

BOSPORUS STORIES

Bosporus stories are as short
like water haikus
between Europe and Asia,
often their ending are brutal
with an anaconda swallowing
its freshly hatched eggs.

Bosporus stories are *baklava*
sticking at night
to your peaceful dreams as you sweat
thinking of your brother who left
and hasn't called for days
while you tidy up
his bed sheets every night
fold his striped pajamas
mend his socks
here in this empty room
on the banks of the river
that smacks of fake freedom.

Bosporus stories are giant
spiders on the walls of history,
you can't crush them with a slipper
unconcerned, returning to your armchair.

PRAYER FROM A CRANE IN BOLOGNA

I walk along cobbled streets
shrouded in ordinary ramblings,
you appear there on the ledge of the sky
hanging like a star about to fall,
your evanescent face trembling and screaming
as you sway like tall trees
in early winter winds.

To many, you are just some crazy fool
a parenthetical scream as they shop
enjoy their happy hour, scroll their smartphone,
some curious passerby stands there waiting to see
if you'll inscribe a period on the pavement.

Instead, for me, you seem to emerge
from a removed mythical time you
now completely unknown to yourself:
like those Mexican *voladores*
rising sixty feet above the ground
on a wooden pole praying for rain,
so tonight you prepare your ritual
raising your demand for dignity.

SPLITTING THE CITY

This intersection splits the city into four,
the badly pruned canopy of trees
barely moves,
pudding-like presences
inside the summer wind.

At the traffic light the Haitian waves
a chocolate bar
that will mark his fate:
heads you stay, tails you leave again.

All that remains of Van Gogh is a swirling flow
in that support hanging over our heads
that some still call sky,
that sense of foreboding is all its own,
painted with exhaust fumes.

This same city is split in fours,
as my grandmother used to do with chestnuts
before roasting them in a pan,
but cutting them now is a very different knife:

here, in the capital of the flying *wenufoye*,
where segregation is the only one
swaying backward and forward,
industriously sleazy
along this intersection,
its vibrant deception
haughty and giggling.