

Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge

Volume 7

Issue 5 "*If I touch the depths of your heart ...*": *The Human Promise of Poetry in Memories of Mahmoud Darwish*

Article 11

1-1-2009

Assassination

Mahmoud Darwish

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholarworks.umb.edu/humanarchitecture>



Part of the [Poetry Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Darwish, Mahmoud (2009) "Assassination," *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge*: Vol. 7: Iss. 5, Article 11.
Available at: <http://scholarworks.umb.edu/humanarchitecture/vol7/iss5/11>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by ScholarWorks at UMass Boston. It has been accepted for inclusion in Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at UMass Boston. For more information, please contact library.uasc@umb.edu.



Assassination

Mahmoud Darwish

Translation by Catherine Cobham

The critics kill me sometimes:
they want a particular poem
a particular metaphor
and if I stray up a side road
they say: 'He has betrayed the road'
And if I find eloquence in grass
they say: 'He has abandoned the steadfastness of the holm oak'
And if I see the rose in spring as yellow
they ask: 'Where is the blood of the homeland in its petals?'
And if I write: 'It is the butterfly my youngest sister
at the garden door'
they stir the meaning with a soup spoon
And if I whisper: 'A mother is a mother, when she loses her child
she withers and dries up like a stick'
they say: 'She trills with joy and dances at his funeral
for his funeral is his wedding'

And if I look up at the sky to see
the unseen
they say: 'Poetry has strayed far from its objectives'
The critics kill me sometimes
and I escape from their reading
and thank them for their misunderstanding
then search for my new poem.
River Dies.

CREDIT: Darwish, Mahmoud. 2009. "Assassination." Pp. 51-52 in *A River Dies of Thirst: Journals* by Mahmoud Darwish. Translated from the Arabic by Catherine Cobham. Brooklyn, NY: Archipelago Books. Gratefully reprinted by permission from the publisher of the poem.