Memory Pictures #3

Salma would never tell me about her connection to water. I don't recall ever asking her if she could swim.

Column / Hadeel Abu Johar December 12, 2018

We seem indifferent, Salma
But, really, we are just the opposite.
We think of everything
We can build a mountain of illusions.
Does God create mountains as they are, so Man can build other ones

I've asked you then,
What happens in the small neighborhoods, Salma?
I got no answer and left our little neighborhood,
I've lived in many buildings without asking,
I did not know who'd lived above or below me.
Yesterday Salma returned early from work.
I sat by her side, listening to her thoughts.
Salma seemed strange, quiet.
She spoke about a blind student she had met in a photo show, and he said:
"It's funny that I'd taken pictures without seeing.
Really, I don't care if it's a wall or a column…"
I paused in front of these two photographic options
And said to myself that he was taking pictures of what scared him,
A blind person,
Walking into a wall or slamming against the scary columns.

unnamed.jpg



Salma would never tell me about her connection to water.
I don't recall ever asking her if she could swim.
Pools of water have always been a refuge from an inner flight.
I, whose vision is already tired of life
Start a conversation with the swimming instructor,
And she says I need to replace my glasses with plastic ones
You don't need to see far.
Open your eyes in the pool,
And you will see the way.
I was startled by the chance of seeing what was in the pool,
By the red line that marked the beginning of the deep part,
And I felt I wanted to move forward.
Loved ones below the water
Water below the water
There are no myths in diving besides stability.

Our intrusion upon ourselves, Salma, is harder than any war.
The migration within us, we ourselves have marked its borders.
No difference between ways of breathing and ways of ancient grieving.

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