

2000

Memory

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Luljeta Lleshanaku

MEMORY

There is no prophecy, only memory.
What happens tomorrow
has happened a thousand years ago
the same way, to the same end—
and does my ancient memory
say that your false memory
is the history of the featherhearted bird
transformed into a crow atop a marble mountain?
The same woman will be there
on the path to reincarnation
her cage of black hair
her generous and bitter heart
like an amphora full of serpents.

There is no prophecy, things happen
as they have before—
death finds you in the same bed
lonely and without sorrow, shadowless
as trees wet with night.

There is no destiny, only rules of biology:
fish splash in water
pine trees breathe on mountains.

Translated by Albana Lleshanaku and Henry Israeli