

Limited Anxiety

by yasser musa

2010 poems

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ut for
this poe
atch





i've come to this place
to write
to witness ripples, lines per inch

to print a copy of this book
burn it
send electronically
to those in my yahoo inbox...

Hail Max!

You came into the Biltmore Riverside Ballroom
Belize City
Under a white towel
A Chetumal Mexican waiting for you

The pundit punch
Belize boxing dead

You enter the ring
Went straight for the TV camera
“I am Max Payne, Max Payne...”

You came out swinging
Wild screams
Hands flying
Feet fluttering
Your blows cutting through the wind

“punch a max,
Punch a max
Knock off ye fucking head,”

Seconds into the second round
you caught him
Hail Max!
eruption
the smell of beer and stout
Carpet full of nachos

Dance Max, dance
Plastic gold trophy in the air
Dance for Belize
Dance for us

August poems

the click zap!

becoming main stream
the funky monkey on a kamikaze
slide
weed wackers in the streets
banks swimming in blood
sex after 9pm
Whats on the news?
Channel cruise!

Arafat

for Uncle Albert

“Arafat” you called me
As a ten year old I would only bow
To your arabesque chant

We never really spoke
But your word made me feel connected
To Ramallah
To goats milk on my father’s body

To late evenings with granddad Hamid
Eating at the head of a mahogany table
Listening to Radio Belize
Scraping eggs with an olive oiled slice of Chinese bread

“Arafat” you called me
Even on that day I went to see you
Lying in your bed
I wanted to say so many things

But we only spoke
About casinos
Your next check up
The words of doctors

I wanted to share with you
Some poetry
But we ran out of time
“Arafat” the word
Will have to do...

Untitled

Each morning I take my son
and daughter to school
Hoping i could do something
To avoid for them
A horrific adolescence

Untitled #2

Each time I kiss you
Know this
It takes courage
I think about it for hours
Sometimes days
It does not matter that I've known you for
More than 20 years

Each time I kiss you
Know
That there is no substitute

Fish, stories and unions

For Ray Lightburn

Only yesterday
I learnt of your love for Leonard Cohen

So many days you danced in my mother's kitchen
You the chef of stories and unions
Your massive fish full of tomatoes
Your narratives full of creole and bombast

That was a time
When Kings Park smelt like limestone
When Shape Rohdas was shooting bombs into hoops
When Evan X added offset to his Amandala

At your funeral Bullet Craig screamed in joy
I stood at the back thinking
About the sound of your voice
Droplets of sweat on my lips
"Lifting me like an olive branch"
Be my homeward dove,
And dance me to the end of love."

Ray, you didn't have a facebook page
Ray, you didn't use google

A pinch of this and a flick of that
The red, orange tomatoes
Is what I want to remember
Cilantro serenades...

Bright, well-loved

For Helen Yu

I see your injured daddy
Stare into your coffin
Your mommy by your side

You sleep
You lived on Iguana Street

Hellen the air ways are loud with your name
I know you had your skirt ironed
Your books packed
For school on Monday

Helen, I am Belize
Born here in the swampy section
The Chinese community shut down their stores for you
No fry chicken, no condensed milk
for one day

Haulover 2

Haulover

Your banks smell of marijuana

You splash white styrofoam containers into

The supreme court parking lot

Children from Pinks Alley

stone sailboats

Then jump into your deep muddy calm

Homage to Facebook

Is there anything better than facebook?
Facebook, I love you

But why can't I get rid of some of my friends?
The ones I don't care about anymore
The ones who just tell me useless shit about their lives
About their stupid, insipid, uninspiring thoughts

Is there anything better than facebook?
Facebook, I love you

But your wall
Does it have to be so full of mada-rass
The rass of fingernail polish, broken promises,
Opinions about the weather, the afternoon feelings
When
The ordinary becomes precious
The mundane magical

Is there anything better than facebook?
Facebook, I love you

How much personal sadness can your West Coast server manage?
How many glamorized photos can you save?

Tomorrow I will post another entry

With a list of those friends
I want to subtract

Dialogue

I am in dialogue with so many dead people

Appearing on sepia colored paper

Their words

Their writing

I still have Post-Modern dreams

For Moses Levy AKA Shyne, formerly Jamal Barrow

You must be fucking crazy
Listening to Uncle Mike
He told us he was building you a studio
So you could make records via Europe

Now home
Can you see Brooklyn from your Belize City penthouse?
Are you Jewish like Netanayhu?
Were you surprised by Bredda David's question?

Last night you wore a red bow tie
On Channel 7 television
You stood next to a bearded man
A 19th century man

I see you Levy
Running up Princess Margaret Drive
With big head phones
Do you listen to Lady Gaga?

Seagulls by your side
Do you ever hear from Jennifer?

Post-script

Since you went to Jerusalem and became Moshe Levy Ben-David

Google says:

“a once notorious rapper takes a Shyne to Jerusalem”

Ba'al Teshuva Yeshiva Ohr Somayach

Your Eithopian mother, your Belizean uncle

My grandfather lived a few miles from your hotel room

I wrote you a letter

But my friends convinced me to keep it on the computer

It had to do with you being our Ambassador for music

About the pledge you made to our artists

But for now

As this poem cautiously presses on

I'll watch you on my television

In your John Lennon and Kurt Cobain shirts

I work among people who

I work among people who
Enjoy music all day
Who chat, and facebook, and download, and burn
And stare at little screens, little well lit screens,
Images, words, audio, verbs, short text messages

I want to speak to them sometimes
But my plain language is immensely small

They walk pass
Their heads down to the earth
Their ears stuffed with white cotton buds
Their skinny jeans, and wildly shiny shirts

K5

On the 5th anniversary of Katrina

Barrack zips down on air force 1
Martha's vineyard to Xavier

New Orleans
I see Brad Pitt brought paparazzi architecture

The sweating magnolias
Where is Trombone Shorty?

The flicker of news
A man called Glen Beck
Preaches with a chord less microphone

At the feet of good ole Abe

**Oh My baby,
You Peed Yourself...
Mommy gonna Change Your Clothes**
for Eyannie Nunez, 8

just a slight tilt to your head
four little white flower pins
decorate your hair
your beaming glow on the cover of Amandala
Eyannie Nunez, 8

Police say
Two gunmen jumped out of a vehicle
How dark was the night?
Small holes in the plycem

Sleeping at the foot of the bed
Deep dreams
A day after you ran in the park

Zericote street
Echo of shots
tragedy of mammoth proportions

A bullet
Entered your tiny body under the left armpit
Your mommy slept in a chair

Four thousand lined the streets
Holding bristol boards,
flags and plastic water ideals

Short poem 1

A Lincoln taxi pulls a horse
A red bull van follows

Something important

Every morning
Around 4 or 4:30
In the dark of my house
I start feeling
That I should be doing something important

So I fix coffee
Or brew tea
Or send an email
Or arrange the coins for my children's lunch
Or write notes for the day ahead

But it never feels important

So I try to avoid the feeling
Of thinking that I should be doing something important

But it only makes things worse

Stored Words

In the back of my head
I keep a set of words
Swirling around
Afraid
Coward
To speak it loud

Chon Sann Diet

tonight I feel it on my tongue
rasor blades

addicted to the sweet and sour sauce
soy's salt
neat noodles in the hot and sour soup
fry chicken batter
pickled cabbage with saturated fries

something about popping that plastic
box
seeing smoke
smelling something
fast and familiar

Limited Anxiety

At moments of deep introspection

Limited anxiety

Bright screens await

Text to type

Type to think

Music scrolled by a thumb

Playlists of pleasure

Why can't I find myself

for more than five minutes?

Passion

Nobody is here

Feeling

Nobody hears

Hanging around for the next inbox
item

Welcome to the exquisite corpse

Shrapnel on my eyebrows

DVD, MP3, ebook,

a rooster trying to sing