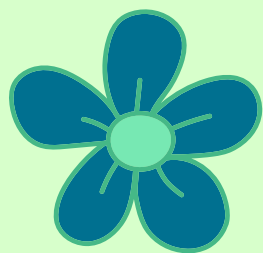


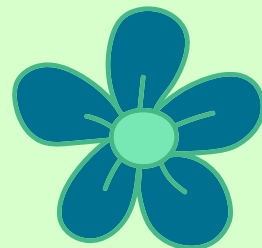
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Wildflower Post

Newsletter



TODAY'S WRITER

Dur

Dur is a 14-year-old poet from Iraq. She started writing poetry in the summer of 2024, feeling rather inspired by cinematic media and music. Her poetry includes themes of love, politics, and stories.

roma, again
DUR

i knew a guy from northern italy
who was catholic
and a supporter of fascism
no empathy
and no comprehension
one time i was sat
with him, and he says
“man, i’m so hungry. i want everything.”
i asked him
“what was everything?”
he corrected me
and he said,
“is.”

the truth here
lies.
this is a poem
and i could never talk to an italian guy
because i hate them

enter, new line
he told me about everything,
and the fact that his uncle was living with a person
he never married
for about ten years now

“they’re happy,” he says
“but i don’t know him”
he continues,
“i forgot his name
but it starts with an A,
and he was from a country
in the north of africa
that i don’t know the language of”

this wasn’t a conversation,
it was a poem
and i never really hated
italian guys
i hated the shape of their country
and their names
irritated me

the next september,
the start of our master’s,
i saw the guy again,
and i looked at him,
incandescently,
and thought,
how could you
want everything,
when in the meantime,
you fail to understand anything?

how could you
see those
who fled the south
to the north
then fled the north
to somewhere else
across the ocean
from the monster
whose arms
had never caught up
to you
because you were northern?

he told me
about his uncle
and the man
who lives with him
“they’re still here,”
he says
and the villa
that is always warm
during chanukkah
because the fireplace
never really turns off
it burns
all the night
through and through

“they argue sometimes,”
he says
“but not in a negative way.”
i ask him
what they argue about
and he says
he doesn’t know
other than the fact
that it sounds like
the language
of the country
in north africa
that he doesn’t speak
and he also says
that he never spoke
to the man
properly
and his name
that begins with an A
keeps falling out
of his memory

the next time
i saw him
was after our master’s degrees
on graduation day
i saw the laurel leaves

on his head
and thought
of those
who weren't able to wear it
i asked him
"how is your sister?"
he said,
"she graduated,
and works in film"
i nodded at him
and the vagueness
of his words
irritated me
like his name
i asked about his uncle
and how's the villa
and i saw
the disinterest
conquer his face
"they've gone
to marrakesh
for the summer.
the villa
is still the same
nothing has changed
except for the new
persian rugs"
i nodded again
even though

what i noticed the most
was his mispronunciation
of marrakesh
and said
it's good to hear that

the time
i saw him again
it was in our conference
in july
we got to work
in the same place.
he'd been assigned
the topic
migration
i asked him
what he knows of it
and he said
“movement of people
for economic reasons”
i asked him
about the rest
and he said
“there is no rest”

the last time
i saw him
was not in passing

it was a dinner
with our colleagues
to celebrate the
conference we attended
organized
at his flat
that was too small
for this many people
but still as lovely
with a big view
over rome
and a poster
on the wall
that said
“fuck fascism”
in italian.
after dinner
he put on a film
one his sister’s works
“it’s a north african film”
he said
“but it’s more...european,
i think”
one of his friends
asked him
“which country?”
he paused
long enough

or the conversation
to carry on
to another topic
someone poured wine
and we drank
later
his uncle called
and we all heard it
because he put it
on speaker
without asking.
afterwards
he went outside
i followed
i found him
smoking
even though
both of us were quitting
he didn't look at me
and he said
"i think they speak arabic"
then he corrected himself
"or french,
in north africa"
and he started crying

and his uncle's companion's
name
still began with an A

about a few months later
in early november
i found out his name
it was engraved
on the headstone
of his grave
now, i thought
he'll never forget his name
the men
in the dark suits
who didn't shed a tear
throughout the funeral
where only one person cried
were talking to him
they're sorry for his loss,
they said

and this time
i thought,
what loss?

