

## American Dream

There is a house.  
Garnished with soft satin curtains,  
tasseled cords, gently pulling them back.  
crystal clear windows, provides the privileged viewer a taste of the estate:

Voluptuous custom gardens,  
an orchard, vast fields of French poppies,  
completing a perfect picture,  
The American Dream.

No one who lives at this house ever goes outside.  
They do not enjoy the orchard or the poppies, they have gardeners for that.  
They have to work long hours to maintain The Dream,  
the Dream that binds to an inflatable happiness,

Last winter there was a persimmon,  
Luscious fruit bright, orange,  
hanging from a tree that was just visible from the road.  
It seemed to call to whomever traveled the driveway.

It wanted them to come,  
to see its splendor, its glory,  
to be plucked from its mother tree, to be eaten in love,  
to fulfill its purpose as a persimmon.

A month went past,  
and many people drove down that driveway,  
to the big house at the end of the road.  
The persimmon became ripe, and heavy.

In the early morning when the dew had not yet ascended from the ground,  
it was possible to see finches,  
sinking their miniature beaks into the rich flesh.  
The orange slowly turned to rust,  
small indentations on what had been,  
perfectly smooth skin just a few weeks hence.

Then another week passed,  
and people on the driveway could no longer see the persimmons from the road,  
but perhaps the finches could see,  
a rust and dirt colored mass on the ground by the tree.

# Pomegranate

Your heart is like a pomegranate,  
Fastened my hands,  
to pry open your  
hardened, bolted flesh.

*To reveal,*  
Open.Wound.

So stitched together  
in speckled unity.

When I open your flesh,  
you speak to me,  
in solitude.  
From your mouth.

An issuance of,  
Every seed.

The crunch is like the sting of words ill spoken,  
and the

*POP,*

*soft, cooing to one's lover.*

Who can imagine,  
your heart,  
just like this pomegranate?

## Miriam

You were, a fish beneath a tree,  
placed there by your mother, ready to die.  
She didn't know then,  
you survived. Like Moses you rose,  
and went on that caravan to another land.  
A land that would hate you,  
scorn you, and spit on you,  
as you walked home from school.

But now, you are a strong woman,  
tall, like a tree, my grandmother.

I ask you about our land, our language, our people,  
I ask you about my heart.  
“You don't need to know *kyank*, just forget about it.”

I want to know so badly, my whole body aches.  
“All you need to know is there was a genocide,  
we don't need to go back to that place again.  
We are here now, so please just forget *jan*.  
You look white; so just assimilate.  
I can't, see? my skin is dark,  
Like the desert that almost took me.  
Don't go to the desert *kyank*,”

But now that you've gone,  
I found my light.  
underneath that tree in the desert.\*

\* *kyank* — “my love” and *jan* — “dear one”

## The Chair

As you lie upon the Chair,  
in our small hospital room,  
I want to hold you,  
tell you it'll be okay.

As I look over at you,  
your head transposed  
in a half asleep state,  
you seem like a butterfly to me.

that Chair.  
you sit on,  
during my suffering,  
you are witness to  
the most hidden  
recesses of my soul.

You are there,  
in that dark and terrible place,  
and you take that  
suffering upon yourself,  
enacting it in the midst of destruction.

I try to drink  
the nectar of a poison flower,  
and fall into a deep  
and unconscious state.

You try to wake  
me out of that slumber  
but the accusers  
are all around.

All you can do is watch.

I weep in this room,  
not for the pain,  
but for the agony  
I caused in you,  
that you had to endure.

Please forgive me.

I weep with the tears  
the tears that you shed.  
in this sun-return,  
I weep with all the care,  
the care you give to me in the  
midst of my un-remembrance.

The pain you experience,  
I experience again,  
my Beloved.

If you only knew  
what is known in the heart,  
I would release you from  
your suffering.

I would take it upon myself,  
and bear this cross.  
You go down to the river;  
released from the all  
bonds of the accusers  
that want your life.

When you try to do this for me,  
I cannot hear it.  
I am too selfish,  
too heartbroken,  
to receive your love.

I release you now.  
One cannot mend  
broken hearts;  
they are for a greater understanding.