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In Sarajevo I Was Happy

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In Sarajevo I was happy there
cafés theater nightlife twenty minutes to the mountains
three hours to the sea
a good job a cosmopolitan life
but when the war started I felt unsafe
so I came to Belgrade to live among my own
I thought a better life no shelling here
there is water electricity that works
neighbors are not suspicious except in the usual ways
but Belgrade is flat flat neither mountains nor sea
life is flat cut off from friends
you cannot even telephone Sarajevo from here
the train no longer runs
and the people brother and sister Serbs
treat us like strangers
as if we are riffraff scum

From The Bosnia Elegies - © 1998 Adrian Oktenberg.

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