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Prayer

(Translated into Arabic by Khalus Al-Muttalibi)

Introduction

Carolyn Gregory

CHAMELEON

The chameleon was a wunderkind
who changed his trousers monthly.
Black striped spats for winter
and green to mimic arbor vitae.

When humans ladled dinner,
he jogged around the curtains
and snaked a red tongue at us
if denied his treat of worms.

Lithe, he took up little space
and loved to curl near elbows.
We watched him run
between the chairs and into pillows.

When his last camouflage was shed,
we genuinely mourned
the quick change artist on the rug
we could not find sans flashlight.

Carolyn Gregory

PURE OUT OF TENNESSEE (for Sierra Hull)

Surrounded by a loud chorus of crickets
in the grass,
the singer who sounds like Loretta Lynn
came on-stage in the dark.

Her backup trio looked like grizzly bears
beside her, shaggy and tired from the tour
though they plucked and strummed with zest.

Flood lit, she asked to not be picked up
to be knocked down fast,
her dignity unstained like a soft denim dress.

That quick mandolin opened up
our mid-aged hearts,
sincere, rhythmic lyrics pouring seamlessly
from her doll-sized mouth

and the flow of electric fiddle sizzled
as the guitar hummed and burned,
grass shining with the fallen notes.

All night in our lawn chairs,
we followed Sierra,
her face sometimes hidden
by a veil of chestnut hair,

our feet wagging,
keeping time to this fine Nashville queen.

RISING CHORDS

My mother never cared for Beethoven.
The heavy drums and struggle
too much for a quiet musician

majoring in counterpoint,
partial to Chopin in her spare time.

The rising chords honoring Napoleon,
all the coursing of dark and light
in every symphony,
too much for mother's melancholy,

his soloists singing mezzo in brocade
too German for her tastes.

Looking back, I guess the word revolution
never spoke to my mother
with any insistence
in the snowy winters long ago.

when I listen to the Ode to Joy now,
hearing the spectacular chorus fill a world.

FULLY OPEN

The four-walled day
with its steaming pot of coffee
suddenly changes.

Cherries spill pink petals
when you climb, waving your arms
for momentum.

Two hawks glide high
above the dry creek at mid-day,
vanishing in blue.

A friend's eyes smile
when you tell her
you hoped she would be here

and a group of blue grass players
fiddle and pick,
their melody tumbling down the street.

Sometimes, the day keeps getting
better and better.
Peach and yellow tulips fill the camera lens.

APRIL NINETEEN SEVENTY

It was all sex, drugs and rock and roll
when the Beatles' "Here Comes the Sun"
pumped through the radio,
offering tinny cheer for an hour
between snowstorms.

The world raged with fire-charred skies
and burning villages,
bloody walls scrawled with Helter Skelter
and body bags in the lobby,
runaway kids with no ticket home.

Two children, we married then,
snow rising above our heavy boots,
long hair draping my purple velvet dress

when villages vanished in the firestorm
and a demon given human form
massacred twelve people,
smearing blood across the walls
and we could not consider the future.

THE BEAR SUIT

Why would it be any better
to climb into your bear suit,
gnashing my teeth and grumbling...
at the lack of food offered?
Instead, I seduced you
wanting to learn how to wear
my own fur, learn to forage
for fruit and nuts in unusual places,
hoping your bear suit
would rub off on me,
make me hardy and unbeatable.
Your burly brows resemble Rushmore
like your square shoulders and height
but I have all of those, too,
and can fast for a day,
build a tent sheltered by pine.
Sure, you looked good in the fur
and ability to live in a cave.
You don't need to be male
to hunt, don't need a club
to hammer small animals.
If you zip quickly,
the bear suit flows around you,
helping you be invisible
among the rocks and crags,
softens your feet over trails.
No need to be a master
of this landscape,
only free to sleep and eat
with the other animals.
No need to name this yours.

Allison Grayhurst

Faltering

Like a swarm of vicious wasps
the daylight discovers my pulse.
All the children stare with
cold, whiteless eyes.
The wind carries the groans of the dying
and the rooftops are sinking into
their frames.
The taps drip and the clocks tick
and a crow has landed on my driveway.
He calls in time with the wind.
He wears my name under his wing.
The windows are undulating like a river's foaming skin.
I run home from the corner store
and have the wrong key to open the door.
I stand inside the porch and count the fairytales
of my people. There is nothing new to cry for,
but how is it decided who tries, who mends and who coasts?
And how my mind bends blue on the pitstops
along the road to illumination.

The Blueness Within

The blue glow
under my chin
frames my face with a final beginning
that will never come again.
I am happy for it.
The glow and it is the elemental ocean -
unkind, strong and oddly soothing.
I fall into it and it surrounds me
until I am wading through its thickness,
barely breathing, but glad to be home.
The blue glow
is my glow
is almost grey,
but not quite.

Shock

It comes like this
into the heart, planting
its spikes in the flow.
It wraps its tawny arms
around the chest and presses
with the strength of death.
The fear it gives is easy to bend to
like being caught on a raft nearing
a waterfall. It is as potent
as grief and hides its pulse like a sparrow hides
behind the branches of an evergreen.
In a prayer, in a scream, it can snap
a strong faith and separate flesh from bone.
It can call your name at any time
and change your life
like no pain has done before.

My Child

With a mother's lips I felt
the ceremony of the stars
soothe my tired throat.
I felt the sun's fire in my hand
when I bent in the direction of tomorrow.
But my child is like
a choir at my doorstep,
seducing my joy by her own.
My child is without enemies
or days, having no secrets from those
she loves. She can carve a jewel
from a crayon, and with her first embrace,
she sanctifies each morning.
With a mother's heart
I tell the fruitflies of my blessing.
I know that money and mortality
cannot be true, but only
the music in her grey eyes, and the movement
of her small hands at play.

King dead

like the guilt on breath
that shows itself as anger, with spite
and immaturity - shows itself as heartless
as one who refuses hard responsibility.
Hopes impaled, left like a twitching
insect not even recognizable as the once
beautiful creature it was.

Far away, I will run, but this world is made up
of so much pain and hardness. Where are the soft people,
souls willing to sacrifice their own blood for
a taste of true togetherness? Where are the warriors
eating out of paper bowls, not afraid of the messy
forward or the ego-erupting aftermath?
Dead: heroes with crossbows and days of answered
prayers: dead. Help is an old woman without a cane.
The light that holds me is losing its thunder.

Where is the light that holds me?

Scott Thomas Outlar

Covered over but Not Forgotten

Sometimes when you look at a person
all you can see looking back
is their childhood
and all the terror
their parents laced into their heart and mind.
Sometimes all you can see
is a bundle of habit energy
and an electric board of neuron synapses
that they've never even noticed about themselves.

You want to believe
that they are autonomous,
that they have free will,
that they are in control of the ship,
but all you can really see
are the eyes of a deer caught in headlights,
a being that has been stripped
of all its creative, intuitive, instinctual urges,
a beast that has had
all semblance of life
beaten out of its flesh
by a belt that lashed
against its body
again and again and again and again
during a period of time
that has been blocked out and covered over,
yet never truly forgotten.

Sometimes you want to shake the person
by their shoulders
and stand them in front of a mirror
so they have to face their inner demons,
and scream at them to remember who

they really are at the core,
at that place of purity and innocence
that every child is born with.
You want them to remember
all the horror
that they've buried so deep inside.
You want them to dig up the cemetery corpse
and bring out the bones from the closet,
because the only way they will ever heal
is by dancing with that skeleton upon the grave.

Angel of Mercy

The virgin blood
will save the world
by drowning us all in a river of fire.
Gushing forth,
the fountain of youth
delivers a sermon on naked innocence
to all the rotten fruit
that has fallen from the trees
in a wretched, wasted garden.
Unkempt, uncared for
during a thousand years of purgatory,
the vines have all withered,
the lush, spring like qualities of the Seraphim
have been raped and polluted, and
all the ancient, tribal, primitive masks
have been exposed as fakes.

The virgin blood
will save the world
by gagging our throats with ovaries of denial.
Sucking on the Savior,
the fabled Revelation of despair
roars across the blackened sky
on wings of death and desolation.
Vultures and other carrion scavengers
carry pestilence and disease
into the tattered womb,
laying apocalyptic seeds within the defiled egg.
Soon, chaos will commence in full
as the cycle of a dying age
gasps its final breath of toxic air.
It can be no other way.
She has come to save the world.

Donal Mahoney

Continuity

I'm just a dog barking,
I tell my wife who's upset
with my yacking on and on
at our weekly meeting
on a Saturday morning
stationed in our recliners
facing forward as if we were
in the same row on a plane
with the middle seat empty.

I tell her eventually
any dog will stop barking
if you give him a bowl of kibble
or let him in the house
or find his ball and play fetch.
Or do what my mother did
when I was an infant bawling
and woke my father who faced
work as a lineman the next day.

My mother would get out of bed,
grab her old bathrobe
and whisk me to the rocker.
Even to this day,
many decades removed,
it's the best solution:
Put a breast in my mouth
and silence will ensue.
Eventually I may even coo.

Surprise, Surprise

The mother's dead.
Thirty years later
you meet the daughter
and realize the daughter
is the mother again,
poking her finger
in your chest half an hour
after her plane lands.
The same laugh knocks
folks in the elevator
back a bit.

Every time the daughter
grabs your arm
to emphasize a point
the way the mother did,
you want a ticket
to the Maldives
or maybe Bulgaria.
Sofia in the summer
might be nice.

This time, however,
you stay put.
She found you
on the Internet.
You must admit
the freckles
across her nose
scream she's right:
You are her father.
Surprise, Surprise.
Her mother never said.

Dying at Midnight

Two big attendants
in white coats are here
to remove my remains.
My son called the mortuary
after Murphy said I was gone.
The doctor, a good neighbor,
came over at midnight, found
no pulse and made it official.
I could have saved him the trip.
I knew I was gone.

My wife's in the kitchen
crying with my daughter
in a festival of Kleenex.
I told her I was sick
but she didn't believe me.
She thought I was faking it
so I wouldn't have to go
to her mother's for dinner.
I don't like lamb but
her mother's from Greece.
Lamb shanks are always
piled on the table.
Stuffed grape leaves I like
and she'll make them for
Christmas provided I start
begging at Thanksgiving.
Every Easter, however,
it's another fat leg of lamb,
marbled with varicosities
and sauced with phlebitis.

Right now I'm wondering
who'll win the argument
between the two angels
facing off in the mirror
on top of the dresser.
The winner gets my soul
which is near the ceiling,
a flying saucer spinning
out of control.
I want the angel
in the white tunic
to take it in his backpack.
The other guy in gray
looks like Peter Lorre
except for the horns.

An Email on Sunday

Some emails
are more difficult
to receive
from a child
long out of college

the daughter who writes
her cancer is back
but the doctor says
with chemo and surgery
things should be fine

and all the while
the father wonders
why she didn't call
at midnight and let
the telephone scream

hysterically in the night
to deliver the news
a computer is too
cold a messenger
to deliver hot terror

on Sunday morning
while machine guns
of sleet drive
bullets too bright
into the ground

Fallout from the War on Women

I was warm and toasty,
curled up, napping
in amniotic fluid,
without a worry
when suddenly
this metal thing
came into my room

poked around
and pulled me out.
The doctor stabbed me,
smashed my head,
cut off my arms and legs,
threw my pieces
in a bucket
with the others.
It's been a busy day
at the clinic.

At the closing hour,
a nurse dumped
the bucket
in a freezer sack,
took it out in the alley
and threw it in a bin.
In the morning
a private truck

took the sack to
the garbage dump.
The driver tossed it
on the highest pile,
launching flies,
at least a thousand.

Sitting up here now
I can tell you
I don't need arms or legs.
I can hear
the angels singing.

Michael Ceraolo

Under the Sea

Of course,
there are rebels against any orthodoxy,
and
letting the species die was no exception
Life had gone back to the sea once before;
why couldn't it do so again?

But first
those rebels had to go underground,
literally and figuratively
and
they did so

Rapid adaptation
developed in the deep darkness:
sight went
(and
eventually the non-functional eyes as well);
hearing was enhanced,
as was touch,
and
taste and smell altered for the different inputs
The physical body,
including the brain,
evolved to reflect those changes,
and
the emotional component of the brain
also showed these changes,
along
with the alterations in the environment,
in the latest generation of cave paintings

And
as some of those caves went underwater,
the humans who lived in them
at first had to come up for air,
though
slowly over ages they moved to the water,
initially
developing a sort of furry scales
for temperature control,
then
growing a hybrid lung/gill respiratory system
And
eventually they became cold-blooded in colder waters
while remaining warm-blooded in warmer ones

And
the two divergent branches of the former humanity
co-existed peacefully in their separate spheres

Twilight Zone

twilight zone- n.

-an ill-defined area
between two distinct conditions,
etc.;

an indefinite boundary
or transitional condition
or area
usually containing some features
of both

[also an exceptional television show
of the second half of the last century
of the second millennium]

and
the planet Mercury was long thought
to be home to such a place,

a place
between the side fixed facing the sun
(temperatures as high 872 degrees F.)

and
the side fixed facing away from the sun
(temperatures thought to be as low as
-300 degrees F.),

a place
with temperatures hospitable enough
to be habitable by humans

Even the discovery early
in what the mid-twentieth-century
called The Space Age
(the year 1965 BCE
to be exact)

that the planet was not fixed
but did indeed rotate

(rotating
three times every two Mercury years,
said year equivalent to
just under eighty-eight Terran days)
did not rule out potential settlement;

it meant
that any settlement would have to move
in sync with the planet's rotation
so as to stay in the habitable zone

The discovery of Mercury's rotation
was a small setback in that
colonization would have to wait
until the technology was there,

but
the wait did nothing to discourage
those who imagined inhabiting the planet,
and
the earliest escapees from Earth and Moon
headed straight for the place

Obviously,
solar power was plentiful,
plentiful
far beyond the wildest dreams of the erstwhile Earthlings,

plentiful

far beyond the needs of the settlement,
and
such plentiful power was used wisely,
at least at first,
for the
terraforming necessary to grow food

And
there was the mining of the plentiful iron,
along
with other minerals

And
there was trade with the home planet,
through
the creation of the Inner Planet Partnership
(IPP),
which facilitated,
on favorable terms,
the shipping of metals and solar power to Earth
in exchange for water and other foodstuffs
that were unable to grow on Mercury

And so,
for a long while,
there was
peace and prosperity

But
even during the long peace
there were problems:
first,
of a religious nature,
as the proximity to the Sun
led to its being worshiped as a God
by some of the settlers,
and
the initially unintentional
and then intentional sacrifices
to the new god caused conflict;
and second,
that of societal organization,
which
resembled an inverted pyramid

And
eventually the weight of the privileged many
ground down the few at the pyramid's point,
leading to the society's collapse
sooner rather than later

The machines necessary for survival
broke down occasionally at first,
and
then broke down more often,
and
finally broke down for good
with no one able to repair them

There was the Mercury Civil War,
a couple of battles really,

mostly
involving the puncturing of the protective wear
to bring on asphyxiation
in those spots where the created atmosphere
wasn't enough to support life for long,
along with
the torture of some of the defeated
by tossing them,
unprotected,
out of the habitable zone,
there
to burn or freeze to death horribly

The Earth-based genetic treatments
weren't very effective on Mercury

[there had been enough time passed
to evolve into a new species
Homo Mercurius,
but
not quite enough time to adapt
the genetic treatments to the changes]

And thus,
the few winners in the Civil War
had to again escape an untenable planet,
though
where they went remains a mystery,
as nothing more was heard from them

-Michael Ceraolo
Thank you for your consideration.

Danielle Hope

From - Mrs Uomo's yearbook

April

[ey-pruhl]

Mrs Uomo's gardening diary instructs
that this is the time to
weed protect tie feed sow

Mrs Uomo starts
with feed
lips smeared with traces of apricot thumbprint cookie

she reads
April is a mere mispronunciation
of *aperire* or Aphrodite

April fool [ey-pruhl fool]

- 1 *noun* the victim of a trick on April Fools' Day
- 2 *noun* a jape played on that day

in the post from Mrs Harris
a miniature spaghetti tree
easy to tend as an Aspidistra

last year
a postcard from the island of Garamond

Apron [ey-pruhn]

1 *noun* garment protecting clothing on the front of the body
while cooking gardening feeding ...

4 *noun* furniture's skirt

5 *noun* the golf courses outer boarder full of lost shots

20 *verb* to surround in the manner of an apron

little word many meanings

Mrs Uomo's row of spaghetti trees apron her unweeded lawn
in this all souls month of spring

Ancient

This is the forest I have not left you -
not the sessile oak, nor hombeam.
No season of thimbleweed
lesser celandine, purple orchid.
No bluebells in the old sawpit
nor garlic scented ramson
not cool on a hot day
no woodpecker's drum.

No home for the orange tip butterfly
flexing its wings on the path.
No stag beetles, nor ants; no enthusiasts
with white knees and binoculars
searching for hawfinch or redstart
or with torches and egg cress sandwiches
hoping for the tawny owl's chant.

No lovers fumbling behind foxgloves.
No times for toadstools and mushrooming
nor pimperlentil spent, no beech nuts crack
under feet, no haws in red and green
nor muntjac barely seen
no winter buzzard hovering

over holly
no badger asleep
nor dogs chasing falling snow.
No mucky walks.

No startled mistle thrush,
calling from the crown of bare branches.

From Mrs Uomo's yearbook

June

[joon]

Month of the Roman queen
protector of heaven and women

Sartre said
*to read a poem in January is as lovely
as to go for a walk in June*

Mrs Uomo said
too many bad rhymes with June

Jungle [juhng-guhl]

- 1 *noun* a wild land overgrown
with dense vegetation often nearly impenetrable
tropical rainforest
- 2 *noun* any confused agglomeration of objects
- 3 *noun* something that baffles

jungle of legal double talk or reason
or wrecked cars
or ideals

jungle of the canal side
where two swans glide
followed by five cygnets splashing

Mrs Uomo stares into the water's depths
of perished cycles and shopping carts -
on the bank opposite a hungry heron
stands on one leg

Two visitor centres

Cairns Botanical Gardens, for John

Shiny and all glass it sits on a hillock –
an easy prospect from the road
where busses grunt over speed humps.

Under umbrellas adorned with parrots
a café serves Latte and crumpets.
With touch-screen computers
in the air-conditioned cool
you could explore the gardens virtually
or tour the displays of butterflies,
rainforests and displaced ancestors.

Birdie John won't stop here
complains how birds fly
into its glass sides. No-one
will tell him how many
have perished on those dazzled walls.

The other is a small hut squashed
near the Dutchman pipe-vine
under foxtail and lipstick palms.
Its thick planks creak.
A volunteer offers tours
of the Flecker Gardens and Orchid House.
Free insect repellent on the ledge.

Birdies meet here, Tuesdays, before daybreak.
Their long lens binoculars
and cameras clank on their necks
as they trail their telescopes
and remind each other
of hundreds of flight patterns.

They know the laugh of the kookaburra
from the tawny frogmouth
can take you to the shady place
where you can surely see a sunbird
or hear a pair of orioles chuckle above.

Wood and glass at odds, two centres
apart – sun, plants and creatures –
the struggle to endure.

Taylor Bond

Illusions

Japanese tea leaves fluttering
crinkled moths, the smell of paint
I starve myself of questions.
The heat is bitter but better
than numb hunger,
anesthesia of flesh
-the jazz can no longer play,
the bees no longer sing,
the canvas no longer quake.
There is life, but
it is not here.

There is an oil lantern
hanging on the porch,
a home of rotted wood.
I keep it out for you
phantom lights to guide
the drunken fire flies to sleep
like acrylics on dry skin
it cracks in the rivets where
life should be.

Does the opera singer know
every whip of her tongue
is a lash on hot butter
is a taunt across pink cheeks
is a beautiful lie strewn
over an eight note harmony?

Summer Trout

Katya learned to peel an apple before she learned to ride her bike,
but before all of that she learned to skin a fish.
Her bone-thin hands flayed long strings of entrails,
stretched them out like bubble gum, flesh-colored pearls
which only the fluttering caress of a child still in love with themselves,
or the kiss of a moth, is delicate enough to achieve.
She would watch the last shining gasps of its lungs
before they sunk, starving, fanning metal in the sun, and then
wait impatiently to peel back the folds and search below.

The body was more than a cavity to her, and more than flesh.
A body was the world; it was all she knew.
She would never hum more, from bone to bone, than when
using the stubby curves of her pinky nail to quantify
and categorize every swollen organ sheltered beneath.
How different the stomach felt,
compared to the brain, compared to heart! And yet
it never occurred to her this experience would be the same for her.
Anatomy was purely aquatic and death merely
the invisible rainbow of a fishing line,
nothing more, nothing less.

It was her grandfather who taught her
about fishing, and about everything else;
blackberries, birdwatching, the best minutes of sunset
He was the one who steadied her tea-cup hands in his,
his more baseball mitt than hand, helped her
coax the knife into burning past the bubbly fat and
split the ridges of the spine like a ripe tangerine
The lifeless fish had mirror eyes, peerless eyes.
Together, they tossed the head and severed shell.

Before dawn, after the trout bite, love is guts
smeared like crosses on foreheads, spread between fingers,
warmer than jelly so that life spills through sure hands.
And when loneliness haunts, drumming like a summer thunder,
where memory whirs, purrs like an engine,
where the ocean winks of another face, forgotten
the corpse of a fish becomes family.

I'll Have It My Way

skin sags, sticks to sunken bones
a deflated skull, all angles, eyes closed
weeping blind tears, fear stains
mouth opens and shuts like a bird
crying as its eggs are plundered
we listen to Frank Sinatra on repeat
see the corpse move, croak
see the man who once growled
cave in upon himself, begin to disappear
hands like twigs cannot even clutch at ours
our warmth cannot pry petrified limbs
rigor mortis a starved hyena, cackling, circling
I can see now how death can live
I am watching a man split between worlds
and I ask why the song never changes
“because this is the music he wants to die to”
as if it can be orchestrated. Sinatra cooes
he's in on the joke and they ask me,
they ask if I want to speak to him
but my tongue is cotton laundry
is a mouth full of metal and ash
there are no words for this silent shell
whose lips are full of frothy spit, gargling
with newborn eyes closed he turns to me
and beneath moans of anguished, inaudible,
he spits “I love-“ -and cannot finish saying the rest.

The Things We Take

I steal books like you steal words
--with ease, without thinking, without breath
this is the art that cannot be replaced
on the ceilings of Venice or in two lovers moon eyes
let them wax and wane, wax and wane
like a candle on a cold night
their plastic embers remain silent.

I wish you would remain silent
--I can only hear in black and white
your colors are too loud and
I have seen them all before
Their tastes have lingered in my mouth, wet and hot,
and hungry, and
they taste like copper (melting blue rust) and also
like the falafel on Fourteenth Street
--now that only tastes like regrets
please peer beyond the shaved lamb to face your broken promises.
I have seduced: the knife, the blade, the binder of the book
it is not the bible but it is like it
and over the pages I pray and cry
and my tears, wet, hot, hungry, angry
grasp the pages with hands stuffed with rage
but the words just turn to pictures of you,
the colors you make me feel, and the sound of falafel.

John Grey

TRAILER TRASH

So they call me trailer trash.
What am I supposed to say?
Thanks for pointing that out?
I thought this was a mansion on wheels,
I figured myself for a lady.
Now I know the truth and, surprise, surprise,
it doesn't hurt so much.

I've grown used to the words.
I can work with them,
make them pleasant sounding if
I'm up for luring someone back here,
or dark and demeaning
if I'm out for sympathy.

Sometimes I forget exactly what I am
which is why I'm all for these reminders.
Especially because I'm up on my rent
and my kid don't run bare-assed
and the dog is tethered
when I'm not out walking him.

I've had the welfare folks around here
more than once.
And the SPCA.
But they liked what they saw.
Even the one whose proposition I rejected
couldn't find a damn thing wrong.

I don't plan to move
because who wants to live some place
where you're all the time missing the old ways?
I just figure my nature is rooted
in cars with bum engines,
cramped kitchens, communal bathrooms
and neighbors an inquisitive nose-length away.

You know some guy once said he'd marry me
and take me away from all this.
So come on down to Barney's Trailer Park
and see what my answer looks like.

A PHOTOGRAPH OF MYSELF AT TWENTY

Life constantly mutates
until it's time for its reward -
every moment just
seems as if it's always been here -
dear ancient photograph,
if not for time,
I would still be you -
your glare is steaming,
you're out there pitching
but you're stealing that heat from me -
you're whole
while I keep watching out for spills -
if you were a woman
I'd kiss you,
but you're a man - I'm jealous -
if you were here,
I'd engage you in some kind
of knife fight -
okay, I get it,
I speak a different language,
if we played a game,
you'd win every time -
maybe once every five years,
I thumb through this album,
it's like looking out the window
at young people,
crazy shoes,
more fun than intelligence,
mobbing themselves like magpies,
flashing smiles like neon,
all who are old beware -
and to think,
one of those used to be me -
all in glossy color,
not attacking flanks
but right in my face -
you have no use for me -
I'm a gust of air -
now all these years of me
and only you
won't suffer from my exit.

THE YEARS GO BY

the young women
have slipped out
of your sheets
and are now
arm-in-arm
on the other
side of the street
with young men

they've gone
from being
your realities
to your obsessions

years grow shorter,
memories wade
in foggy marsh,
your thoughts
can barely get
them naked
let alone
do anything about it

younger men
have taken
over your territory

younger women
don't even know
it's you

Post Scriptum

Prayer

i don't know where i'm going
i don't know where i've been
the holy gates of sainthood
will never let me in
beneath the holy chambers
is a grave that can't be touched
i will pray before the altar
my uncleanliness to snuff
where the failure of solutions
is the only terror left
we scale the wall to heaven
and murder all the rest
who have come to pray and
suffer
the blessed virgin's grace
i will walk the streets unholy
and offer my disgrace
the light of any doorway
is a haven for the cursed
lead me to the slaughter
i am ready for the hearse

kjg 949pm 23 sep 2014



Prayer

Klaus J. Gerken

صلاة

لا اعرف اين انا ماش
ولامن اين اتيت
البوابات المقدسة للقدسين
لن تسمح لي بالدخول ابدا
اسفل الغرف المقدسة
قبر لا يمكن لمسه
سااصلي امام المذبح
لتختفي دناستي
حيث فيشل الحلول
هو الرعب الوحيد المتبقي
تتسلق الحائط الى الجنة
ونقتل الباقين
الذين جاءوا ليصلوا وتحملوا
كمال العذراوات المباركات
سامشي في الشوارع بغير قداسة
واقدم الخزي
ضوء اي ممر
هو ملاذ للملعونين
قدني الى الذبح
انا مستعد للنعش

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COMMENTS & SUBMISSIONS

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