

Ney

Take apart the hollow bone□
drill holes□
carve and smooth□
this former lover of flesh□
construct a flute
let us blow
our breath
play the harmony of our grandmothers'
resurrections over Aleppo
while all the sunken
tombstones cry out: we want to return□

every morning we dress ourselves
in another country
and there is nobody to shout□
when the bombs fall□
just a loud whistle and a terrible
silence□ we stir in our beds□

we wake covered in sweat□
the millions of refugees□
pills we can't swallow
they remain□
lodged inside our throats□

we drink too much coffee
to function
haunted by guns
we don't even pack

it doesn't matter
how many birdhouses□we build
someone will always say
we're vigilantes

we watch Aleppo in grainy footage□
we wave to our cousins
over the airwaves□
and hope satellites
can deliver embraces□

in the diaspora we sink
into chairs□ we open a book to escape□

while the libraries in our homelands
are set ablaze□ our stories prayers
and histories□burn into smoke filled
tornadoes□schools explode with children□
still at their desks□

churches mosques and temples,
now rubble□news crews
film carnage and wailing□
zooming in on our anger□
calling us criminals never our names no□never our names
only collateral collateral collateral
here in the diaspora

I can't even mourn in Arabic
I've forgotten the language□
but at night I still dream with my people□I dream
that I am crossing□borders with my cousins□
under a quiet sky
and we take turns carrying one another□

at night when I dream
I sing all of our true names