

POSTCARDS POSTCARD

Police are absent
from the burned asphalt rituals
spinning tyres tattoo
a defining signature upon the ass-end of this city

Last week's blood crusts over
bubblegum and cigarette butts in a
fast-food drive-thru parking lot
beside the library (the carwash is more popular)

They pulled burners and rubber tubing
from our neighbour's garage
a stream of persistent visitors
undisrupted
(more popular than the carwash)

Here I am stifled by:
- playground vandalism
- Lebanese bakery
- monosyllabic exchanges [eyy man/yeh/nah/bro/cuz/wot?]

Teenagers discover themselves
and condoms
in overgrown vacant lots
beside illegal vegetable gardens
netted
sprawling, ignoring the fenced parameters
of the migrant
home next door

Black-shawled babushkas
carry baked goods
and speak in their mother tongue
of home
of their mothers
and daughters
who are now mothers
with daughters who disobey and say 'We do not wish to be mothers'
[Yoo mutha she tell mi yoo no hav boifrien.]

An upturned coffee cup reads
join the ranks
of Mary and Theresa, inhabit
the space between laundry and kitchen, worship
the value of silent alignment

Holding breath
streets are exhausted
the train comes
the train goes

and schoolkids throw stones
at veteran magpies
who tangled my hair (when I was little)
and from their perch can see
all the way home