

A Poem for Your Pocket

AISHET CHAYIL (WOMAN OF VALOUR)

This is not a beautiful place, and you know you allow it, you admit and open yourself to it, this Friday in April for a fool's death, a day wholly emptied of sound, now as the light leans almost heavily into the park, catching every speck in the air, gathering itself for the attention of long hours to come. Here in the shadows of onion domes and great leafless arcs that greet rows of uncaring apartments that uprooted something better, that displaced something else, something you wish might have had time to grow to be good. Why haven't you taken care to deal small graces to yourself, she asks and without waiting for an answer tells you to get naked, with only the smallest if, as if this is not your last invitation to learn and simply a convenience to work on your hip flexors, vastus lateralis, and gracilis, all unnamed until touched and hushed, your head cradled in her arms, your arms drooping to the floor, palms open. It's a pity you never saw what your trust looked like from the outside, a fool's hope that could only be disappointed. Don't call it betrayal, call it love and the ambient guttering light of a place that teaches you what it knows by spearing your heart.

BY DAN KNAUSS

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