

Zajal – Levante (E)

Brothers, ask us about
the state of affairs,
ask us about those
who set up the barriers!

And about the face
of those near and far
who conspire
in order to divide us.

A calamity begot
the following calamity;
but whoever brought sorrow
could not divide us.

For fifteen years we have
paid toll with blood,
but even in a hundred
nobody will enslave us.

If between you and me
a barrier stands,
and we can't see each other,
stay alive for me.

You live in my eyes,
but from time to time,
carried by a puff of wind,
let your heartbeat be heard.

O my love!
Nobody can replace you,
not even Croesus
with all his treasures.

My whole life long,
I will write songs to you
which with their ardor
will melt even stones.

May God be
with our loved ones,
wherever
they may be.

The madder this world's wars
are in their insanity,
the deeper the eyes of dark
night sink into blackness.

The oil tree, however,
which always served us,
I do not only cultivate
for mere selfishness,

For it will
save the ark
and with its olive oil
heal the world again.

The leaves of the oil tree,
not blown away by the wind,
are summer and winter
its proud apparel.

In spite of its age it stands
tenaciously and with dignity,
for it is as old
as life.

From time immemorial
the kings found
in its oil a means
of healing wounds.

The oil tree's branches carry
the fruit of true love.
Balsam from the olives also
heals the wounds of kings.

In it we see hope,
as its oil makes friends,
as a symbol for trust,
for generosity and love.

Inherited from forefathers,
give children the oil tree
and content yourself with that
which it gives at harvest.

Life is for us a mirror
wherein the eye looks.
The soul records everything
as far as it pleases.

We believe in the mirror,
in the meaning of its 2 sides,
the open and the blind one,
with its inner magic.

And whoever in bitter life
has lost his luck,
is helped to return to himself
by its inner magic.

Look at yourself and be gentle
mother with delicate cheeks!
Your glance injured
my heart and forgot me.

Would call you to task
if I knew where you were,
for you did not even ask
once about my wound.

I am Zaghlul and still
have feathers on my wings.
I am ready and will fly,
wheresoever you will.

As soon as you're tired of me
your eyelashes can,
like two sharp daggers,
cut my throat.

If between you and me
a barrier stands,
and we can't see each other,
stay alive for me.

You live in my eyes,
but from time to time,
carried by a puff of wind,
let your heartbeat be heard.

Very early one morning
I once saw
two most beloved doves
fly into the grove.

They flew such wild capers
above the earth
that it seemed as if
the world flew with them.

If they flew out of view,
my eyes
then flew
behind them,

Until I arrived
at the olive grove,
took my gun
and tried to aim.

I threw it away then, however,
and devised a better ruse
and thought I would catch
the birds with nets.

For two days I often returned
to look in the grove,
until one of the doves
had been snared.

First I seized the bird
between the eye and heart.
But moved by honor
I let the bird go free.

When our love letters
lost their addresses,
then the doves
always brought them back.

People have not yet
themselves acquired
the art of fighting
against the evil ones.

Thus the doves must
fly here and there
and hinder the propagation
of the cunning crows.

The flying dove
which you do not notice
you should not forget,
for it serves us.

That we might not suffer
when a ship did not arrive,
we were then always
helped by the doves.

They brought us news
in place of the messenger
of our loved ones
who were absent.

Long before pounds and dollars
traders exchanged
much more human
Phoenician money.

The earth of our roots
we first leave while treading.
He who leaves with 5 pennies
returns with a hundred.

Do not waste the days,
open a shop,
trade assiduously and
sing a song to freedom.

Sweeten your bitterness
and in trading build houses.
For peace a life in freedom
is sufficient for you.

O Lebanon, after all that
our souls have experienced,
we are determined
to preserve your glory.

We still have strength,
thus have no fear,
you green earth, of them
that threaten your border.

Our land is still lovelier
than imagination's picture.
The infinite magic of culture
had its beginning here.

Our birds sound
like strings of the harp.
And our brook's melody
is like lyrical song.

And all of our apples
are colorful lanterns.
And the grapes shine
and smell of roses.

And thanks to our gardens
and their fragrances,
the bee nourishes itself
and the nightingale sings.

My country is
my passion,
is my love's source,
is my life's pointer.

Thanks to it my origin
is dear to me
and worthy of the glory
that my forefathers planted,
whose souls came
from the high mountains.

May God be
with our loved ones,
wherever
they may be.

Very suddenly
her eyes met mine
and tempted me
silently into her house.

My heart then
separated itself from me,
ran ahead
and showed me the way.

I thus followed my heart,
travelled far and wide
on a carpet
carried by wild winds.

I raged with desire,
saw only my shadow,
and my madness quarrelled
with my madness.

When it finally arrived
my heart was confused
and she who invited me
awaited me.

In order not to burn
my fingers,
I knocked lightly
with my eyelashes.

Her voice had,
with the sound of the harp,
enchanted my feelings
and awaked my senses.

She welcomed me
and let me into the house
where her eyes immediately
began to speak.

Then her two hands,
like graceful candles,
I hardly know why,
took me tightly in her arms.

Embraced by her
I forgot
what had caught me
and was free.