

leyh (they say)

by Marc Lowe

the days here pass slowly/quickly/quickly/slowly
(they say he lost his vision for three weeks afterward)
the sun is scathingly hot, a wretched red ball of heat
(they say she went deaf the moment she heard the news)
time does not so much stand still as cease to matter
(they say her brother wept and tore out all his hair)
self is lost, memory blurred, meaning extinguished
(they say her sister fasted for five days straight)
the days turn into nights into days into nightmares
(they say the daughter was only six when she died)
the nights turn into days into nights into daydreams
(they say the driver was sharing a joke with his mates)
and as for me, i'll never forget the terrifying expression
(they say half her body was crushed flat as a pancake)
when i stumbled to the mirror at 4:44 a.m. one morning
(they say the village leaders went mute for a time)
to stare at the countenance of another man who wasn't me
(they say they scrawled the word *LEYH!* upon their homes)
insubstantial as one dreaming the world out of existence
(they say the father didn't shed a tear, he seethed it)
and i'll never forget the words of the holy man i met
(they say the mother didn't hear the news, she agonized it)
while gathering handfuls of sand to fill up my pillow
(they say the brother didn't pray to God, he cursed Him)
do not attach yourself to this reality, he said, smiling
(they say the sister didn't eat food again, she vomited it)
for surely you do not wish to stay in hell forever, do you?
(they say things can always get worse, and that they will)

and then he began to sing, along with the ghostly villagers

leyhleyhleyhleyh leyhlehylehylehy lehylehylehyleh

*leyhleyhleyhleyh leyhlehylehylehy lehylehylehyleyh
leyhleyhleyhleyh leyhlehylehylehy lehylehylehyleyh*

*leyh eyhley leyh l yhl h eyh e l yh yh ey le
ey l yhl e ley ey le hle ey le yh h
e y hl hl e*

*ll e h
lle h
lle h*

