

**MOHAMMED KHAÏR-EDDINE**

**THE KING**

**TRANSLATED BY JAKE SYERSAK**

I string along inside of my stigmata a king who parches the uvulas  
of thousands tongue-lashed by that rogue's lightning  
assagaies pommeling my purloin star  
inside my antidote I string along a king who snarls out  
a litter of lions from riven infancy come winter  
my apodeal legs feel out the tepid danger  
established in the small explosions of the gyromitra and lily  
I circulate through my lungs an old leper  
and his scandalous inner-circle of ankles knotted together by sprains

the squillae of childhood loom together a resentful memory  
into the violet anus of the seas  
I string howling  
black scintillations and tethered-down by heavenly glory

*how to pass through the nose of the king  
his murderous head  
through his legendary strong-arms pressing their najas into my head*

the true sun will limp under the weight of the torrential joints  
of my life's opprobrium and blood's  
cumin strangles me and out of my left eye the king proposes a toast  
to drink my right eye rightly  
I'm executed by the king's  
lead-like inflection and my shadow too outwardly  
wealthy (I'm casting away my crutches  
white-hot rye fields perspiring  
spiders sculpted over the pomp of delirium)

it's been said my balaclava of earth reared up  
my sentiments of inverted rust  
in the dossiers of oleander-flowers  
from my country that one calls the stone of the wind

*the king takes apart my clock-face to point out  
this era's hydra—the spiraled masses*

*string along its tempestuous eczema more adeptly than White  
Fridays at black tide*

*I string up a toolkit of noons king minus my fever  
per the curves of horizon reversed by joyous  
thorns  
and the milk of figs dropped from the disorder of the stars*

like the cockchafers charred by the antiquated etiquette of springtime  
like the evil-doers redeemed by the last remaining jailer  
like the dual vee of birds in my eyes embracing one another  
inside my teardrops inventing crocodiles  
shooting from the mud over the purview of my almond-tree nights

*your words pink scree in the  
serpent's flavor*

like your statue bound to be reformed in my quicklime

*I pull the nails from my body elevated too high to be wept over  
I shed blood to burn you with  
your erotic moons explode over my roadways  
gnawed by dogs  
your throne lobs the abysses of bombs from the helm of the clouds  
and whips your swelling back into my lens*

I was standing in the center of a zoning ordinance when it began to appear yellow and the color disappeared emaciated finally stretched-out by its clean traversal someone told me our love had been pilfered the Champs des Lyres hoisted itself onto my shoulders with cambricum I'm sure to retrieve under a decapitated jackal the skillfully tanned skin of *les Boucs* I stretched out to seat myself on waiting for the obligatory dreams to end up dead the king gave birth to oblivion the prey edified its sky and brought an end to my aim metamorphosed into a bee's rousing sex the metro drove back the rain let's recapitulate that I was screaming at those who weren't there it's absolutely no delusion because the thinnest parts of my speech are shaking in your massacres I granted them safe passage into the frontiers of Fact ringing like a droplet of the crucifixion I had seated myself for cross-legged on the maps of my own misfortune.

they lived in the isolated flame of candles they noshed the legs of cockroaches they slurped sweat they invited Asian flu and cancer into their little squared-up faces they allowed for ironworks to teethe serrations around their ankles and took advantage of my presence to carve out the tongue we are the Earth and the king barfs into our sour bloodlines we are the swallows of the wind's necessary gale we dare carry a flag threaded with scars they rolled like old asses in scoured oats and they had no faith in my wrinkles my wisecracks slapped me in the face the longest of my arms retreated my revolt rapped at the door mandible of thunder I made the tour of Paris fifty times and I saw the emberous ladies the membranous men the lettucey little girls smiled in my direction but I was incapable of returning the favor despite concentrating on them intently how to love when you tote catastrophe on your lips in the trainstop café the hand from the table grabs the king who roused my nausea by the throat in one monstrously invincible motion the beer climbed from my stomach and surrendered after a brief shootout the hen who laid the golden eggs in my matchbook reciprocated with eggs of cinder and forced me to guzzle *les Boucs* knowing that I'd vomited their monarch originating from the holes of the whole outlying neighborhoods and they surrounded me without explanation but they couldn't get near me I would've strangled the king already suffocating in my grip the elderly argan tree saluted me a lizard delivered me the fraternal telegram of all the reptiles engorged with jujubes and the ebbs of surging rage and red chains I revisited my village teetering on the trident of Time again I trudged up the mountain's violet ridge in the evening when my bones filled with the tintinnabulation of the guerillas' sandy roses the Spaniards danced their seguidilla the Italians placed the Holy Ghost in an overheated locomotive and all the people of the world swept across the highways and concocted one big air of pandemonium following the example of the astrological maps and from the savannahs I lead the world from its Sepulcher I lift the world to the dialect of the instant illumination it swings itself from men's pockets falling like a nest infiltrated the eggs while the serpent upstarts the heat of the sun has lapped the Earth's politics the king faced off against in a duel with the devil who fires first always the king sordidly postures himself up without disguise *les Boucs* along the Assembly Line there is alarm in the putrefying hooves

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through that horse of yours called youth  
through the rapids of Nigeria and the flotillas of infinity's song  
through the marble of the war palaces in smithereens  
of lolling lynchings  
the leader of the abyss diggers  
sharpens you deadlier than the razor of an ocean's wave

*through your chain-bracelette of millipede legs so Vesuvial to salamanders  
through your profuse stench laughing up the mural of Marrakesh  
through the plates where you make a feast of my numbness and my cirrhosis  
through buckwheat flowering into flames  
of your gown  
I descend  
halt  
I ring out a death knell for the king who dies at my hand  
for the king who whispers inside the talons of a cesspool*

the hooves putrefying upward from the old petroleum-like tales lugging through drugstores  
their halo of illegible landscapes and tubercular poetry at the bottom of a ditch full of  
corpses the blight attacking the seedpod of my blighted blood turned into sunken faces in  
the avalanche of stars crushed on the neck of the sky weighed down by figures I wasn't  
expecting anything more from the extravagant nothingness nor the turtledoves inside  
my wallet THE RESENTMENT written in cash and bus tickets the mouth irremediably  
tightened the fingers prepared to sink themselves once more into an oeuvre whose apple  
forgets the risks I lent them the side-eye I eyeballed them I tried to rescue them I spent  
white midnights as talc they were unwatchable and masochistic Within the soul of things  
a hotbed of sparks scraping up the sky in the street I returned a heap of lost shadows and  
swift rapes the newspaper published the marvels but I was unaware they were bound to  
an old pact to the lie I pushed back against my disarray for a time but without knowing it  
I fabricated maggots from the meat and carbuncles with difficulty I left the establishments  
not quite successfully waking up one evening found it imperative to make use of a special  
product to remove my support I revealed underneath the lovely tombstone of my breath  
and nervous breakdowns and bit-by-bit I ended up at the Umbilical point where it was  
always Night.

you wound us up in the withered olive branch just before the deluge  
you summoned us toward hypothetical quarrels  
you granted us amnesty and scratched disgrace into our faces  
mutely mutely like the waters of death  
like a firestorm in the very heart of my heart

my table remained deserted my family which is that of  
arachnids and suriae invaded the aridity of your eyes  
and the Mosquito drank the sea in front of the Ramses your lightning is

rebel king  
blizzard king of needles leading one thing to another you style me  
in swarms of crickets my screams recollect

I've unearthed you from Hitler's trench where you were rewriting the plot twists of your  
catapulting  
cavalcades and faith insidiously vast hailstorm raining down despair of caved-in dawns

soldier king  
of colonialism and the sap-red tie  
the cedar and the river restoring hunger and thirst  
to she who births colics  
onto a dismantled quran tying maggots into the lock of my fugue and peoples scratching  
their  
haunches against the hedges the bottom of your vanity  
while I recite the names of Baraka and the secretive suffering among the leaves of autumn  
root names the mu'addhin discovered in the panther not to mention  
what you offer me  
I camouflage my isolation poorly  
from the names of golden laurels  
from the names of neurasthenic caverns  
and considering that my hair will dig out from under the catastrophe  
in the street I spread your name like smallpox  
seasoned with a dash of armyworm  
tough shit for the age of buttercups drag-netting the swamp  
tough shit if they pilfer the veins from my skin like some assassin

realizing what will survive the blowback is a beach  
where morning lounges to replenish its eagle energy  
with headcheeses spread by the knives of my vertebrae  
of the drummed up villages  
and weddings perhaps thinks the sand  
of mankind  
running through my rosettes and kohled-up eyelashes

*meanwhile a foghorn from the harbor  
blows and impersonates  
my voice  
the king of rot through a sarcophagus  
I've suffocated that beast for so long the crafty  
Umbilical eclipse  
in exchange for the green purity of my silence  
where dreams hear the sunlight*

*no king  
nor führer  
only this power of a day to seismically molt  
to sink  
into the black milk of my palm grove*