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I Am Not a Person From Sarajevo

Faruk Šehić

in Sarajevo

April is truly the cruelest month
where fantasy and horror mix in the test tubes of the bodies
ghosts hang in the air, ghosts of literary schizophrenia
you only have to pick them, those sad bunches of universes
for which you will pay with your own blood
at Bistrik and Kovači the houses are fenced by high walls
but human souls are open like the cupolas of Ottoman mosques
the air is sharp like a month of the dead
in coffeeshop stories the war never ends
squadrons are arranged between bottles of beer
discussions are of Serbs, Muslims, and Croats
of villains and victims
a hundred times the established “truth” is measured on a nanogram scale
because epic narration is the fruit of red blood cells
if Brazil is the country with the highest number of national football coaches in the world
here live the highest number of wooden philosophers and misanthropes
in spite of everything that ravages and distorts me
I still participate in your paradoxical mythmaking
Sarajevo, you haven’t given me anything
except your poetry.

Translated by Sara Elaquad – © 2007 Sara Elaquad

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