

**Selected work from Ilhem Issaoui's *Thoughts of My Own***

**a letter to a stranger (3)**

dear thenceforward stranger  
call it a confession  
a moment of madness  
that shan't be healed  
nor defined  
albeit I am as sure  
as the breath  
that has long ago left the lungs of mine  
that this love is my pure and only  
everlasting ordeal

**Cacophonous**

Voices

Haunting me

Hither

And

Thither

I collect

My torn morsels

Relentless

Cerberus

Is behind me...

### **Like it never was**

my dear bygone darling  
I still remember  
how the words came of your lips  
how clouds became cloudier  
how the sun became gloomier  
how the wind became a slayer  
and the foliage under your slow steps  
was busily moaning  
and how somber I was  
and how somber I am

### **meaninglessness**

and when time becomes meaningless  
nude of any comprehension  
the heart frigid as ice  
time suicides  
“chillingness” unremitting  
and when each word uttered  
uselessly  
exhaling inhaling  
the shallowness of the past  
we are trapped in  
like some curse  
that we are doomed to  
and when tears  
cease to run  
upon the lifeless face  
like a desert deserted  
what shall be done  
other than fathoming  
that nothing should be done

## **my philosophy**

I am simple  
aye, I am simple  
and the half of everything  
can remit my ardour  
I am a boat made of paper  
half sunk and half lofty  
and I have dreamt and dreamt  
not once  
of existing  
and not existing  
purgatorial essence  
is the essence that defines me  
an arch-angel  
an arch-fiend  
nay, I am not avoiding thee  
O thee who are besieging me  
thee who defines faithfulness  
By mere presence  
and thou who shout  
“What a crime  
What a crime”  
When someone sees beauty  
In a marvel  
that is half lame  
and half sublime  
What a nonsense!  
My philosophy is not thy  
I am my own definition  
I am mine  
I am mine

***On the road of madness I met me***

On the road of madness I met me  
I asked it, "where were thou thenceforward?"  
It replied "tush ne'r utter a word,  
For thou are a Murderer  
Thou suppress word  
Thou shan't have no right  
Thou shan't speak."

On the pathless road I met I  
It torn me into pieces and said:  
"Thou are blinded by thee,  
Thou are mad,  
Thou begin a battle on which  
Thou kill thee,  
Thou are a brainless villain,  
Thou shall live brainless and sad."

**The day went well**

indeed the day went well  
just some tears were shed upon the memory of an unknown  
but  
never mind it the day went well  
spring was not felt  
not on trees  
nor hills  
or vows  
the unforgotten traits of a stranger  
but nay  
everything went well

## **the justifiable farewell**

rain fell  
and how heavy it was  
it sounded not like rain  
but dire blows  
and all you commented upon  
was how chilling my hands were

## **The lost letter**

and with the ink of my lost solitude  
my lugubrious temper  
my furious traits  
I write thee  
with the plumes of  
the gloomiest dooms  
I write thee  
and with the colour of despair  
that had ever since tinged every curve of the bosom  
I colour thee  
with the fragrants of  
longing  
tormenting  
the "plaguest" of the plagues  
the sediments of bygone years that yearn everlastingly  
with all the paradoxes, the dilemmas  
and  
the unsilenced  
undeaf  
incomprehensible  
mournful  
mourn  
I mourn me  
I scatter thee upon the grounds of purgatory  
though I know  
aye, I know  
that wind shall contrive against me  
and sow your seeds again  
upon the land of me

*Winter inside me*

On the hills of souvenirs I walked  
Rain like soft tunes,  
Coming out of the piano of nostalgia  
There thou appeared,  
Clearer than the sky,  
Brighter than the dews,  
Amongst the dusty books,  
Ay thou appeared,  
Whispered in my ear  
Tunes never heard alike  
Tunes that shan't be forgotten  
Tunes of an everlasting vow,  
What could I demand more  
Thou told me to close the eyes,  
Painted roses on the bygone scars,  
Watered the lust flowers,  
Wiped away the crystal tears,  
Thou hast left...

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Ilhem Issaoui is a 22 years old Tunisian translator and writer of poems and short stories. She graduated last year from the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of Sousse, Tunisia. She was recently placed as a runner up for the international Canadian competition CreatEng Café for her poem "A Letter to a Stranger (1)." Her short story "if only" was selected to be published in the 90th issue of the online literary magazine "Danse Macabre," and her poem "The Tear on the Cheek," has recently been published in *Mad Swirl* magazine.