

**TANELLA BONI**

**FROM THE FUTURE HAS AN  
APPOINTMENT WITH THE DAWN**

**TRANSLATED BY TODD FREDSON**

I

The dawn counted its nomadic steps  
to the border  
the early breeze took over  
amidst the day's news  
the men and the women  
weaved the wedding cloth  
with sympathetic hands

it was ordinary life  
between routine and rupture  
during these times  
I searched for the letters  
of the perfect word

The land of hope was blessed by the gods  
the nomadic words sang  
the refrain of water's Kindness  
the poet woke early that morning  
not knowing how long  
the offerings of this ground  
would feed the origin-less shadows

Sowings were good  
the harvests miraculous  
the poet lived  
on a parcel of land in Eden's garden  
breath she said  
you are not of this world  
naked-winged swallow  
your feathers wait so long  
for the buoyant winds of the open sea  
they will borrow the ribs  
of the dawn  
and soar along the roof of the world

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On my way  
across the bare mountain  
a song stronger more deafening  
a martial cadence from nowhere  
a rhythm from the tank shelling the dead  
another music ignoring the past  
bursts of wind sweeping the future away  
crack of dawn  
an emergency c-section  
exhale from the country under drip  
generation rapidly deteriorating  
the sun's difficult  
birth into the highpoint of day  
nowhere the right word  
the poet must wed these visions  
of the dying world  
and the living water that keeps hearts beating

We dream sparks stars moons and suns  
lighting our lives our days sweeping clear the path  
the time-to-be braids its palm branch canopy  
I do not know how to tell you this story of blood  
that seals our lives behind the door of the wind  
how to tell you that the coming dawn  
has already changed the color of this motionless day  
that the wait lacerates our grieving hearts  
while infusions of cold hard cash  
are blatantly burned through during the nights

### III

Our conspicuous steps wake  
the ancestors napping  
in the shadow of fear  
trudging out ahead of the morning sun

history still slumbers  
in bed with the first word of love  
which must come to save us from open chaos  
from our quicksand steps  
we wait for the first blue love note with feverish hands  
face offered to the wind to the sun  
eyelids heavy with rain

the day has sown the word of the hyena  
in the city the night  
the speech of the hyena terrorizes words undressing them