

AFTERNOON IN THE WINTER GARDEN

The lake separates the winter gardens.

I'm here in the winter garden looking out at the lake.

Yesterday I was there in the winter garden looking out at the lake.

Frost flowers on the pane. *Frost flowers cover the apple of the eye.*

It's a matter of time. *Apple blossoms fall, fill the eye sockets.*

Time separates this winter from that winter in the garden

on the other side of the lake, where the Wannsee Conference took place

and the Wannsee Protocol was written. The systematic counting,
country by country. Now exhibited on a poster board, for all to see.

Does the eye exist to see or cry? Does the eye exist to cry or see?

Even horrors that no one witnessed still take place everywhere, at all times.

Like how the era of the camp is still taking place. Like how Death Island is taking place.

Shark Island, also known as Death Island, in present-day Namibia,

where the word Konzentrationslager was used for the first time in German,

decades before the Holocaust. Now there is a campground

where the concentration camp used to be. Tourists are camping.

Sleeping bags float over mass graves.

Sleeping eyes soar over empty eye sockets.

Some skulls were brought to Germany in the name of science,

and just like how the conference was not a conference

and the protocol not a protocol

the science was not science but barbarism.

The women were forced

to boil the heads of the dead

and scrape the skulls clean with pieces of glass.

The skulls stayed in Germany during war after war after war

after war after war after war after war after war,

before they were returned a few years back.

I lean my forehead against the frost flowers on the pane.
Even horrors that no one witnessed still take place everywhere, at all times.
It is the realest thing of all.
Realer than catching a glimpse of your eyelashes as you blink?

But this much I know: They say a human torpedo
was built here in the basement during the war. They say the human torpedo
was called the n-word because its constructor's name Mohr
meant Black. Mohr sounds like *mor*, mother in my mother tongue,
or Moor as in: *The Moor has done their duty, the Moor may go.*
Phrase from Schiller. He did not mean a mother.

Mother tongue as murder tongue.

Our languages depend on us, how we use them.
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