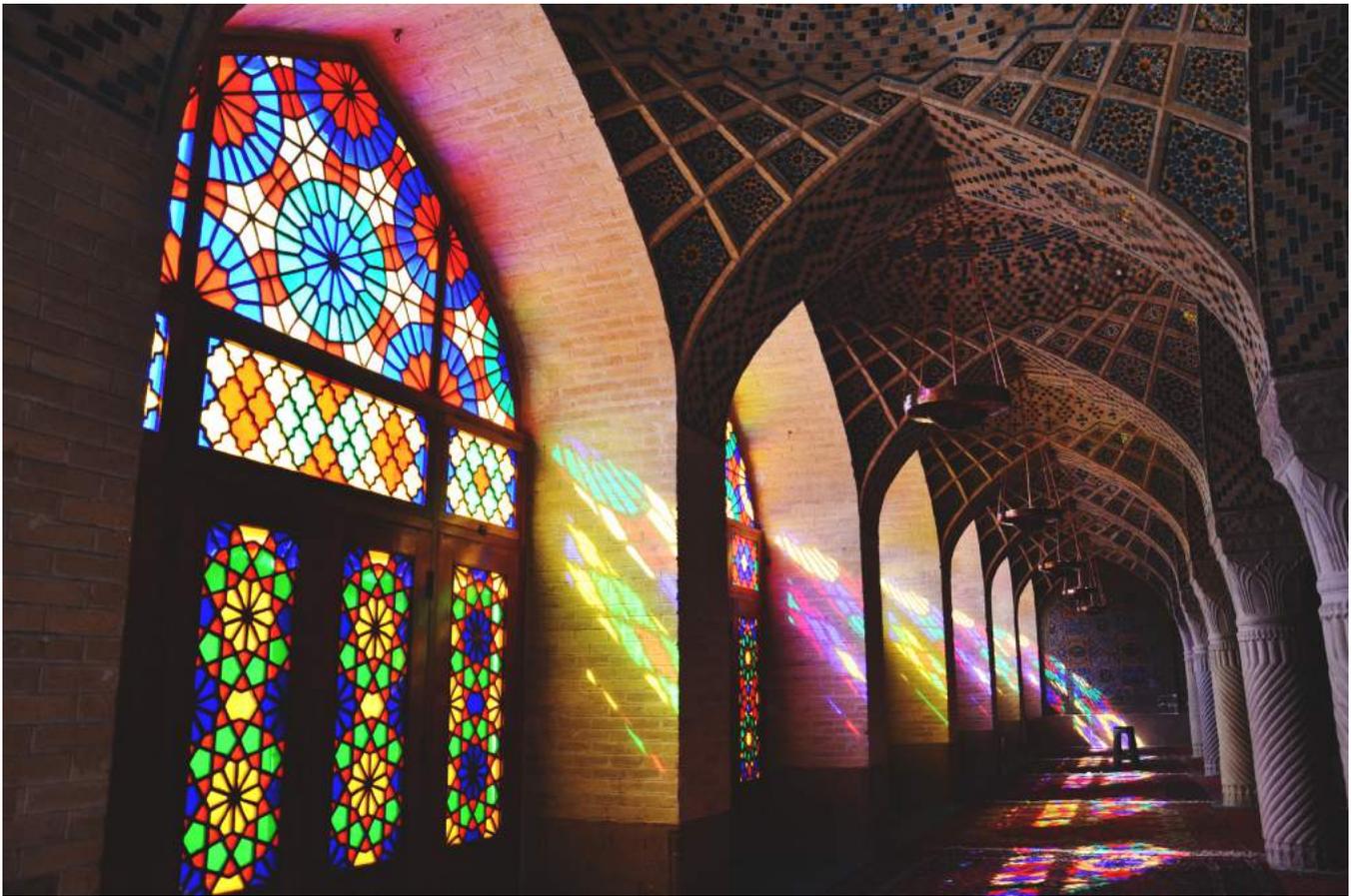
"FLASHBACK", BALI
NEDA SHIRAZI



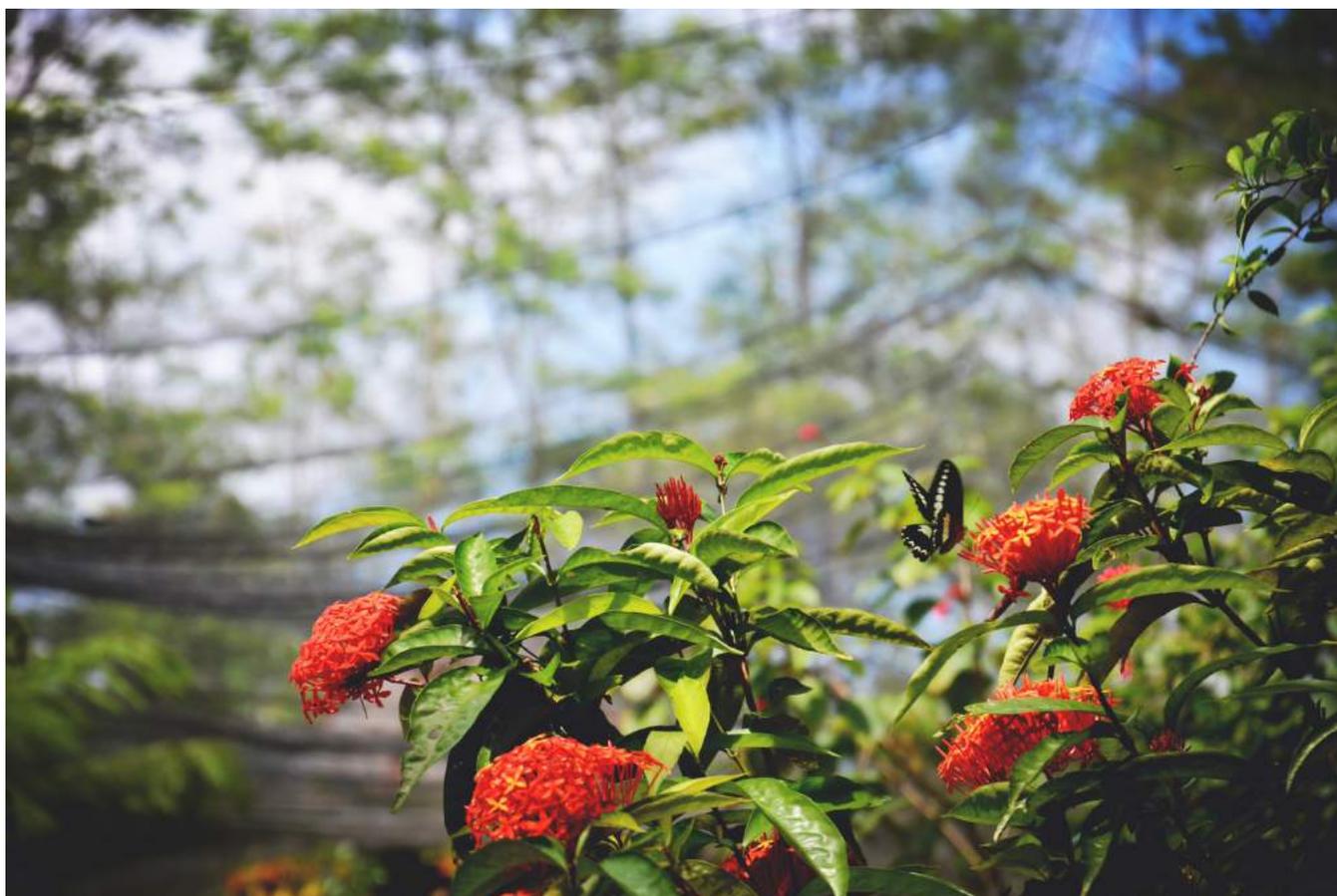
"MAGICAL WINDOW", NASIR AL-MOLK MOSQUE, SHIRAZ, IRAN
NEDA SHIRAZI



"RAINBOW IN MOSQUE", NASIR AL-MOLK MOAQUE, SHIRAZ, IRAN
NEDA SHIRAZI



"SCENT OF LOVE", BALI
NEDA SHIRAZI



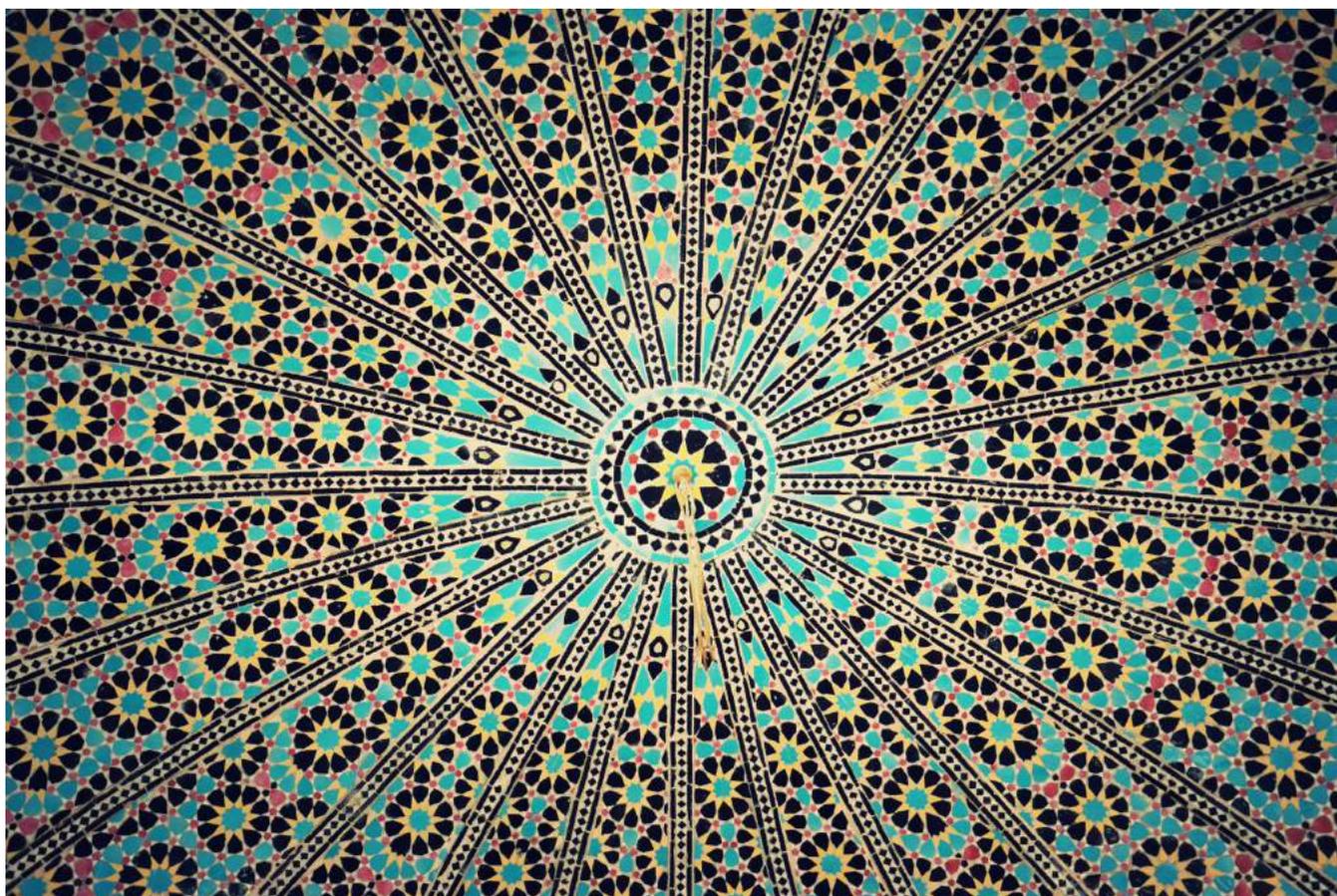
"THE PRECIOUS ENDEAVOR", BALI
NEDA SHIRAZI



"WHAT GOES AROUND COMES AROUND"

NASIR AL-MOLK MOSQUE, SHIRAZ, IRAN

NEDA SHIRAZI



"SEEING THROUGH THE CRACK"
ANAAM RASHEED



"THE END"
ANAAM RASHEED



"THE RISING CITY"

ANAAM RASHEED

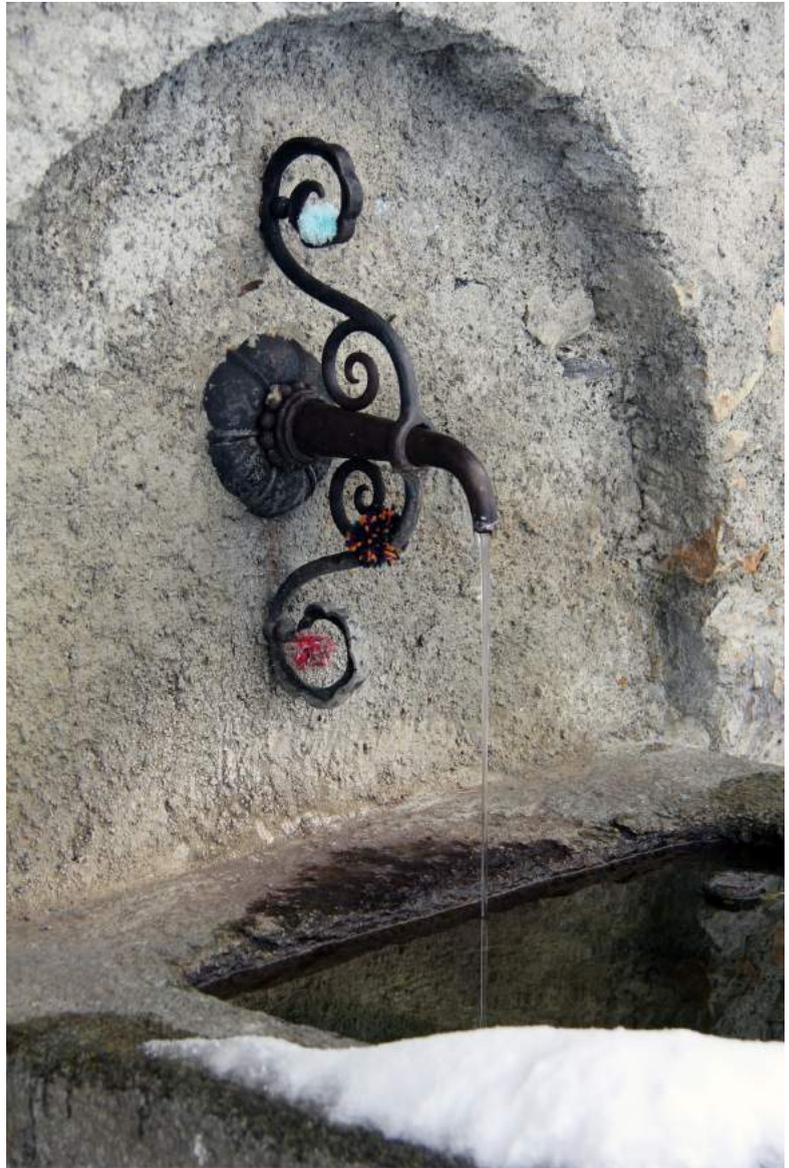




"ALPINE ANGLE"
MARCELLA JANUSH-KULCHITSKY



**"SPRING IN THE
MIDDLE OF WINTER"**
MARCELLA JANUSH-KULCHITSKY





"CONTRAST"
DIANA BEDROSSIAN



“LIGHT BULB IN THE STYLE OF PIET MONDRIAN”

DIANA BEDROSSIAN



UNTITLED
NAJD TAHER



UNTITLED
NAJD TAHER





UNTITLED
NAJD TAHER



UNTITLED

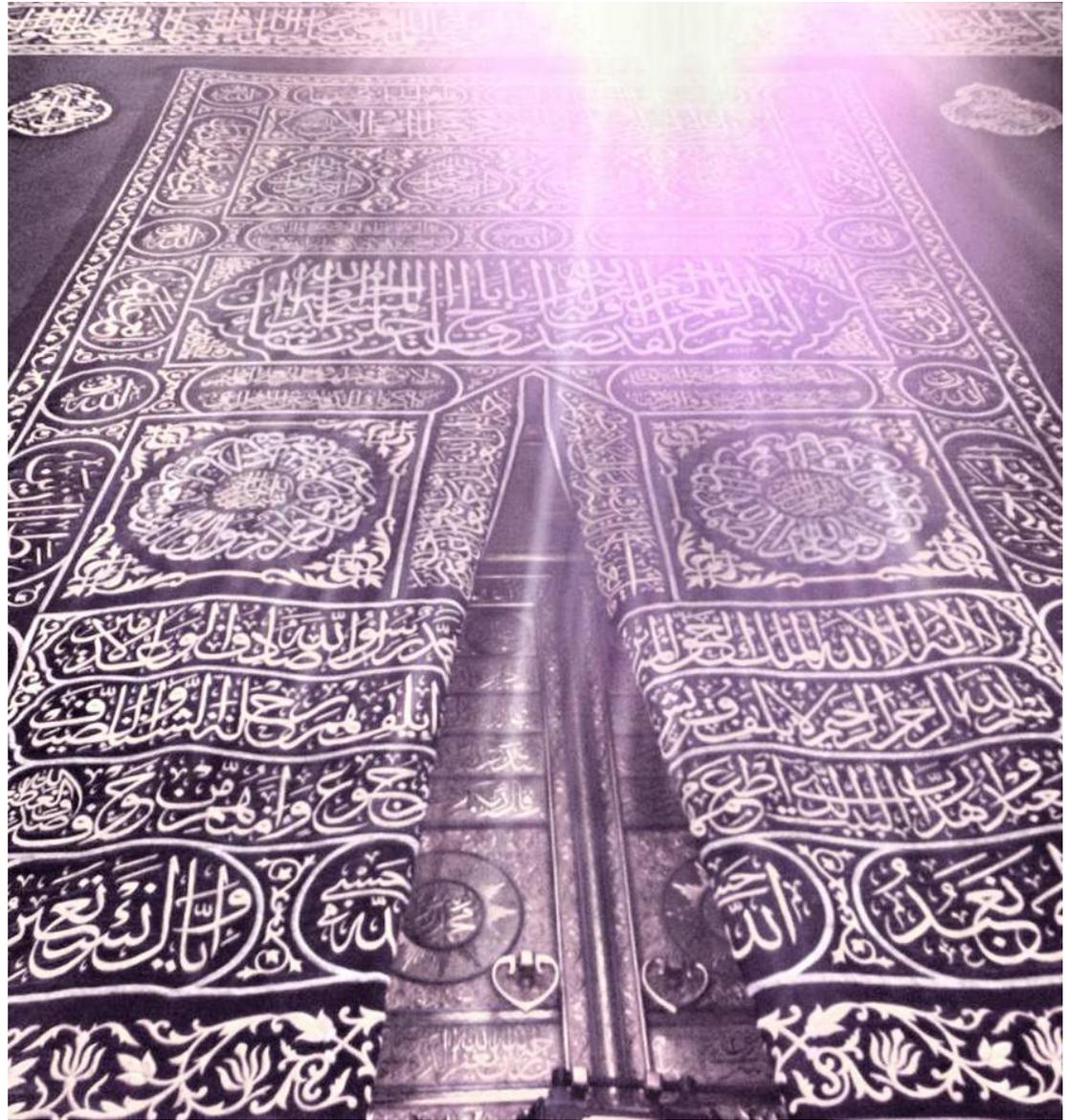
NAJD TAHER





**"ALL THAT
GLITTERS
IS GOLD"**
IQRA RIAZ





"PERFECTION"
IQRA RIAZ



"CHEETAHS, HARD LIFE", KENYA

SCOTT BERLIN



"LIONS, HARD LIFE", KENYA
SCOTT BERLIN



"TANNERIES, HARD LIFE", FEZ, MOROCCO

SCOTT BERLIN



"TANNERIES, HARD LIFE", FEZ, MOROCCO
SCOTT BERLIN



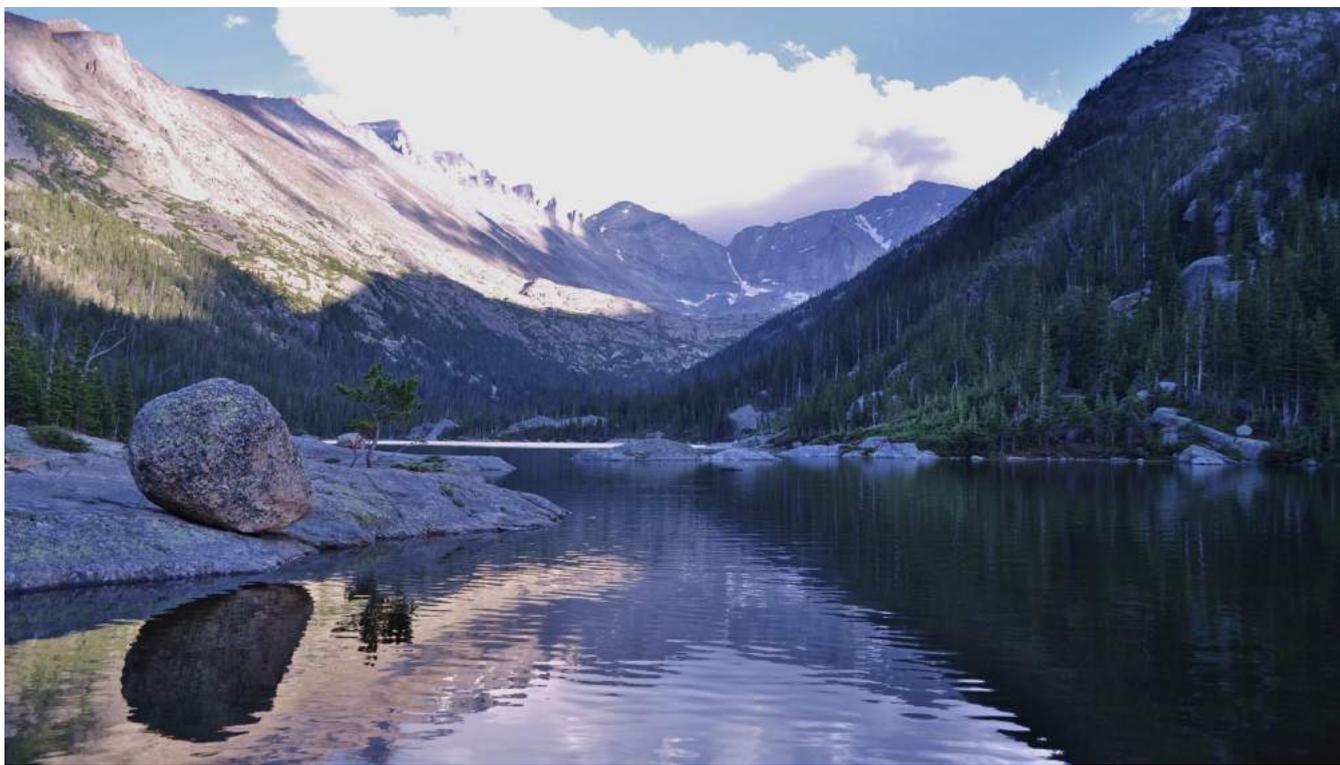


“ANOTHER WORLD”
SRI LANKA
LISA LEE WAITE

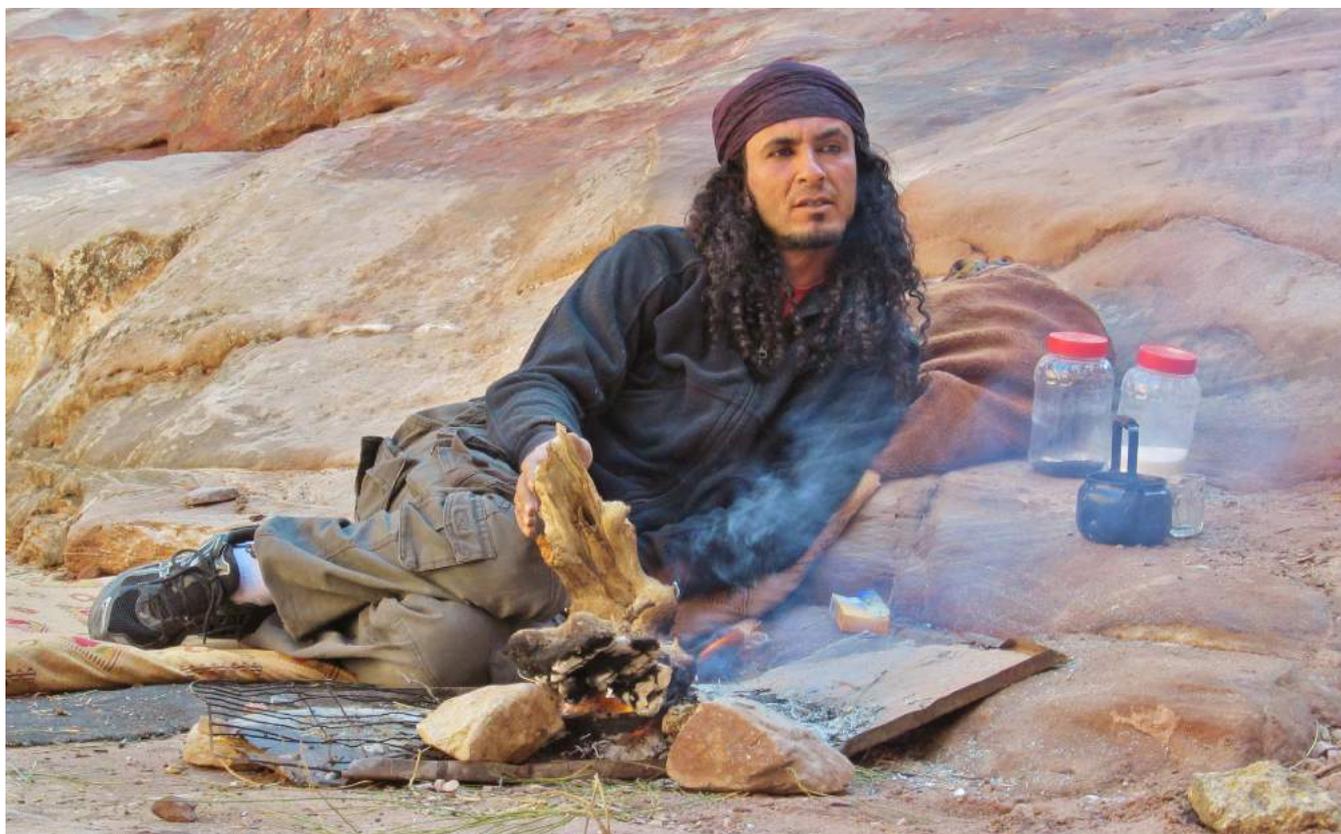


"BREATHE", MILLS LAKE, ROCKY MOUNTAINS, CO

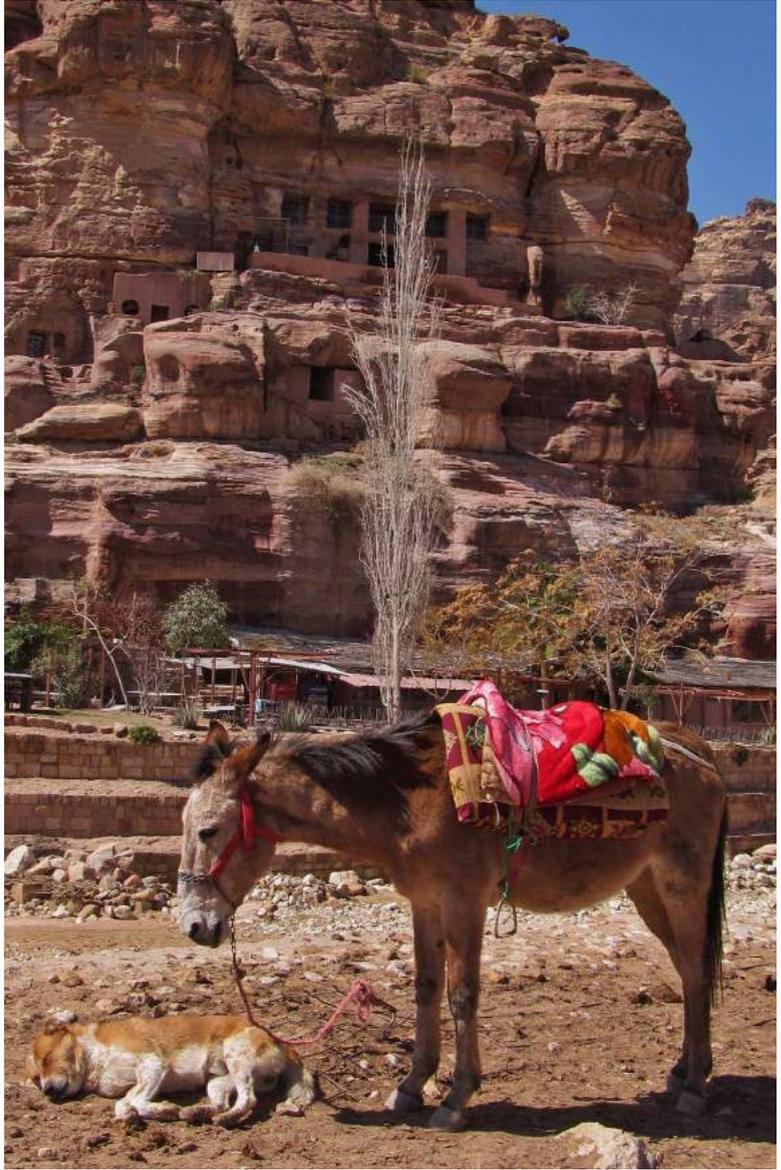
LISA LEE WAITE



"PETRA"
LISA LEE WAITE



"PETRA"
LISA LEE WAITE



"PETRA"
LISA LEE WAITE



"REST", ROCKY MOUNTAINS, CO

LISA LEE WAITE

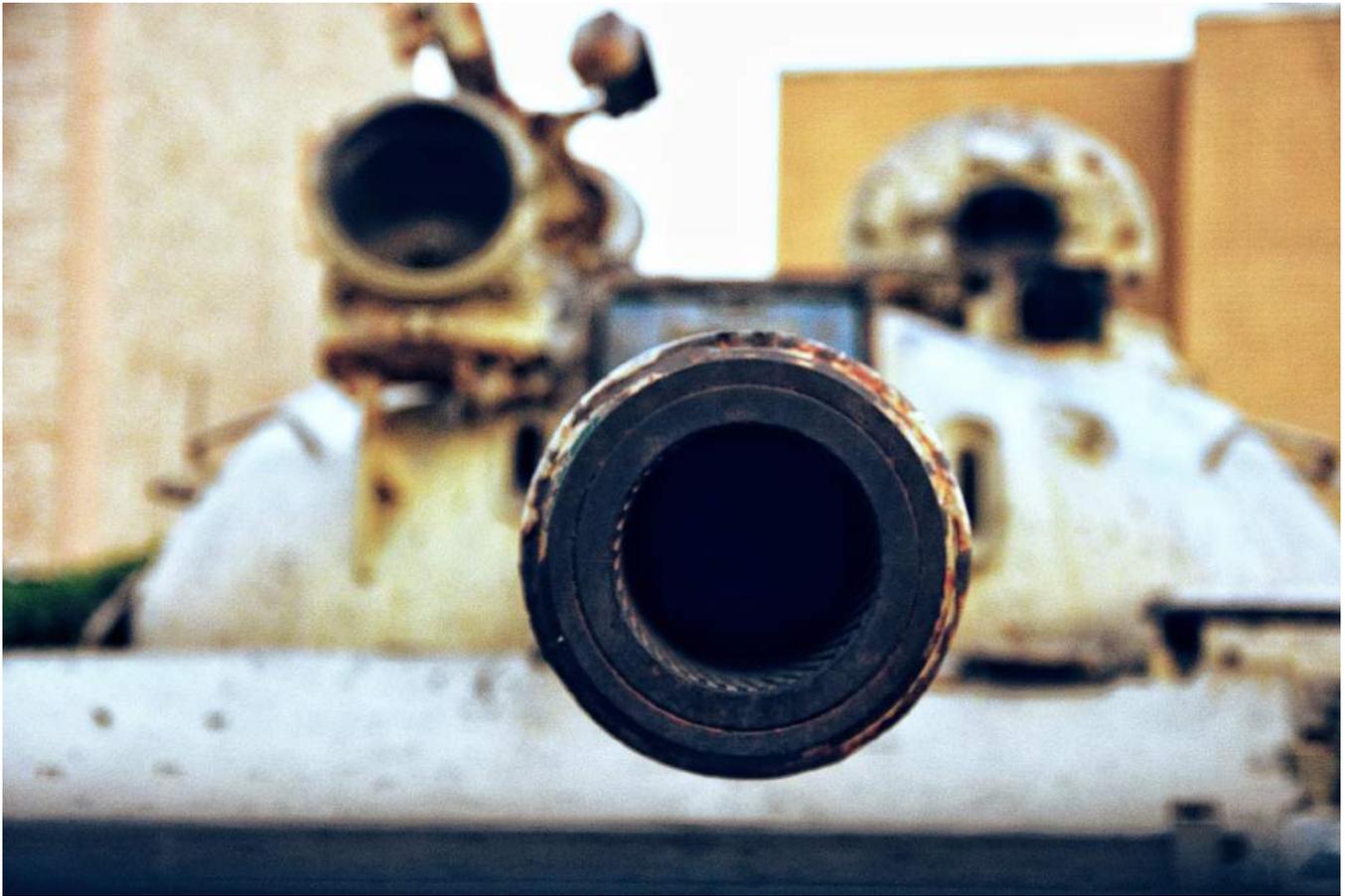


"OLD IS GOLD"

ZAHRAA ASADALLAH



"OLD TANK"
ZAHRAA ASADALLAH



"PEARLS"
ZAHRAA ASADALLAH



"ARABIAN SPLENDORS", DOHA, QATAR
WILLIAM ANDERSEN





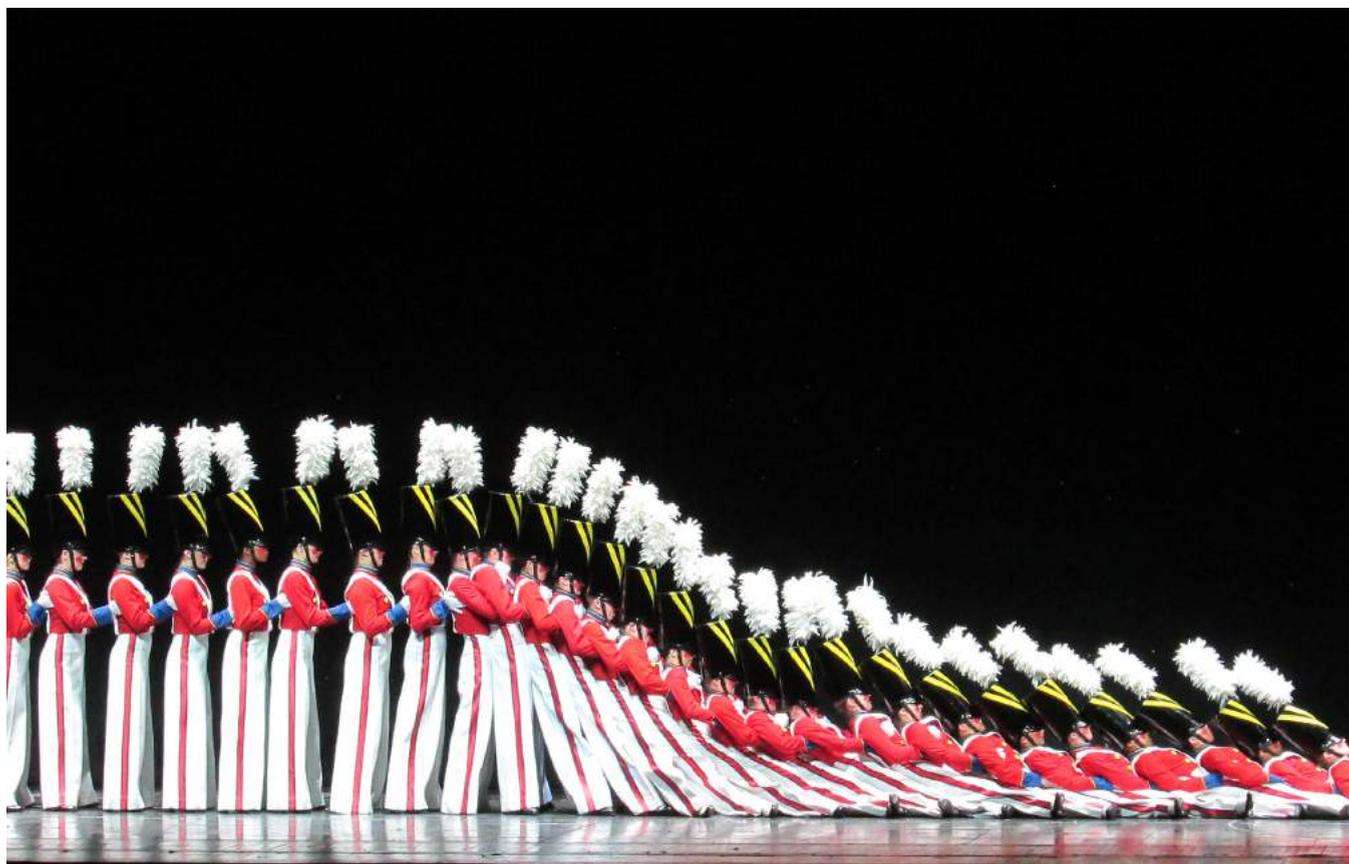
**"KATARA CULTURAL
VILLAGE", DOHA, QATAR**



"CIRCLE OF LIFE", UBUD, BALI
WILLIAM ANDERSEN



"TOY SOLDIER ROCKETTES", NYC
ANTONIA STAMOS



"THE DARKENED ROOM"

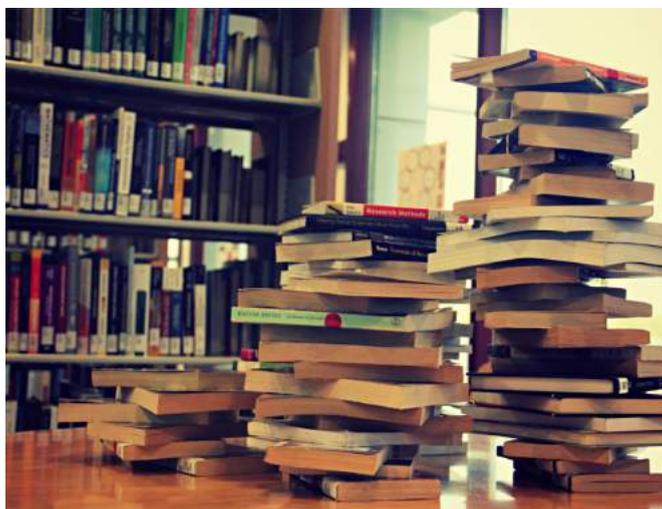
MUBARAK AL-MUTAIRI





*A Decade of
Accomplishments*





UNTITLED
SARA BABAZADEH



**"EYE OF
THE STORM"**
ROLAND LOPES

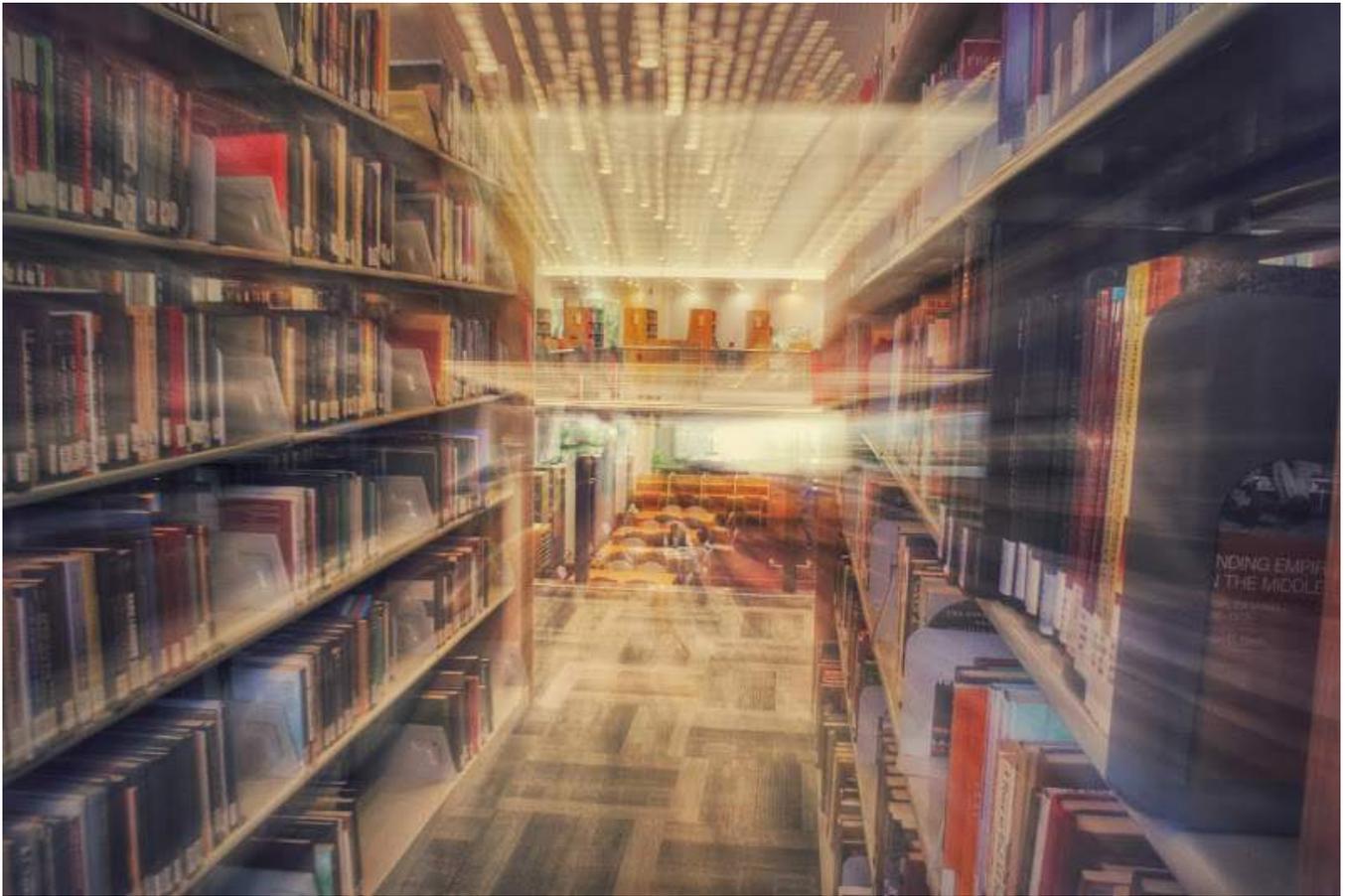




**"TOMORROW IS
A SUNNY DAY"**
ROLAND LOPES



UNTITLED
GHADA AL-SAYED



UNTITLED
HUDA AL-KOTOB



"THE INFINITE POWER BETWEEN THE BOOKSHELVES"

GHADA AL-SAYED



"WHERE THE WORLD BEGINS"

KHALED MOHAMED



UNTITLED
FARAH AHMED



Arabic Poetry & Prose



تحت المطر

FATIMA NAYEF



وللمطر أيضاً أسرارٌ وخبايا..
أعتدنا أن نربطه باللقاء والمحبة والصدقه..
ولكن نسينا أن المطر أصدق معبر للعطاء ..
حين يعطينا المطر قطراته العذبة بلا مقابل .. بلا إنتظار لأن نرد له الجميل..
يكون هذا معنى العطاء الحقيقي..
لا معنى حقيقي للعطاء إذا ما ارتجى من وراءه رد ..
كأن تعطي شخصاً ما سرّك ,, في إنتظار أن يعطيك هو الآخر سره أيضاً..
وكأن تقف معه في محنة منتظراً أن يقف معك في محنة أصعب..
أهذا العطاء؟
أم نحن أفسدنا معنى العطاء ليصبح شيئاً بلا قيمه..
هل أفقدنا العطاء قيمته الحقيقيه ليصبح عطاءً مزيفاً بارداً لا لون له ولا طعم ,,
في المطر دروس العطاء الحقيقيه..
فالمطر معنى ان تكون معطاءً بكل ما فيك..
تعطي العذوبة والنقاء والصفاء ..
تعطي الماء قطرةً قطره..
تعطي الحب قطرةً قطره..
تحت المطر..
أنبتت كل شجرة أثمارها..
تحت المطر..
يزول من قلبنا الكره والضغينه..
فالمطر كما يقولون .. يغسل الاحقاد..
وربما .. ينسينا الخلفات..
فنعود لنجتمع من جديد..
تحت المطر..

حكاية قلب

HAWRAA AL-AWADH



أنا قلبٌ مدفونٌ في جوفِ جسدٍ ما
أنبضُ لأسكُبَ فيه الحياةَ
تحتويني عُتمة.. لكن العَيْنَ تَمُدُّني ببعضِ من النورِ
تتقربُ مني الدِّماءُ كأطفالٍ تهوى اللهُوَّ و اللُّعبِ
أضحها فتطيرُ فرحاً.. تَعومُ في أرجاءِ الجسدِ
لثُلقي تَحِيَّةً على كُلِّ الأَعْضاءِ، كلِّ ”الأصدقاءِ“
أما عدوي.. أيِّ العقلِ.. فإنَّ مُعارضته من تَخْصُصي
فأنا و هو في خِلافٍ مستمر.. يكادُ يكون دائم
سعيدٌ أنا وَسَطَ دُنْياي الصَّغيرةِ
إلى أن أتى ذلك اليوم!
يومَ رُخصِ فيِّ و أهديتُ لغريب..
لم تتسنَى لي فُرْصَةً أن أودع رِفاقي!
فاذا بي بينَ يدينِ باردتين، خاليتين من الدِّفاء..
خاليتين من الحَنانِ!
اشتقتُ للحياةِ في دُنْياي
اشتقتُ مُداعبةِ العقلِ أيضاً!
باتت أسئلةٌ تنهمر.. لا أظنُّ أنه خُلِقَ لها جَواب
لِمَ أُرْخِصُ فيِّ هكذا؟ و كَيْفَ لذلك الجَسَدِ أن يحيا بدون نَبْضاتي؟
لِمَ أنا هُديتُ؟ و لِمَ رُمِّيَ بيِّ هكذا من الطرفين!
و هل كُتِبَ لِكُلِّ قلبٍ أن يُقتلَعَ من مَوطِنه ليغدو غريباً مُشرداً أهدي للهلاك؟!
أسئلةٌ لم يُعْتَر لها على جواب ..
أسئلةٌ باتت تعبيراً عن الإعجاز الإلهي

تلاحم اءه حين

HAWRAA AL-AWADH



تُكَلِّمُنِي
 و بين الحَرْفِ و الحَرْفِ
 أرمقُ نَبْرَةَ عِتَابِ
 تَخَاصِمُنِي
 و بين الثَّانِيَةِ و الثَّانِيَةِ
 لوعَةُ إِغْتِرَابِ
 تَتَّجَاهِلُنِي
 و بين الخَطْوَةِ و الخَطْوَةِ
 شَغْفٌ لِلِإِقْتِرَابِ
 متى سَتُدْرِكُ يا نَصْفِي
 أن أرواحنا تُصَلِّي الرُّجُوعِ في ذاتِ المِحْرَابِ
 و أنه ليس لروحينا غيرَ بعضهما مآبِ

جنة العشاق

HAWRAA AL-AWADH



”حينما تُلامِسُ يَدَايِ..“
أشعرُ و كأن النور يتخلَّلُ ما بين أصابعي..
و كأن يداي إلتَحَمتا مع شُعلةِ شمعه..
فَيَفُورُ دمي على نار الحب الهادئه..
و يتغلغلُ الدفء إلى أعماقي..
”حينما تُكَلِّمُنِي..“
تداعبُ حُرُوفك دقاتِ قلبي..
تتناغم كلماتك و نبضاتي..
و يكون الحبُّ هو ”الممايسترو“ الأمثل
لمقطوعة عشقنا..
”حينما تُنَاطِرُنِي..“
تتطايرُ فراشاتٌ ما بداخلي..
يُرتَسِمُ الخجلُ على ملامح وجهي..
و أغدو لوحةً لُؤنتُ بألوان الربيع..
”حينما أحببتني..“
انبثقت في الروح من جديد..
بُعثتُ الى سابع سماء..
و ندّه لي صوتُ ذات نبرة ملائكية:
”أهلا بك في جنة العُشاق“

إبريق و كوب شاي

HAWRAA AL-AWADH



إبريق و كوب شاي..
 ليسا الا حاملان للأسرار..
 جالسا ملايين البشر منذ الأزل..
 نصتا إلى آلاف الأحاديث..
 و ذوبت فيهما -بدل السكر- مكعبات مشاعر..
 خبئها أصحابها مع كل رشفه..
 هما وحدهما من أبصرا ذلك الكم الهائل من الكلمات
 في لحظات الصمت!
 و ذلك الكم الهائل من الحزن المتكدس في الإبتسامات!
 إبريق و كوب شاي..
 من خصالهما-على عكس البشر- الوفاء..
 هما الويحدان اللذان أتقنا فن الإستماع..
 و صدقا حين وعدا بعدم البوح!
 و لعل البشر كانوا على علم تام بإخلاصهما..
 لذا اختارهما الإنجليز ليكونا شُرفاء على حفلاتهم..
 و عمَدوا العرب على الإستضافة بهما..
 و الأتراك على الا يكتمل اليوم الا بوجودهما..
 إبريق و كوب شاي..
 دُلا بتزويدهما بشتى النقوش و الرسومات..
 و بإعتبارهما فرداً من العائلة..
 و جزء لا يتجزء من التراث العالمي

حياة بلا جدران

HAWRAA AL-AWADH



حبيسةً منزل
حبيسةً جدران
تليها جدرانٌ أخرى من جلد!
لا تصدر الحنجرة أي أصوات حينما يكون الفم هو أيضا من جدار..
و لا ترى العين أية صور حينما تغمض الجفون و لا تعود لتفتح..
جسدٌ بات متصلب.. كصلابة السجن الذي يسكن فيه..
مرضٌ بات يُعدي كل الأطراف..
ينشر الموت بغمضة عين..
و يبقى مصدر الحياة واحداً..
قلباً بات يقاوم.. و يقاوم.. و يقاوم..
إلى أن تصلب هو الآخر..
و بات أنين النبضات يشع بالمكان..
عفيّج كل الجدران..
فُتات موتٍ إنتشر في الأثير..
لعله يُزرع في الأرض ليولد الحياة من جديد..
حياة.. بلا جدران..

اقص على الجمر

HAWRAA AL-AWADH



تطرق الموسيقى باب إحساسي الموصل الإقفال
 تتخلل إليه عبر الفوهات التي حفرها الزمن
 لم يكن لتلك الأقفال أي قيمة
 أجبرتني الموسيقى على الرقص على الجمر
 و عبر ذاكرتي سرت..
 استهويت تلك الرقصة في باطن العتمه
 خطوات بطيئه.. كلحضة التأمل الأولى
 حذرة.. كخطة هجوم
 و مؤلمة.. كالفراق!
 تكمل الموسيقى طريقها..
 تعزف على أوتاري.. تعرقل نبضي.. تتخلل عقلي
 هكذا هي دائما تجتاحني
 و لكنني أجد لذه في تلك الرقصه
 ما بين نبضه و نبضه
 ما بين لوعة و غصه
 و مع توقف النغمات.. أجد خطواتي تحط على أرض الواقع..
 متوقفة عن الرقص و مكتفيه بما خلفه من ألم....

هجر النبضات

HAWRAA AL-AWADH



ماذا لو خَرَجْتَ نَبْضَاتُكَ مِنْكَ
و باتت تتجول على هيئة ألحان وَسَطِ السَّمَاءِ
و صِرْتَ أَنْتَ جَسَدٌ خَالِي النِّبْضَاتِ
ميت.. و لکن بِشَكْلِ آخِرِ
فالموتى تَوَقَّفَ قَلْبُهُمْ عَنِ النِّبْضِ
و أما أَنْتِ..فقد هَجَرْتِ نَبْضَاتِكَ!

دقائق معلقة

HAWRAA AL-AWADH



دقائق ثقيلة تمر
 بطيئة قد تكون مُعلقة
 و كأنها تخشى المضي .. تخشى أن تُصبح ساعات
 تخاف أن تمضي فترى العمر قد فات
 دقائق ثقيلة بالكاد تمضي
 و كأنها مُنهمكة بالتفكير
 رُبما بالهروب من عقارب الساعة يصعب لي التفسير!
 دقائق عجزت أن أعرف ما حَظُّها
 فحينما كنت أنت معي كانت كقطارٍ سريعٍ تسير!
 مابالها الآن كمن أخذ حُقنة تخدير؟
 و أنا مالي أعدها.. مالي أرقبها و أطيلُ التفكير
 و مالي أتأملها كأنها حبل نجاتي الوحيد!
 و مالها تربكني.. تتعبني.. و لا تحقق لي ما أريد
 دقائق عجزت أن أفهمها.. تهوى مُعاكسة الريح
 نعم.. هي تشبهك بكل تفاصيلها
 أيها الرجل العنيد..

يا قدر

LAILA ABDAL



أعانيتَ طعمَ العلقمِ مثلي..
أبكيتَ مرارةَ عقدينِ ..
يا قدر..؟
أسأمتَ الصبرَ مثلي..
أكنتَ رفيقاً للسهر..
يا قدر..؟
أشعلتَ قنديلاً نحاسياً..
أحرقتَ فتيلَ القهر..
أجبنني يا قدر..؟
أبكيتَ من جبروتِ الشوق..
أفرحتَ من حلمِ المفرد..
لما أنتَ صامتٌ يا قدر..؟
أكتبتَ في نفسك رثاءً..
أماتَ ضميرَكَ يا قدر..؟
كن عطوفاً ولو مرةً ..
يا قدر ..!!

سفيرة اللغة العربية

LAILA ABDAL



يا مجنون اللغة البليغة؛
قد جُنَّ عقلي ببلاغة حرفك السامي،
وهمسك الفاتن قد أجنَّ جنوني بك أكثر..!
يا فارس اللغة الساحرة؛
اطلُب من رب اللغة أن يلهمني وصفك الملائكي!
فأنا عبدٌ ضعيف النظر،
وجاهلٌ بوصف جمال رسمك الذي يشفي كيف اللغة..!!
يا رسول اللغة؛
دُمّت أبداً منبعاً معطاءً لعطش هذه اللغة!

أنين
LAILA ABDAL



أمسيْتُ عليَّة الجوى ..
أقتلُ نفسي بيأسي،
أفرُّ مني إليك..
يا منفاي،
يا سيدي،
خذ بيدي ..
أنقذني ..
فأنا بجنون المعلقات السبع
أشتاقُ إليك !..

الإبداع الإنساني سنة الفن

LAILA ABDAL



أبداع الخالق عز وجل في خلق الإنسان وكرّمه بكل الوسائل التي تساعده كي ينجو ويقف في وجه كل معضلات الحياة التي تصادفه. فهناك من حُسِسَ في نظره لكنه أبداع في رسم وتشكيل جمال الكون المعنوي والمادي. وآخر أبكّم ولكنه كاتب ونابغة مشهور. وتلك عازفة تبتّ روح الإبداع الفني في آلة ساكنة ولكن روحها مهددة بالتلاشي من قبل خلايا خبيثة تسبح في دمها. وأخرى تمثّل دور عاشقة قد برزت في عصر النهضة ولكن على مسرح حديث البزوغ. هؤلاء يمارسون الفن؛ بل يخلدون غايات إنسانية كثيرة هدفها سامي حدّ سمو مستوى الإبداع الفني في نفوسهم. فالفن بكل أشكاله وفروعه - أداة تعبيرية- تعكس تجارب إنسانية عاشوها وعاشوها هؤلاء الفنانيين. وقد تكون مزاولة الفن علاجاً لمبتنيها ولمن يتأثر بأي نوع من تلك الفنون، فهي تخلق حالة من السلام الداخلي في نفس الإنسان. علماً بأن غرّة التعبير عن الفن هي -الوعيّ - الإنساني الشامل بكل جهاته وأبعاده المعروفة. حيث أن كبدّه هي -الإحساس- الإنساني لما يوجّه ذلك الفن من مشاعر في نفس الفنان والذي أيضاً سينقله الفنان للمتلقي ويثير إعجابه ويؤجج نواته الشعورية. وخاتمة تكمن في -الموهبة- الإنسانية ذات النظرة الثاقبة المتبلورة في أي قالب فني؛ لعرض وتحليل وعلاج أي قضية إنسانية تثير المتلقي عقلاً ووجداناً.

حلم إقتصادي

YOUSSEF NAYEF



فليشهد الأشهد

لم أحلم كثيراً أو قليلاً
كان حلمًا إقتصاديًا جميلًا

في الحلم وحدي أو وحيدًا، كان ذلك إقتصاديًا
وكنْتُ بلا ملابس، كان ذلك إقتصاديًا كذلك
خالي الأفكار والإحساس،
ذلك إقتصاديًا بما فيه الكفاية

لم تُحدِّثني العاصفُ الصغيرُ
بل ولم يحدثْ معي شيءٌ خلالَ الحلمِ
إلا أنني - طفلًا - رأيتُ ملامحي
ورفعتُ رأسي للسماءِ
وحدي على سطحِ المحطَّةِ واقفًا
أمتصُّ ظلي والضيءَ

أمَررتَ يا حلمي كمُعجزةٍ تراءتْ لي
ولم أع منك إلا صورةً أو صورتين؟

أكنتَ تكفيني؟

نعم
تكفي.



١
 رجلٌ غنيٌّ - شاعرٌ - ورقٌ على العشبِ
 الحديقهُ ذاتها، والليلُ يسلبه قواهُ
 أتتْ وقهوتها ستفلتُ من يديها
 منذُ أسبوعينِ أخبرها عن الحبِّ القديمِ
 وحزنيه لفراقه عن حبه الماضي، تفهمت الفتاةُ كلامه
 والآن صارَ الودُّ بينهما كأبي صديقه وصديقها
 الريحُ تهدأُ ثم ترجع كلَّ حينِ
 كلما عادتْ وداعبت الضفيرة هزه ذاك الجمالُ
 ولكن الأقدارُ شاءت أن تكونَ صديقه
 هو معجبٌ بجمالِ عينيها إذا ضحكت على وقعِ الكمنجة
 مولعٌ - إن صحَّ هذا القولُ - لكن لا يقولُ، ولا يخطُّ الشعرَ عنها
 وهي تنظرُ نحوَ طيرِ نائمٍ فوق الشجيرة، فجاءه
 يأتيه إحساسٌ غريبٌ، [ربما الإلهامُ] قال لنفسه، لكنه لم يمسكِ القلمَ
 الذي لم يستطع إمساكه ليخطُّ شعراً فجرَ هذا اليومِ
 مضطرباً، أزاح الهمَّ عنه برشفة السيجارة الأولى بدون شعورها

٢
 جلساً طويلاً تحت أغصانِ الشجيرة
 والظلالُ تصدُّ نورَ الشمسِ عنها
 في الحديقةِ طفلتانِ تلاعبانِ أخاهما
 قطُّ صغيرٌ ناعسٌ العينينِ ينظرُ نحوَ عصفورٍ
 وعمالٍ النظافةِ يكتسونَ ويأكلونَ الخبزَ
 قالت: [ليت هذا اليومَ لا يُبلي شعوري]

قال مبتسماً لها: [لن تكبري أبداً]
فقالَتْ: [لست تعرفني كثيراً]
قال: [أعرف ما تحبين]
استكأنت
بعد صمت بارد قالت له:
[إن كنت حقاً شاعراً، لِمَ لَمْ تُفكّر بي إذا؟]
قال الفتى:
[أنا شاعرٌ، لكنّ عندي مبدأ، هدفٌ نبيلٌ
لست ممّن يكتبون لي يُشار إليهمُ
فالشعرُ في رأيي البسيطُ رسالةٌ
لا بُدّ من إرسالها بأمانة]
سألت: [ولكنّ ما يَصُرُّكَ إن فعلت؟]
فلم يُجبها، ظلَّ ينظرُ نحوَ عمّالِ النظافةِ
وهي تنظرُ نحوهَ محتارةً

٣

لم ينتبه أبداً إلى إحساسها
بعد انقضاء الشهر، بل بعد الربيع، تبدّلت أحوالها
لم يُلقي بالآرغم ذلك، رغم إحساس ألم بها ليالٍ
هكذا تركته دون مقدمات، بل تخلّت عنه
بعد دموعها، بعد السهر

طفل تخربشه السنين

YOUSSEF NAYEF



١
للصَّرخة الأولى انفعالاً وانفعالاً.
أولاً تجتاحُ ذهنك دهشةً سحريةً
بعْدَ اندهاشك، فرحةً،
فرحٌ فجائيٌّ رقيقٌ، كالهدوءِ بُعيدِ عاصفةٍ.

يزمجرُ طفلك الباي.
يميلُ السَّروُّ أبطأً.

غرفةٌ بيضاءٌ يملؤها صراخٌ لا إراديٌّ.
حينئذٍ تحت هذا السقفِ، مختلفٌ حياديٌّ بسيطٌ.
كلُّ عرقٍ فيك يدعو للتفاؤلِ.

٢
يمتازُ جسمُك بالرشاقةِ -أيُّها المنسيُّ بينَ ذويك-.

تمضي في الحياةِ كمنحلةٍ جبليَّةٍ، والكلُّ أبطأً منك.
رزقكُ لم يعدْ سهلاً كباقي الأمنياتِ،
تعبَّتْ جدًّا من ملاحقةِ الحقيقةِ بالخيالِ.

وأنتَ تركضُ في الحديقةِ تعرفُ الأشياءَ صمتك من بعيدٍ،
إذ تراقبكُ الإمامةُ كلَّ يومٍ،

كوبُ جارِك،
حائطُ،
دَلُو صغِيرُ،
دميةٌ مفقوعةُ العينينِ،
وامرأةٌ كذلك لا تُقابِلُها سوى عند الحديقةِ.
تعرفُ ما تقولُ إذا صَمَّتْ وتاهتِ الكلماتُ،
لكن لا تقولُ، بصوتِها المبحوحِ، إلا ما يسُرُّكَ دائماً.
تُعطي اليمامةَ خبزَها، فتطيرُ نحوَ الوكرِ مُسرعةً.

تمرُّ عليك،
ثمَّ تقولُ للشمسِ الوحيدةِ - وَهِيَ تنظرُ نحوها -
[قد جاءَ يومي قبلَ يومِكِ.. بعدَ موعدِهِ.]

وغابتُ في الزحامِ كأنها لم تأتِ إطلاقاً إلى هذا المكانِ.
نظرتُ خلفَكَ كي تراها مرةً أخرى.
رأيتُ يامتينِ تحلِّقانِ معاً
وتتجهانِ نحوَ شُجيرةٍ خلفَ المباني والظلالِ.

٣

ها أنتِ، والطفلُ الصغِيرُ أمامَ زوجتِكَ الجميلةِ
قد تعلَّم كيف يمشي. (أنتِ مرهونٌ..). لقد فاتتكَ أوَّلُ خطوةِ.
لكن كَأَنَّكَ قد نسيتِ؟
وربَّما قد مرَّ عبرَ خيالكِ الوجهُ الذي يزدادُ حسناً كلَّ يومٍ.

-وجهُ ريتا-

ما لجسِمِكَ يقشعِرُّ؟
نعم لقد أحببتِ ريتا في الحديقةِ.

لم تجد سببا سوى سهم المحبّة
وائتلاف الروح بالروح الذي تحتاجه أيضا كطفلك.

فجأة يمتص قلبك صوتها: [أنظر أمامك وانتبه!]

(فتلوم نفسك، ترقص الرغبات فيك، تلوم نفسك.)
هذه دوامة الماضي تعود إليك ثانية،
ظننت بأنها رحلت ولكن النوافذ أرجعتها
حيث كانت في خيالك، في فؤادك في حواسك كلها،
معها حنين غامض أيضا. حنين ساحر.. ريتا..

٤

في كل أغنية أراك وفي عناق أحبتي
تترافقين .. وبعد حين تجلسين على رصيف هادي.
في عالمي هذا الكثير من المصائب، أنت منها يا أميرة منطقي
ولسان حالي. أنت بركان وزلازل وعاصفة تمزقني وتمسح إسمي
المدفون في لغتي.. وأنت رقود قلب عند قارعة الطريق. هناك أرقد
كل حين، فلتنامي جانبي. فالكل يعرف أننا حيران ملتهبان.
هذي أرضنا، هذا الشعاع شعاعنا والضوء يعكسنا.
لنقفز من مرايا العالم الدامي معًا. لنكن يدان تصفقان
لكل مطرقة تدق حديد صوت صادق. لنكن إذا.. لنكن إذا.

٥

وبدأت يومك باتصال هاتفي - لست تعرف أين أنت - تجيبها:
[ريتا..] وتصمت.. ريثما يزداد خدك احمرارًا. أنت في الصالون،
تخطو مسرعًا بين الأثاث. هناك عصفوران خلف زجاج نافذة تطل
على الحديقة. لا تقول لها بأنك مولع، لكن صمتك فاضح. تهتز،
ترتعش. الأمور جميعها قد أصبحت نسيبة، حتى أثاث البيت

أو صوت العصافير الصغيرة. فجأةً صوتٌ جميلٌ واثقٌ من نفسه
كسَرَ الحواجزَ كُلِّها، لكنَّ ذَهَنَكَ غَيَّبَتْهُ الأُمْنِيَّاتُ. تقولُ: [قُلْ].
فَتُفِيقُ ثم تُجيبها: [هَلَّا ذَهَبْتَ إِلَى الحَدِيقَةِ قَبْلَ عَصْرِ اليَوْمِ؟]
تَسْمَعُ صَوْتَ كَوْبٍ عِنْدَهَا.

[ريتا؟]

[.. سَأَتِي.]

[أَحْضِرِي مَعَكَ الرُّوَايَةَ.]

[أَيُّ وَاحِدَةٍ؟ لِمَاذَا؟]

لا تجيبُ على سؤَالِهَا وتُنهي الإِتِّصَالَ.

٦

[ما بِالْهَا؟ لَمْ لا تَحَدِّقِي بي؟]

وتنسى أَنَّ جِسْمَكَ ليسَ مرثِيًّا لها.

المقعدُ الخشبيُّ كالإسْفنجِ، يمتصُّ الظَّلَالَ.
تري العصافيرَ الصغيرةَ كُلِّها تزدادُ حَجْمًا
ريثما تهوي النُّجُومُ ويستفيقُ البرقُ.

أنتَ هنا، ولكنَّ الحَدِيقَةَ أَصْبَحَتْ جزءًا
صغيرًا من خيالِ حَبِيبَتِكَ.

[لا تَرْتَبِكِ.]

وتبسَّمتَ لَكَ ثمَّ قالتُ: [مدِّ لي يَدَكَ الجميلةَ.]

تصيحُ الدنيا سرايبًا بل فضاءً لا نهائيًا بلمستها.
تذوبُ كشمعةٍ وتقولُ: [لكنْ.] ثمَّ تغمضُ فترةً عينيكِ.

تشعُرُ بانقلابٍ بعدَ أوَّلِ قُبَلَةٍ.

∨

مطرٌ خفيفٌ. هاجسٌ في قلبك المقلوبِ.
ترفضُ أن تنامَ، وأنتَ مُستلقٍ. هناكَ سماءُ إلهامٍ.
هنا أرضُ الحقيقةِ. أنتَ تحتاجُ الحقيقةَ والخيالَ معاً
لتحييَ مثلَ كلِّ الناسِ. لكنْ ما الحقيقةُ؟ ما الخيالُ؟
تجولُ أسئلةً وأجوبةً. تقومُ. تبحثُ عنك، تبحثُ جيِّداً. لا.
حينها أمرٌ غريبٌ مثلَ صاعقةٍ يُصيبُك. قد فَقدتَ الآنَ شيئاً غالياً
من بعدهِ أشياءَ أكثرَ قيمةً ما عُدتَ تعرفُ ما اسمُها.

طفلاً يزمجرُ. (لا أريدكِ يا حياةً)

أأنتَ ترقُدُ في سريرِ غريبةٍ؟ ماذا جرى؟
يزدادُ شوقُك للقاءِ بحبِّك المجنونِ: ريتا.

∧

ريتا هناكَ، كتابها معها.
وتفتحهُ لتُكمِّلهُ، لتغرَّقَ فيه.

أنتَ هنا، تراها من بعيدٍ،
بل تُراقبها وراءَ شَجيرةٍ. وكأنَّها أيقونَةٌ.
وكانَّ قلبك صارَ طفلاً لا يريدُ سوى المحبَّةِ
عندما اكتشفَ المحبَّةَ.

أينَ زوجتكِ الجميلةُ يا عزيزي؟ أينَ طفلكِ؟

نائمَان

كما العصافيرُ الصغيرةُ. إنَّ هذا الفجرَ

يدعو للتفاؤل. أنتما يقظان، والأوراق تسرقها،
وتسرق قلبها. لم لا تحدّثها؟ لماذا؟

[أين كنت؟] تقول والشك المريب يكاد يهزمها.
وأنت تخطو نحوها لا ترقص الأشياء حولك
مثلما كانت، ولا يمتص ظلك مقعد. ريتا تراك،
ولست مختفياً عن الأنظار. هل ستلومها مثلاً؟
أتهرب؟ هل ستنساها؟

وتركض
مثل طفل يائس من كل شيء
تترك الرغبات والآمال،
تترك غصةً في حلقها



A Decade of
Accomplishments



حرفا حرفا

YOUSEF NAYEF



حرفاً حرفاً
يرسّمُ نزفاً
لكن لا يصرخُ أو يُشفى

يعبّرُ جسراً
يهدمُ جسراً
يبني حلمَ أبيه وقصراً

حرفاً حرفاً يخرجُ من هالته الأولى
عيناهُ المغمضتان تفتّحتا ببريق
يدخلُ مكتبةً ليجاهدَ أو ليحرّرَ ذاتاً
يقرأ حرفاً حرفاً كالمجنون
وكالمجنون يُواري دمعتَهُ الأولى

رُقُ، كتبُ، قلمُ، شايُّ،
كُلُّ الكونِ الآنَ بحوزتهِ
كم كانَ وحيداً
وكم اشتاقَ إلى شيءٍ يجذبُهُ
وكم احتاجَ إلى إنجازٍ يرفعُهُ
وتحدُّ يكسِرُهُ أحياناً

طفلاً هوَ طفلاً
لكنَّ شابَّ قليلاً

يرسم نرفاً
لكن ما كان قتيلا

قتل الحرف كثيرا
كي يحييه طويلا

حرفاً حرفا
يعزف عزفا
ينكر ساعات الإعدام

حرفاً حرفا
يضرب دفا
يوسع ساحات الإلهام