

Armine Iknadossian

333 Fragments (an excerpt)

1

A motorcycle boy and an underweight naïf meet in Beirut.
She speaks only when spoken to.
He wears Levis and runs away from home.

2

Her eye shadow is cerulean,
the color of the Mediterranean.
She cries behind her veil.

3

She stutters and has a lisp.
Her mother sews all her dresses.
Her shoes are a size too small.

4

Men gather around when he speaks.
The Becca Valley is a patchwork
of orange and olive trees.

5

Time and again,
war sees
its own becoming.

6

Time and again,
a girl is born. Eight sisters.
My mother is number three.

7

She is named Shaké,
to let light in.
She survives on boiled lentil water.

8

Armen is the eldest boy.
Armen means man of war.
A horse kicks him in the teeth.

9

Like shafts of moonlight,
like tangled bed sheets,
like ripped stockings and fault lines.

10

She keeps stuttering.
I-I-I-I-do.
Mid-afternoon full moon.

11

Right in front of her, an ocean
as big as the longest day of the year.
He is the 2nd to last cue ball on a pool table.

12

Absolved of sin
of guilt
of consequence.

13

Wild flowers and lizards:
jasmine, alyssum, opium.
Kisses under a drooping cedar.

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14

Man and wife and baby make three.
During the first trimester,
she craves bitters and sweets.

15

Lemons dipped in salt,
clementine and honeysuckle.
Iced rose water with pine nuts.

16

Above their bed, the moon
is in primal scream.
It happens before they know it.

17

I am born in August,
early afternoon.
I am named Armenouhi.

18

My left ear and foot don't work.
I wear corrective shoes and watch
Sidon burn from our balcony.