

Life isn't a quiet river

by Zehra Doğan

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Cultural, political, social oppressions, discriminations of every kind, ethnicities... With each breath we are poured into a specific mold. Each of us feels ensconced in an existence, constrained, tied to at least some of the millions of other pre-established identical molds. In one of those cells scattered among billions of such constructions, we drown in the restrictive definitions clinging to our skin.

So then, what is freedom?

When life itself is an imprisonment, how can we draw the notion of freedom before our eyes?

Words... Sometimes, I see that words are not innocent. I see words as criminal fragments subjected to the macho mentality.

Inept words subjugating us to notions and facilitating the hold flowing from macho fingers, filling the Sumerian tablets with the laws of Babel, the epic tales of a civilization gorged with scenes of war. And they persist, filling books, texts, laws, defining the official story, religions, gender-assigned roles. Each of those words rises up before us, as racist, sexist, discriminatory laws. Were not the first normative Sumerian scripts so designed? And the fact that these first scripts were also commercial ones, did this not announce from the onset this world altered by merchandise values, and the ugliness of words thus tarnished, letter after letter.

Should I turn my back on these sullied words and plunge into deep silence? Or, on the contrary, should I seize them in my open palms, bathe them, knead them, remodel them so that they slide between my fingers, reborn in new words, genderless, borderless and free?

Can I manage to do this by myself?

We must touch.

It is by brushing against one another that we can erase the connotation of words, their usage, and remodel them for an endless reunion with the universe, in harmony and a relationship in otherness.

- *I'm in a bottomless pit... I can't breathe...*
- *Doors are closing on me, one after another, I can't breathe...*
- *I'm in a tunnel, I hear the sound of water... Water keeps me alive...*
- *Words take wing between my fingers...*
- *I am liberated with my writings from where I have been imprisoned by their writings...*
- *Words...The masculine words clinging to me take my breath away, capture me, mould me... I am drowning, I am drowning...*
- *But again, words breathe to me...*
- *I'm not alone, we flow into eternity...*