

Sawsan AL-AREEQE

POEMS

What If My Blood Sweetened Into Chocolate

What if
time cast its candle into a pit of winds
And night extended beyond the brow
And wearily the sea hugged the shore
And light faltered during the celebrations
And I embraced a man's shadow

What if
The city departed for another planet
And children regained their angelic wings
And ballot boxes were abandoned
So the seats of power collapsed
And my
Blood
Sweetened
Into
Chocolate

What if
All meanings piled up in the streets
And poetry ventured unveiled
Within earshot of those who would wag fingers
Within sight of the hunters' traps
Stirring up the checkpoints
Where guards would search for free poetry
At the borders of the unconscious

What if
The evening rained gold
And all government posts were abolished
And true democracy emerged
And time unwound
And I wore my grandmother's glasses
What
If

Completion

The flower dies with the fruit
The fruit falls from ripeness
The moon waxes to wane
The droplet pools to drip
Light focuses to scatter
Nothing complete remains

The sun rises to set
People grow old to die
Life completes to perish

Desires burns to fade
The wave crests to break
The dream achieved dies

And now my feelings are complete.
Are you ready to part?

My Voice, I Do Not Hear

I will abandon everything
My screams leave their marks on the walls
The doors open to no one
The drops of water sting
Sickness feeds my silence
The pill dull from my surrender
And laughter that rings false
Crashes against my pillow

I will abandon everything
My life behind closed doors
My anxious voice, I do not hear
My feelings frozen since that first moment
Dreams enclosed by sadness
And songs that drank my tears.
I WILL ABANDON

Even my silent thoughts
As I depart!

More Than Necessary

When I allow myself
to be myself
I am surprised
that the rose on the balcony
smiles
more than necessary
and nighttime in the city's face
lingers
more than necessary
and the moon on my dining table
is too near.

Then I decide to allow myself
to be half myself
until I do not feel these things
more than is necessary.

The Far Corner

I'll hide you
in the far corner of myself
and decide not to see you.

As you continue to build the walls
and lay the foundation
you discover in the moment that you,
yourself become a part of the walls
without resistance.

You'll also discover me hidden
in the far corner of yourself
and without warning
I will look in the other direction
and find myself part of the walls.

And for moments only
when regret seizes us
we will see two shadows embrace
in that
far
corner
of ourselves.

Translated from the Arabic by Willa C. Richards with the author
