

## My last letter

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The cellar looked bigger than usual this time, as a vast pan of history with only art above and death below, with all the naked bodies of history, crucified against the sun and the paradise-blue pools, calling for endless miles with various remains to be found right and left. It entombed her glances for a while and seemed to rob her eyes from any move and shift. The further she tried to understand what was happening, the more heart haunting and soul swelling it became. A phalanx of paint-brushes was flanked by a bucket of water and all the colors were gone. Then she was sitting on a rock eyeing a dingle and all the lay naked rocks were drenched, they were velvet and silk soft with listless moonlight signs and all the remains of the forsaken, of the Non-binary. The torchlight blinked twice and Mustapha's eyes were simmering and about to water the thick air around, there was a guttural sound coming from his throat like a crow's echo. Half of his curly hair glinted by a ladder of water drops coming from above as if an ocotillo had received the rest of a water bottle by a nomad trying to catch the moon's direction. It was combusted and scorched by each glittering water drop and seemed to be scraped by a vorpal blade of his father's statue, coming from a distance and stabbing the sunspears on the way.

Feyrouz tripped when she moved backward, she trembled and her teeth rattled with a desire to repose and never let him do whatever he wants to do and in each way he likes. She wanted things to be organized for everyone, a cosmopolitan desire for the words and a firm believe that Translation is a despondent nostalgia for the standardization of the language in the world; She believed that human beings are one and only after various

languages they become enemies of each other's gender and each other's views, it was not the spoken language that created it but the language of love, forgiveness and celestial prophecies... The hanging paintings were shambling and shrieking inside her head too, then they became soundless, they danced to the rhythms of all the forefathers since the dawn, howling at all the marauding blackbirds of history, silencing each grunt and each grisly creature all along the way. They were about to jump like how they used to appear. Their facial gestures could make you believe in both Valhalla and Helheim and even a bridge between both, with all the chants of nymphs and the prayers of the world all along the way ahead. They looked bereft of life yet artistic and bewitching with two pools of ecstasy and saintly letters coming down from their eyes.

Mustapha wanted to put an end to all of her interpretations of art and gender verbose. A sort of retribution drenched and permeated all over him, it wasn't acceptable at all and after all of this period that no bewitching sentence and no arresting and cool gesture was placed on her face, with all the chocolate boxes and the morning promises to be able to see the sunlight again and draw a seagull by the shore on a Sunday morning, just by unlocking the maze of her heart, just by saying the common three words of love and even in another language, it will be also up to scratch if it was done in a slow-motion before reaching the cellar's door or before asking about the best-loved lunch and dinner meal. He stepped forward, took a deep breath, and said in a low voice as he put his hand on the wall to keep his balance, worn out and hollow-cheeked like never before.

“What is art and gender, after all, it is a cigar modifying the air and a belly trying to devour what is inside, and all is roving and rambling in the belly of a whale.” He kept looking at her.

“It’s not a gallery coo, or painting a lady, or adding a signature, or spattering colors; it mustn’t be so filtered, so euphoric and elate, so spirited, animated and manicured. A piece of Art is a desert swelter, a performance of liberation where a system bows at the brush’s handle. Another sex is another life, It is not a stuffed space shifted further to the up and to the down, or a dropping sound of coins, or an analytically represented rectangle, or a breast feeding the air; our lenses ought to be gender-neutral, unsexed and uncategorized, not possessed on canvas. It is a promising call, a loud shout from the womb of history. It is not a naked body marred with earthly mosses, or a multicolored garland, or a scattered skull in a poorly lit tomb, or deformed vertebrae, or a fringed island; it ought to be a phoenix, a white dove in a dark night, a phalanx of voices engulfing the ears. It is a Joshua tree smacking the vampire bat where the humming-birds get their wings smoldered by all the lipsticks. It is an arrow whirling in a time machine. It is not a couple of breasts eyeing the viewers, or a rosy cheek casting a gleam, or a pool of mystic eyes; it is a heretic paintbrush, so unbowed and bloody, shielded by the fading voices. It is a cactus absorbing the slithering sounds of snakes, a graven image where the symbols and figures speak. It is not an illusory eagle by a trance-like mirage, or a forlorn sautéed flesh, or a burned corpse, or a grilled mouth and a dehydrated liver. It mustn’t be so dull, so motionless and transfixed. In this context of Eastern intricacies, patriarchal and phallogocentric sphere; the other is the scratching sounds of the dawn and the coliseum of the unremembered.” Said Feyrouz, she spat on the floor.

“I guess I have lost my voice.” Added Mustapha.

“You still have the echoes of your forefathers. You’re never free” Said Feyrouz, she went and sat on the wooden chair.

“You’re free here. I’m free here.” Said Noah.

“Freedom in an illusion, the walls of exile seem short from afar.” Replied Feyrouz.

“I’m free.” Said Noah.

“How can you be free anymore, and dawn has taken all purity out of your eyes? Have you ever absorbed pastoral scenery?” Replied Feyrouz.

“I used to live in the countryside.” Noah twisted with embarrassment.

“How can you look at the fields anymore, and the roses have been wrapped in a dress of sin?” Replied Feyrouz.

What mattered most now for Mustapha is her flesh around the palms of his hands, it was so urging, as if a brigade of phantoms were pushing him to do it and put soap inside her mouth to silence all the balderdash she keeps on saying each time she talks. For him women don’t have the right to analyze but just to nod. Her shape expunged all the gambling losses from his head and even the security guard’s hands on his cheeks seemed to shove him next to the wooden chair. Then he could suffocate her throat and hurl her thin body on the bed and watch how she can unsex herself. Glancing over her eyeing him from a distance, it sent a blizzard of electromagnetic waves all around his fingers.

The torchlight blinked again but only once this time and it was so quick, no one seemed to pay attention to it, roaming and roving in endless spheres. With both hands around her chest and a look that cannot be understood, the ladies inside the paintings seemed to flash on her face, they were placed there one by one, there were some marks which appeared before each shift too; as if a ghostly creature was leafing through a marvel

female comic book. Then her facial symmetry was blobbed by some plumes of dust, it was a depressing dust with a glittering particles on it.

With the next breath he gulped, all the ladies he silenced, kidnapped and covered up under the ground seemed to arise, wrapped by a shroud with the entire Necrophilia cicatrix all over their faces, spiraled and surged with an oriental song's flute. He gasped in astonishment at the forgotten faces, coming from the far-flung corners of his barbecued memory. He was like a standing bronze-colored sculpture with an agape mouth. Then they started to spurt over the hanging paintings, just next to them in a line while their heads were covered by the sooty darkness above. At first, his only impression was that the Absinthe's liquor effect was ambling along his brain's zigzagged alleys but it seemed not like that at all. It gave a sense of reality, a real show unlike all the cinema movies he had watched so far. He rounded and as he began to look close on top of the hanging paintings, the flute's rhythmic sounds escalated. Their heads were hitting and churning the swollen roof. It stopped for a moment but it became louder one more time as he averted his eyes, it seemed to beckon the rest of the naked ladies inside the paintings to participate in the dance. It was an open invitation to join the tornado. One of the hands glided underneath the shroud, an entombed scorpion poked through the waterish skin and it was followed by a thick greenish moss. Then the full body pirouetted and seemed to embalm itself. All the bodies that he had forgotten flashed on his eyes with a flip-flopping sound. He twitched and eyed Feyrouz, he was unable to recognize her among the basin of images all around him.

The past and the present seemed to lurch in a mirage-like moment. It was like a

succubus<sup>1</sup> was knocking on his chest and trying to dethrone him from his body. The groaning and grumbling sounds of the other ladies peeled off his ears with some drops of acidic water. He ran towards the door to find a way and shelter himself but the door was morphing into unearthly creatures which rumbled and splayed female hands with pale fingers to push him back. Some images of mischievous gremlins had to ascend and vanish, spiraling from each side. As he squinted one of the ladies in the paintings frolicked on the ground while the other gambolled next to Feyrouz's bed. He closed his eyes for a second as he leaned back his head and was about to gouge out his eyes. There was a strong desire whirling inside his body to vanish into powder and stop all the images that bombarded his head which seemed to dwindle and shrink. He could smell the Absinthe's scent lollygagging all around him while he was slobbering.

He saw himself in a white plate, being munched and masticated by an endless amount of fingers manicured by his face. Then a hefty amount of bristles were removing his hair and placing spikes inside his skull.

The mouldy air trickled up to his nose, he was urged to go back again in a place where he can see Feyrouz clearly, She was there standing under the hanging paintings, there was nothing around her and he thought for a while that it was a passing nightmare or a mind-numbing moment making a caustic taste in his mouth and a stomach-churning sensation. He snatched the air away and the distance between him and Feyrouz looked very far with all the murky shadows on the way but she was like an uncorrupted female flesh that is so inviting for a feast. The ground belched up tormented screams with each step he made, with each move a sense of

1 Succubus: a female demon believed to have sexual intercourse with sleeping men.

beauty was added to Feyrouz as if she was going out of a beauty salon on a wedding day.

Her eyes were two balls of birth-stone blue pools that could make a sea-gazer blind, glistening and pulsing and making the water bashful, even the veil of darkness was blinded by its flicker, reflecting on an innocent face, a skin so pure. In the next move, he was almost next to her, Mustapha's eyes were foaming and sheathed by the reflection of her voyager-blue eyes. He placed both hands around her throat, he grabbed her and she was pummelled by his chest. He pressed on her throat, then he tried to smother her, her smile tipped him over the edge of sanity, as cold as a dead flower yet so alive. The dust rose up and marred the hanging paintings and the torchlight blinked again then it plunged the cellar into darkness.

Nothing resisted... Nothing fought... Nothing glinted any more. There was a cadaverous sound coming from above the hanging paintings, it grew much louder like a devil's last call; increased weight to the

sagging roof from heavy useless debris had let the paintings and the roof to fall on them. A swamp of black blood birthed from Mustapha's mouth and it watered the ground causing a vampirish taste. Lots of layers of filth, scum and sewage were formed. Feyrouz spilled ribbons of light while the water drops started to clatter down on all the letters she wrote. Now they are dead, both are dead like a red flower and water hemlock combating on the edge of a dark swamp.

"In most of my life, equality and equity have always been the hallmark of freedom and society; my thoughts will kill me in an atmosphere of mystical blue waves embracing the shores and stubborn human waves destroying every act of liberty. Death is only the beginning for us to pave the way and establish the universal citizen, cut the barriers of geography, discrimination and gender. We should co-exist like milk and honey, like a bunch of sweet jasmynes, like a bird and a nest." Wrote Feyrouz once during her captivity.