

babbling
is
a
substitute
for
sight

bani haykal

babbling is a substitute for sight : a collection of works
bani haykal

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Silence
is an ocean. Speech is a river.
When the ocean is searching for you, don't walk
into the language-river. Listen to the ocean,
and bring your talky business to an end
Traditional words are just babbling
in that presence, and babbling is a substitute
for sight.

-The Three Fish (Rumi)

for ila.

yes. this train ride is extremely shaky. anyway. yes. fuck.
it's violent in here. yes, i have been told that i would be
losing my sight in the months to come. a year at best. and
it has come to my attention that everything recorded in the
next few months might be the last few strains of visual
memory i might have for myself. it is bloody scary. yes.
i am psyching myself. and everything is a broken tonsil
on my thoughts. rickety. rails fragmented into bits of
soup leftovers, heavy in the underground bickers lay gently
these impossible speeches of idiocy. i am crumbling in the
beautiful slip. i wasn't too sure if it'll be easy for me to
come to terms with an inevitability. my ears loses
its common sense. listen dammit, listen. these crackling
pointless diction directionless in nothingness is perhaps
my last station for normality. listen, boy, listen. you've got
to get that last haircut and know who it was she said you
looked like. you have to find out sooner or later. watch these
chances illuminate what is giant in the footsteps of the
last walkway. yes. you know what, boy, forget it all. everything
is a hickey. the world will walk on its own legs, not yours.
lets forget the fairy tales and walk away with the
last fragment of optimism running dry in our hearts.

it was grey haze sudden
ambience explodingly sweet during
dinner. i was sitting in the freckle
of a queue. and spotlight. burst
these open silences and walk
down with me through these
cave ins. it's polite, it's
subtle but i love the impending
departure of slight shifts in
plans. it's a black hole,
where our future is obvious
looped in violent enthusiasm, breaking
floorboards and door frames
as you're balancing the tip toed
grace in this accident. walks are
tasseled mushrooms where the embrace
is incubated through one prodigal
tension of tongues. let it crawl
in, open silences blushing
these cheeks for the billionth time.

so i say, quit
prancing within daydream confinements quivering
in lonely dark spots because our
ambitions to conquer the world on
our sandals and slippers are
not irrelevant with
however it is we see
ourselves. watch our
hands grow to become thieves in
countries getting towed by
wicked corporate laughs, they
are blisters on our constantly
befuddled tongues never
knowing what could and what
is good and sometimes
right to say. oh beautiful, lift
those slippers and let these feet
breathe in sand and silk popping
out of coasts just in
time for supper. we shall and
we will sit in before
these tired legs and rest in the
bewildered are our judgments against
the obvious and should have
been truth, because we should no
longer be prancing within these
walls. oh beautiful, they have
already taken so much
away from our transit tongues
only wanting to express and not oppress
ourselves in the miraculously
boring predicament of our
space. so i say again, oh beautiful, toss our hearts
out into open waters and let them
sink on their own. let these bodies
lie on the palms of man-made
beaches and stain it for good because when we are submerged
into somewhere or whatwhere we
may be, we will not
remember space, sandals,
slippers or this.

happiness in chuckled merriness are
entangled in lips by grasshoppers tidy
springs. all i hear become ocean waves sweeping
back to lashes curled in. mimosa
teeth sharpening my smiles. i think
it is distinct each day. you hold back
these thoughts of underground whispers jump
start blushes by our quiet moments, blank on
pages, you should see the look on our weary
faces each time we have to
go home. quit the moments where
silences are golden
yolk a joke yolk a
joke is fun. blabber beautiful blabber
blemishes or blushes, chuckle and
hop across whatever that is that
is. you can hear us happy in
these hollow spaces of orange. hold
this hand and in figures of eight
not know what anything is but
this hand in figures of eight.

watch the concrete patterns of our
constellations blushing through this pitch
dark scam. us glued close to tired planet
earth dissolve into a close shave bullet
through our beautiful embrace whilst
we let organized crime cringe. your
t-shirt is wet from the night we ran
away from everything from bad commercials
to bad manners to
back ourselves into a tiny
path leading to our cottage on the moon. we
allowed space winds to black hole us
down plot holes and zoos
but just before we arrive anywhere
else close to earth, we
had lunch at the most unpopular
cafe in the universe because they never
had our wanted posters on
display. we jumped ship when
the patrol cars we heard came
screaming down from somewhere
and teleported ourselves back
to our little apartment on
earth. everything is tidy. but
we're breaking walls tonight
again to reach that last
inch of space. tonight we rendezvous
before it's dark and slip
in our invisible pajamas as we
hopscotch our way to nowhere.

wide eyed patience sloths into
shameless empties as we are blisters
on feet weathered to sleep by wheels. i
suppose you aren't quite keen
on sliding down wrinkles smudged
against laughter. for many odd reasons
i think i wouldn't have liked the
experience myself. but hence
entwined frost posture undoubts
the many instances where we would
just have much preferred to drift
off without having to imagine
too far. but there must have been
something in that thrill of unknowingness
which could have brimmed our
shaky thoughts to standstill stay
stay there, stay (i think between
window grill lights disappearing at
every headlight that drives by) between
these invisible (we are not) portraits
blank from past, present future
tenses, for many odd reasons i am
swamped in this Galapagos of your
kisses, and slowly drown in shameless
instances for if you stopped (creepers
rooted to buildings) smudging these
skidmarks at every turn we've taken
there just might be a possibility that
we have finished a portrait
for our grandchildren
flocking this decaying world.

i keep waking up to this feeling
where my feet seems obliterated from sight. standing
proud and tall my disobedient listlessness holds its
finger up on a constant unbridled momentum
daydreaming about dead kisses by brown leaves
collapsing like giants. it has come to
my attention that we are the invisible horn
section, brass rusted during an intermission and
all this adds up to the how does this make
you feel question in question. and we
have yet to find the answer. this bright
blankly voice undulating in the background
hissing to our unsuspecting masks. and we
put ten dollars on nothing because
we thought we felt something. impeccable
human pretense slips along sidewalks
on trembling ankles feeble from a
smile aftermath. dark tongue folds
flat knocking against droplets of
ghost notes drifting. sugar trinkets
over our dead bodies. and the world twitches like
everyone else cringing with hope.

you reset the week whilst
you shuffle the cards we have
been creating all
night. tonight these are the
world is your oyster clamped against
your tongue. laundry stacked up
from where we see volcanoes fire
up in glassy eyed green and
purple in shades burning clouds
like marshmallows soaked in
chocolates. whispers smokey dark
hazelnut, i have 4 cards and you
have 9 because you won the last
round. mine are peppermint laugh
of cheery round cats and yours, i
believe this is where we realize
that we can never make up our own
games because the sequence of
events to follow are futures we
have conjured up for the last
couple of years. your cold glass
of milk is warm and bubbles
like speech snaps away from
momentary start stop arms toss
these wild cards and our bed is
silk till morning. we woke up, just
like last week, where the trumpet
from our clumsy ambitious
neighbor creaked into stop motion
undivine intervention burps
out reality in a song whilst you
shuffle the cards and reset
the week whilst i was probably
asleep.

you are plonking your way between lips and
crumpled smiles disguised in sighs blunt in
this puppet play where shadows
are apparitions slipping on broken
syllables which means nothing, quite honestly. perhaps
occasionally, maybe, we tried to mouth
more than just the standard blurry adaptations
of film dialogues between moments where
you are uncertain if we were drugged
or maybe, possibly, kidnapped by the
ISA. our honeymoon is cut short because
we have been busy with tossing hate
mails and poisoned pizza to politicians
polishing hate crimes across the ignorance
is bliss few running everything from
nothing to practically nothing for
someone. i guess you could say, we never did
quite like the way things have always been. these
walls we sit in are spiked but we would all just
sleep through it for the flat screen televisions
or homes and cars larger than the sun,
we should have seen the look on our
faces when they lured us haphazard
offerings during dinner parties all
year long. and suddenly, fuck babe, nothing
mattered at all. all monotony in
sun baked intervention butters across our
initial assumptions for a clean getaway, but
now all is halted by the few who read
our minds and passports as we're
sleepwalking through the departure
hall. you are
plink plonking your way between
tongues and crumpled lips crushed
in disbelief and i blame me for making bad
decisions and pizza before our holiday.

we lost our slippers in the middle
of our late night swim in the do not
trespass sea where we were bloodshot
with countless criminal activities (maybe
we had head counts but we never got
involved with the psychopath offering money
for the head of the prime minister) such as
what happened to her urine test and how
did he end up in the lion's den? i don't
suppose we are clueless inasmuch as
we were tumultuous with open ended
discourses of the future. you had your
hands clutching on my wishful
thinking blisters developing, God,
you had the world balancing on its
eyes on you. in the distance people
dance to polygamic rhythms before
confused philosophers of happiness. we
had our own music to dance to. we still had
legs. slippers lost isn't the end of the
world. if you say we'll stop the moment
the child is born, it's cool. we are fathers
to a popularity contest so lets fuck
our perception of happiness and
call our feet the introductory discourse
for this sinking play we are in. lets tumble
into bed and let the apocalypse
consume us in one big beautiful sweep
of the ocean's cradle.

hands clasp in the diminishing flick-flickers
of light dissolving before this animated
apocalypse. bed sheets undone and strings of
last night's laughter hang by the curtains. and
whilst in these last few seconds i become suddenly
obsessed with your breasts. odd seconds come
around having thumbs put pressure
on the temple of my confusion, i'm
sliding to the fiction of this standstill
and all i keep thinking about are your
breasts. yes, love, where did
you get these hand crafted work of God? and i do
not wish to wait for an answer, no. time
is tonguing on our what should be and
we bleak the taste of tension for our
buds tasting happy scared moments
before the last light dims. our tongues,
hands and hands and hands on your
hands keep the apocalypse from
settling in. hands, hands clasping
your hands, hands, hands
clasping yours.

hadn't unbuttoned the morning yet. it looked like
it rained last night. excessive breeze. autumn autumn
seems like a dirty word. she hadn't unbuttoned
the morning yet. but the road
had. more than a spoonful of cold cereal and milkshake
along with the aftertaste of dry lipped kisses. what's
inside? we've forgotten about the sun. it must have
been, maybe, what?, 6 in the morning when we
had breakfast. the workers are letting the paint on roads
dry. we had an overcoat. the blanket was on substitute. and
we had subtitles for the playing morning. playing
morning, looped and paused. did we miss a second of
a smile? we could keep heading down. the walkway
isn't too far away from here. it's just around the
corner. it's grey today. what's keeping it?

it was a back alley stroll. and the chimes were
actual instruments getting plonked by the aimless
busker through the grey. footsteps poor in the
muddy scatter of thoughts. this morning erupted
effervescent migrating between eyelids. its the prayer
for the day, the untied sentiments on a free jazz whirl
spinning round the hairpin bend. all of today is
a tree house upgrade, up, higher to the 9th branch
where the view is a lot calmer than before. heavy
metal clangs in the stubborn grey. please, run.
your sniffles echoes the chimes. zinging linen
breath with coffee stains makes each word uttered
poetry. it's all in the cradle where palms reach
each morning, breathe.

felt tip silk buttered markings spun in absolute
don't go off just yet, because we've not picked
up our passports. quit crossing, come now, quit
it. but the shoes are humming. hum. hum to
flickering stanzas muting our daydream. because
that is the last stretch before everything dissolves
into a relative plane. and we'd make phone calls.
kill hours and voices in one beautiful click of
tongues. tug on the momentum where you walk on
and let free these legs from strings and magnets
or trains that only head one direction. don't let
the markings direct. oh i've forgotten though, we're
halfway through the mountains and they've lost
track of our signal when we were humming to
their rhythm.

i've been under the blanket with the weather storming
out. red lights green lights distract me in the middle
of aisles where you transmit your thoughts through paper bags
pinned to each letter, like the one where i was sailing through
the war torn province of the brave. or the one where i had
a billion things to say but could not offer my tongue as
an instrument of peace. glassy eyed floor. fingers numbed in
disbelief. perhaps even another letter isn't what's needed. no. but
supposing, during some point of time or another, i had
thoughts running like, maybe the fugitive didn't
escape the ISD but the ISD escaped the fugitive. i mean,
whilst it is all very possible for one to leave hope, it must
also be possible that hope could leave us. madman. raving
lunatic. run, baby, run. but like what was planned, you stayed
in the middle of the aisle where your blanket left trails (because
the cotton were peeling away) and i was a bloodhound to your
immaculate kiss stain. god, i'm sorry love. maybe it was the green
lights, maybe. and suddenly, it's not about an explanation.

let me start over, we're been under the blanket with the weather
storming out. red lights green lights fluctuates. it's all jumbled up
in here. fractured puzzle pieces hunched into perfection, chemical
reaction to one another, peppermint sunrise finger pointing to pretty
optimism where you cradle the tungsten warm smiles of our
yesterdays. your fingers are cold. slight shift in plans, we'll scurry
down a wormhole, burst open concert halls fluttering the echoes down
hallways and let the reverberations drench our pitch shifted laughs.
we're
not cold bluffers. but, god, i'm sorry love. it occurred to me when
the lights go down. when the orchestra bloomed with the applause.
what can i say, i've been digressing once again.

let us start over. you are under the blanket. and i am an idiot. under the influence of insignificant mess plastered across my forehead, i'll pick up dance classes and reread every misread word i spelt. i mean, i'm no madman, maybe, maybe i am, maybe i'm not. but i'm not a fugitive. yeah, it's getting late. but, you're an arm's reach away from my dial tone. at least i'm wishing i've still hope. but you are in the arms of a hopeless romantic. i'll spell everything from aardvarks to zilch to correct our misread dictionary. take it with you that you are perfect. take it with you, that i'm still celebrating your birthday. take it, cat. take it. no?

and so you had about two billion miles of stretched
fingers on the paragraph. certain. certain. certain. certain. certainly
certain. certain. certainly. certain. you now draw the ink stains
with the figures suspended in between your loose glued eyes
straining for the morning sunrise before you head back to
sleep. don't bother waking up, it's just another morning, certain.
certain. certain. certain, certainly, certain. certainly. certain. it's
unapologetic, it's almost severely benign this wake up call
because for many uncertain reasons i may be one and a half
light years away from the comfort of your nude thoughts, i think
i could see the skyscrapers bellowing out the sun rays cob
webbed against the very grey illumination fit. this is insane,
this is insane. and you said it's about time.

and so you got dressed. certain, certain. certainly certain. certain
certain, certain. certainly certain. it's about a quarter paragraph, your
birthday well wishes, providing that immaculate providence
blanketing an insecure jump start to a wry morning. but who cares. who
cares, certainly, certain certainly certain. so that morning i
thought you had already warmed up the breakfast, but yeah babe, i've
had it all planned out. and you said that you didn't want breakfast.

and so you shuffled an unalarming, undulating texture of voices
from the depths of our kitchen throat, halt throws and tugs of
mismatched politeness, shuffle back again, shuffle, shuffle shuffle
shuffle, shuffle and shuffling back again, shuffle off. and it, then,
becomes dry ice, it becomes darted in the middle of a smile, or at
least one i'm hiding, because the morning isn't over. because the
presents are hanging from the backdoor of my tonsils. ah, this could
wait a bit longer. look it's all pretty much alright, because i
think we could still make dinner reservations. suddenly i feel like
it's all fiction i'm spelling, it's all foley. and you said everything
is going wrong.

and so you sit in. pressed against the backdoor in me, arms
crossed in linen silk, perhaps i am purring my way into
the brandishing freeze frame that we become temporarily immortalized
in. but i think to myself, shuffle the certainlies, shuffle shuffle, shuffle,
certainly, shuffle, shuffle this. give us a kiss. and you
said stop.

(a beat)

and so you breathe in. and breathe in. breathe. out. give us a
kiss. and you said

(a beat)

stop. because it is pouring. and we are drenched in the torrent
splicing its way between our weathered thoughts. it has to be the
awkwardness in trying to conceal a surprise, the pulsating illumination
of walkie-talkie breathing, crossword puzzling or but you said we are
listening to the rain drops drying to the down tempo
blitz of anti-hero humor. stop. stop, stop. stop, just stop, certainly
shuffle your stops and stop, stop. stop. there. and you, but i stopped
you from saying, said defence mechanisms.

i wish i could smile and break open the fragile nature
of this prank surprise. but no, no. that could wait. yea.

(zoom in)

and so you might be twitching with the irregularity of an improv in
progress, but maybe there was something more musical about the
sudden
disinterest i'm revealing today. and as every little detail begins to fall
in place, i could still not perfect the way i'd anthemically articulate
this prose to the sudden pause that happens in five,
four-

(a beat)

tonight, all suddenly i go, tonight, we are post-modern poets drunk
on one pivotal sunset on tongues, mellifluous torch against a planet
smiling from its womb soft and softly certain, slippery on your graceful
footnotes of take this hint you idiot, as poets we might digress, but do
not put up fences surrounding
these immaculate threads chalked
against the backdrop from where we
sit, sat
once like two year olds pretending
to be alone at dawn chasing down trailing
hints of birds fleeing unrequited
countries shadowed
by steel nothingness. it may have
sent shrill winter notes plonking on
our twiddling instances, chanced
dialogues, nose rubs or fingers outstretched
to the corners of dimpled
laughters through the evening. we
are on coasts, we are on impenetrable
momentum drugged in the juxtaposed
mundane everydays. we are not alone
and suddenly everything and everyday
could disappear and we'd still
be high up on a tree house, sleeping
in one invisible sunset.

(a beat)

we are untangling such
a wrap, such beautiful incubation
of tongues, legs and topics of
conversations, conversing
with fluctuating distresses at every
moment curved into a microscopic
bend of thoughts or oh, i
remember what it was i wanted
to say. forget the wasteland where
our footprints left undeniably boring
paths to inanimate shells because
we've gotten lost into another
place, another provincial spot
gluing together our other loose
ends before midnight. watch this
embrace cocoon itself with
us through a bombardment of caramel
induced unknowingness, but why
should it matter? no, it doesn't, because,
watch, watch us untangle, tossed in
to the middle of here we are, untangling
slowly to the clicking of tongues
against time, untangling
footsteps traversing away
from our hiding place.

(a beat)

and so, you now, say stop. stop. do not shuffle, just, stop.
stop. stop. certainly, certainly, stop.

_sleep

{ sometimes it withers. collapsing through midnight conversations. it's
a broken choir. dissolving like light. just light. and the vacuum is an
orchestra replying back to sender. }

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