

Pleasure Lost Under the Rubble

By: Haneen

On some days, I am filled with poetry.

On some days, I find myself chiseling words until they become sharp enough to stab through flesh.

On some days, I teach my words how to find your soul.

But today is not one of those days.

Today, I have to fight for every smile.

So, today, I cannot fight to find the poetry in me.

Today, my words cannot teach you the things my land has taught me.

Today, my words cannot make you feel the weight of our dead.

Today, my words hide from me while I wait for the end.

Today, I spare my words from the pain of knowing that this might be the death of all hopes and dreams.

Today, no clever word play could even begin to explain the horrors I have seen on my screen.

The horrors. The horrors. The horrors.

So I hope you excuse me when I say that,

Today, my words cannot find a ribbon to tie around them.

Today, my words are stripped of their polish.

Today, my words are messy, naked, vulnerable.

Today, my words bleed.

I am sure that I find hopeful words tomorrow,

Words of freedom and liberation.

Words dreaming of a free sky.

Words of pleasure as resistance.

Words on community joy as a life line.

Words about laughter loud enough to drown out the noise of fighter jets.

But, today, all I can offer is questions.

Today, that has to be enough.

How do you find pleasure when rain turns into white phosphorus?

How do you find pleasure in perpetual darkness?

How do you find pleasure while counting the days until the bombs come for you next?

How do you find pleasure while counting your dead?

How do you find pleasure when you no longer have a neighborhood to go back to?

How do you find pleasure, when your past, present, and future all live in the same tent?

How do you find pleasure while your body turns into a new massacre everyday?

How do you find pleasure when your life becomes the funeral?

How do you find pleasure when your blood starts to flood the streets?

How do you find pleasure when your children turn into dust?

If you are lucky you might find a piece of their skin so that you can give them one last kiss. How do you find pleasure in a last kiss?

How do you find pleasure when the cold hugs you so tight, it steals your last breath?

How do you find pleasure when your babies are left to cry until they decompose?

How do you find pleasure as you watch the last university explode?

How do you find pleasure as hospitals crumble?

How do you find pleasure when your memories become the target?

How do you find pleasure while watching the world debate if your life is worth saving?

How do you find pleasure when being alive becomes worse than death?

How do they find pleasure while they live in our stolen homes?

How do they find pleasure while ignoring the smell of our burning flesh?

How do they find pleasure while blowing up a whole universe, day after day?

How do they find pleasure while killing 250 of us, day after day?

How do they find pleasure while parading our dead through the streets?

How do they find pleasure while being haunted by the living?

How does the world turn down the volume of the children as they scream?

How does the world find pleasure while profiting off of death?

How do I find pleasure when my other cannot find bread?

How do I find pleasure when my blood is cheap?

How do I find pleasure while watching my people's genocide being live streamed?

How do I find pleasure while I try to scream,

We are here.

We are here.

We, the Palestinian people, are here, and we deserve pleasure just as much as you do.