



The Moment before the Bomb Falls

Last year, Ezra Pound's poems committed suicide in my library; they could no longer stand to be on the side of the executioner.

In the moment before the second hand ticks, when the shell is suspended in the air, the murdered cease to dance, the house ceases to lean against the cement of the neighbor's house, the coffee cups cease to assemble next to each other in the kitchen cabinet.

In the moment before the TNT turns from a solid state to an aerial state, I hear your silence clearly, it is a mixture of rain and memories, I touch the sound of bombs via Skype, I drink your fingers, I love you then I leave, I love you then I stay, I love you then the song on the radio breaks, the newscast breaks, monotheistic religions break, the poetry standing between us in the family picture breaks.

In the moment before the ambulance arrives, feathers sprout on the bodies of children so they can fly far away, it's the acquired trait that Lamarck spoke of and scientists disproved, it is a miracle from God that will not happen.

In the moment before the newscast, I get several things for free, for example, a sixth finger in my hand - so I am left with no middle finger to raise in your faces. Young Arab features that cover the streets of old Europe - the number of those standing in the metro to seat the elderly in their places will increase. A new falafel restaurant in Stockholm - we will think it's good after a night of drinking. A new seat for racists in parliament - giving us an additional reason to fight neo-Nazism.

In that moment before silence, I shake the bread trees so my friends will not go hungry, I shake them and your face falls, my face falls, the UN falls, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights falls, the UNESCO falls, the Red Cross falls, Amnesty International falls, Human Rights Watch falls, the Security Council, Reporters Without Borders and Doctors Without Borders fall, the Non-Aligned Movement and the International Criminal Court fall, free speech falls, the first world and democracy fall, women's rights fall, everything falls, and the wolf wins.

On the way to the massacre, the policeman gives me a ticket for the high level of alcohol in my blood,

-What did you drink?

-My beloved's fingers.

Why do we wait for the salary at the end of the month?

Why do we wait for the Barbarians?

Why do we wait for Santa Claus, the Savior and the bus?

This world is walking in a straight line towards comedy,
and you sleep til noon,

as though the bomb did not precede the breaking news,
this world is walking in a straight line towards organizing prostitution,

-Dear madam, have you tried to work in prostitution?

-No

-Perhaps you haven't tried to die of hunger yet, the two are interconnected, they come together in one package, a special offer, take one, get the other free.

To put it briefly, I love you, but my poems decided to travel north,

-Do you want a warm bed in a cold city?

-No, I prefer a cold bed in a warm city, hell is paradise but without friends.

—*Ghayath al-Madhoun*

(Translation to English from Arabic by Nadine Saliba)



Ghayath al-Madhoun, a Palestinian-Syrian poet currently living in Sweden