

Adelia Gregory

The World Tastes Our Blood (In Tribute to Mahmoud Darwish)

The world tastes our blood,
deciding whether our stories are worth remembering,
and we hang our hopes, like clothes, on disinfected racks.

The world is testing us.

I wish we were its birds,
so we could molt and fly anew.

I wish the world were our child,
so we would embrace her.

I wish we were doves in the hands of a Turkish statue
for our pale peace to flutter forever.

We watched shooters whose faceless masks hide
those who let their neighbors' blood flow.

Our children will hang their portraits.

Where should we fly with our borrowed wings?

Where should we step when the streets are inky?

Where should we find lights pouring from windows like fireflies?

We will soar over the undercurrents.

We will not slice our feathers to drop into the waves.

The world will drink us in, in air engulfed by flame.

Out and out we stretch to save our stories from sinking.