

## العطش

وُلدتُ في العطش، هكذا روت أمِّي. لا أدري الآن، وأنا أكتب عن هذه المرأة التي تلاشت من حياتي حين كنت في الخامسة عشرة، هل كانت شفّتها متشقّقتين بأزياح شقّافة متوازية، أم أنّ صورة العطش التي لاحقتني منذ ولادتي، حوّلت شفّتها العطشانيتين إلى صورة لا تفارق مخيّلتي حين أستعيد تلك المرأة في ذاكرتي.

كانت أمِّي، وكان اسمها منال ابنة عاطف سليمان، من قرية عيلبون في الجليل. حين أذكرها، أضع الفعل الماضي الناقص أمام اسمها. فهي بالنسبة لي مبتدأ لا خبر له. وبعدها غادرتُ البيت في الخامسة عشرة كي أعمل وأعيش في كاراج الخواجة غبريال في حيفا، اكتشفت أنّ هذه المرأة مرّت في حياتي كنسمة هواء، لم تترك خلفها سوى عالمها المصنوع من الحكايات، وأنّي لا أذكر منها سوى شفّتها المتشقّقتين وعينيها اللوزيّتين الواسعتين المتموّجتين باللون البنيّ الغامق المنغرس في أعماق البؤبؤين، وخطّين رفيعين لامرئيين في وجنتيها. وشعور عميق بأنّي متروك كي أعيش وحيداً.

*My name is Adam* (English edition, p. 123) – Translated from Arabic  
by Humphrey Davies

## *Thirst*

As my mother told the tale, I was born in thirst. Now, as I write about that woman who vanished from my life when I was fifteen, I don't know whether her lips were indeed cracked in parallel, straight lines, or if it is the image of thirst, which has pursued me since childhood, that transforms her thirsty lips whenever I recall her.

She was my mother, and she was Manal, daughter of Atif Suleiman, of the village of Eilaboun in Galilee. When I remember her, I say, "Manal was . . ." for to me she's like the first word in a sentence that was never completed. After I left the house at fifteen to work in Mr Gabriel's garage in Haifa, I discovered that the woman had passed through my life like a sigh of wind, leaving behind her nothing but her world of stories, and that the only things I could remember of her were her cracked lips, her wide almond-shaped eyes deep inside whose pupils trembled a hint of dark brown, two fine, almost invisible, lines on her cheeks, and a deep feeling that I had been abandoned so that I could live alone.

## **SEDE**

Nasci na sede, foi isso que minha mãe disse. Agora, enquanto escrevo sobre aquela mulher que desapareceu da minha vida quando eu tinha quinze anos, não sei se seus lábios estavam realmente rachados em linhas paralelas, retas, ou se é a imagem da sede, que me persegue desde a infância, que torna seus lábios sedentos sempre que eu me lembro dela.

Ela era minha mãe, e ela era Manal, filha de Átif Sulaiman, da vila de Eilabun na Galileia. Quando me lembro dela, ponho o verbo “ser” no passado, depois o nome e só. Para mim, ela é um sujeito numa frase sem predicativo. Quando eu saí de casa, aos quinze anos, para trabalhar na oficina mecânica do sr. Gabriel, em Haifa, descobri que essa mulher tinha passado pela minha vida como uma brisa, não deixando nada além do seu mundo de histórias, de quem só recordo os lábios rachados, os largos olhos amendoados, onde no fundo das pupilas uma cor marrom-escura ondulava, duas linhas finas quase invisíveis nas bochechas e um sentimento profundo de que eu tinha sido abandonado para viver sozinho.