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Alessia Tamer

Another Kind of Death

When I wake up in the morning it feels like I have left a part of me in the oneiric landscape that still lingers in the back of my head: flashes of sensations, twirling colours, otherworldly melodies sooth my racing, anxiety-scarred mind. That was nothing, I always tell myself, just a dream, surely. Coffee is lulling me into the first stages of the day as the muffled sound of traffic filters through the dusted glass of my kitchen window; a persistent cacophony of honks and irritated half-censored obscenities accompanies me as I brush my teeth and pick the necessities for the day.

The street is crowded with people coming and going; little children holding their parents' hands, asking for that thing or the other, business women clutching their briefcase, men in full pinstripe suit nervously looking at their watches, everyone has the same expression, that is, that of the one who believes the world is committing a heinous crime not waiting for them, not cherishing for their invaluable time. I walk amongst them, pacing leisurely, looking up at the sky, breathing deeply and savouring the moment: the crisp late-autumn air is filling my lungs, a hint of acrid exhaust gas reaches my nostrils, as the space filled with cars is right next to me, and what can only be petrichor permeates the atmosphere.

The Hospital is only a few blocks away, but I take my sweet time examining the texture of the walls, caressing the leaves of those seemingly never-ending hedges; my fingers dance softly over the cold, roughly cut metal of a fence. My eyes follow the fingers down where more skin stings due to the cold air and my mind screeches to a full stop. What are these called? I am sure I know their name. How can I forget such a common word? The cold is stronger now; I try and protect myself from it clutching the... soft wool around my neck and speed up a little. Every wish to procrastinate gone with that word.

The next thing I notice is I'm frantically repeating words in my brain as if it was a poem, a desperate doggerel without an order, a sense, and my chest is tightening uncomfortably. Why was I going to... to the white building with the nurses again? Was I sick? Step after step, I begin feeling light-headed, almost nauseous, as I unsteadily put one... shoe after the other. It feels like my brain has a hole, somewhere, and words are running away, fast, fast, faster. What is happening?

I reach the place. It is nice. Doctor said it's ok. Just words. A little. Some of them. I'll be fine. What do I need words for after all?

I go back home. The street is full of people. The air is cold. It's not far, I'll be there soon. I still feel like something is missing.

Something important.

But what are words for?

Important.

Maybe?

I sleep. I dream.
I wake. Something's missing.
Words.

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