

# UNDERSIEGE

M a h m o u d D a r w i s h

Excerpt

-6-

The siege will last in order to convince us we must choose  
an enslavement that does no harm, in fullest liberty!

\*\*\*

Resisting means assuring oneself of the heart's health,  
The health of the testicles and of your tenacious disease:  
The disease of hope.

\*\*\*

And in what remains of the dawn, I walk toward my exterior  
And in what remains of the night, I hear the sound of footsteps inside me.

\*\*\*

Greetings to the one who shares with me an attention to  
The drunkenness of light, the light of the butterfly, in the  
Blackness of this tunnel!

\*\*\*

Greetings to the one who shares my glass with me  
In the denseness of a night outflanking the two spaces:  
Greetings to my apparition.

\*\*\*

My friends are always preparing a farewell feast for me,  
A soothing grave in the shade of oak trees  
A marble epitaph of time  
And always I anticipate them at the funeral:  
Who then has died...who?

\*\*\*

Writing is a puppy biting nothingness  
Writing wounds without a trace of blood.

\*\*\*

Our cups of coffee. Birds green trees  
In the blue shade, the sun gambols from one wall  
To another like a gazelle  
The water in the clouds has the unlimited shape of what is left to us  
Of the sky. And other things of suspended memories  
Reveal that this morning is powerful and splendid,  
And that we are the guests of eternity.