Photo Credit: Alessandra Capodacqua

السمكة ، حتى وهي في شباك الصيادين ، تظل تحمل رائحة البحر

The fish

Even in the fisherman’s net

Still carries the smell of the sea

البرغوثي مريد Mourid Barghouti

far from the eye far from the heart

I Saw Ramallah هللا رام ريت

(Translation: Ahdaf Soueif)

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the first heat

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now they are here

one is called Port the other the Adriatic Sea

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groundwork that
nowhere in the world is
there this

nowhere is there i.e.
porous sedra like
cities here
crazed water lunatics makes
three-branched tree branches go
off on
open veins
beneath the house ice-cold run human fish swim olms
beneath the house
above water surfaces in day
tufa capsules greenery and shell
next to the house in channels underground in holes namely sedra like
porous rock like
cities that
must raze the house raze the houses but
not now

When you sit down at the table and look out the door you also see yourself in blinding backlight, tottering in an aunt's, a cousin's, high-heeled boats, balancing
a cone with oversized scoops. Their size a testament to the ice cream seller and the family's sound relations – kinship, even. Or is it simply the fact that everyone who knows of your parents' perennial struggle to conceive celebrates your existence. Until they conceive again, that is, and the successors receive a protector in you who does not always deliver. It is still the same wood door with ornamental glass panes you've seen all around the Mediterranean. A cosmetic chimera ajar. It is the same Ottoman wall you see through the door, a white-washed stone wall high enough for passers-by not to be able to glimpse the family's unveiled women in the garden. The only things higher than the wall are the two palm trees that one of the sons of the house smuggled here as cuttings from Egypt maybe forty years ago. No, that's a lie: they are from Split. Both the pomegranate and the fig trees are shorter. The wild grape vines are placed at the same height and create the best possible outdoor

shade in the space between the wall, the house, and the stable wall outside. You want to tame the vine. You sit down with your back to the shed beneath the arched stair in the hajat, the vestibule, where there now is room for a plastic table and four white plastic chairs. You want to sit facing out, but
also not have to contemplate the crappy painting job from shortly after the last war by the refugees who inhabited the house. You feel an affinity with them even if they grew more closely coupled, so to speak, with those who ousted you – but
why was it even necessary for them to paint the wood on the shed and stairs? And if it was necessary, why in this glossy shade of feces?

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you're
so
vain
beloved

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boats craft

rising water filled with shit rising water bearing debris

bears bodies bears debris

the water is large it's gotta be sea but

the water however doesn't seem that salty

and in every room in every room macabre things happen
often one of the children is there

it's small much smaller than how it is

larger than I am now

and I dare not say what I see them do and who they are

and while we sleep someone sneaks out sees friends girlfriends
drunk

who unlike others manage to drink and smoke
until the water reaches its highest point

and I need to see where everyone is and if they have fared well

and they haven't and they haven't
and they haven't and I sit on deck and wait for
someone to come home

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mouth agape gulps sea
hands cupped cleave waterfall

ABOUT THE TRANSLATOR

Jennifer Hayashida is a poet, translator, and artist based in Stockholm. She earned her BA from the University of California, Berkeley and MFA from the Milton Avery Graduate School of the Arts at Bard College. She is currently a PhD candidate in artistic research at HDKV, the Academy of Art & Design at Gothenburg University, and teaches in the creative writing program at Biskops Arnö Nordens Folkhögskola. Her dissertation project, *Feeling Translation*, is an artistic research enquiry where translation is deployed as writing apparatus, pedagogical scaffold, and practice of solidarity. She is the author of *A Machine Wrote This Song* (Gramma Poetry/Black Ocean, 2018) and the chapbook *Översättaren som arkiv/Arkiv som översätter* (Autor, 2020). Her scholarly and creative work has been published in journals including *Women's Studies Quarterly, Women & Performance*, and *The Asian American Literary Review*. Her translations between Swedish and English include collections by Athena Farrokhzad, Don Mee Choi, Iman Mohammed, Kim Hyesoon, and Merima Dizdarević.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Merima Dizdarević

Merima Dizdarević, born 1983 in Yugoslavia is a poet and multidisciplinary and multilingual artist based in Malmö. Her expression stems from a poetic, writing practice. She writes poetry, prose, essays and experimental texts. She translates between her spoken languages and sometimes from those she does not speak. Merima also teaches art and art criticism, has worked as a cultural producer and engages into anti-fascist and decolonial thought within and from the cultural field. Her first major Swedish publication *långt från ögat långt från hjärtat (far from the eye far from the heart)*, published on Albert Bonniers Förlag in November 2022, is a maximalist, lyrical text that was nominated for the Swedish Writer's Union award The Catapult Prize for best Swedish literary debut.