

Ilhan Sami Çomak and Caroline Stockford poetry collaboration April 2020

First stanzas of Ilhan, responded with second stanza by Caroline 1-5.

1.

Light hits the seas within me.
The questions are immense.
It's like freshness is rising from fine climates
Like I'm gathering flowers, gathering
countless pleasures from touch.
Breeze is blowing from the future.
My breath corrals the excitement
Remind me of the law of the wave,
fluent and formidable.
Let life become new! Let hunger rise up,
from just-made bread and
the thought of poppies wet
by new rain grow clearer
Your lip is red with the taste of a first kiss
bring new fires with your body,
I'll wash myself anew.

The sea's law is made by its wave, it turns
back to wildness the green glass surface,
waves run far from their home, to abate
on the sand, they return depleted.
We wave to one another from our white
wooden boats, I look for you each time I
crest a wave. You are there, and children
write your poems on the beach.
The bell of a first kiss is on my tongue, I
have forgotten everyone.
I've grown deaf in this world of war cries.
I need the sea and your dazzling.
With poems we fling a lasso at sky.
Suddenly I'm flying.
Yes, life becomes new.

2.

Perhaps they tell you my name,
as my face breaks up in a broken mirror
What do you expect from a silhouette?
Let water pour from my tearfilled eyes
and let us go silent together,
time and again, in darkness.
So that different scents may mature,
rising from the body of life, flowing

to us, around us, filling to fulness with
all-new aromas.

Other suns are dawning, can you see them?
As last the knot of love is being undone
I've been embraced, I've seen, I've come.

If we have no names how can we
know each other? Your inner sea is
clear in poetry. I don't know the face
of the new-born moon. Let the knot
of love unfold like a flower.
Let it shine without shadow, as soft
as April's suns. I can't see the new sun
it's shining power is blinding. I open my
eyes in the cinnamon garden. At last
my courage is blooming like spring buds.
My burden lends its weight to earth,
my back is light, oh life! I am embraced.

3.

I want to tell you of waters today
Of the smell of cut roses in baskets
of my desire to climb the willow tree
and of longings that have faded to memories.
To tell you how the anger is sown, when
my mind plays its broken record, calling
Life tripped me up! It went and tripped me up!
Where will the sun rise? I want to talk
about this and the most simple reasons for crying
in the rain. The sky has a strange way of caressing.
There is a sound to budding leaves and to
forgottenness. The sun will be born from my palm!
I want to tell you about this, and of the trembling
of the wind that swims over my body.

Your body's like a tree, each leaf is a poem
the curious wind plays every one, and we,
on our far islands, hear the music of your news.
We measure endings with the setting sun.
That ceaseless star will not stop, pouring gold.
Tell me the rain's secrets, on the mountain
slopes at a quarter to dawn. I would tell you,
too, of the vision of that day, when I saw the
horizon rise up, of the inner worlds of patience
and possibility, but you know all these better
than me. Tell me of your miracles, I'm listening.

4.

I had a pomegranate, quinces, I spent time in
the ripening of fruit. It was morning. And they
saw the summer sun overflow from me.
With the eternal beauty of my childhood
I said, Fall down, you mountain! Cease, you winds!
They threw stones at me. We got there, and they
threw stones at me. I was sleepless. The birds
were warbling in full flow. The waters were torpid,
my steps a little rushed. I said, *The names of flowers
are spinning in my head, their memories, their scents
are trembling on and on.* But they threw stones at me
from that place called life.
Did you see? Did anyone?

I won't turn away my head, and there's no escape
from now. We are what it means to live, it's us,
and all the stones we touch will one day return
to sand. The hand of patience puts everything
in its place, in time. I can't tell this to the weary
mountains, or the fretful seas, they are both
older than me. Birds fly over heads of
good and bad, led on by vibrations. And if
it reflects our face, does water not also
see us? We wear the things we know like
new brooches. The mountains are laughing
at us, showers of falling stones are chuckling.
In my hand I will catch every stone they threw at you.

5.

First I thought of the freshness of the shade
in which I hide. The sound of the city,
mountain's distant grandeur. And the clumsy
attempts of fledglings as they try to land
on branches. I grew thirsty, so thirsty and
thought of other lives. I thought long and
hard, with no view on which to rest my eyes,
of darkness and the sun. My mind asks,
What is it to thrust out green leaves?
What is it to work, build up a sweat,
to tire thanks to labour, from beautiful
hard work? No matter in which stream
I bathe, the waters are so bitter.

Look! See your form in the shaded corner
of the lake. There floats the crown of a daffodil
swimming like a yellow ghost. It's petals

are seeping towards the silence of transparency.
There is strength in the ellipses, where petals
overlap, we are strong in the space we make
between us. Come, let us climb Idris's mighty
mountain, let the valiant memories of your
muscles return. Let sweat shine, and not tears.