**Black on Black / Adi Keissar**

Translated from Hebrew by Ayelet Tsabari

My grandmother loved me with a thick accent

And spoke to me Yemenite words

I never understood,

And as a child

I remember

How scared I was to stay alone with her

Out of fear that I wouldn’t understand

The tongue in her mouth

In which she kept singing to me with a smile

And I didn’t understand

A word she said

Her words sounded so far away

Even when she spoke closely

And once

I remember,

She bought me a pineapple yogurt

And after I punched a hole with my thumb

In the thin aluminum cover

And drank it all up,

I wanted to say thank you

But I didn’t know

Which language to use

So I went out to the big garden

Picked a flower

And handed it to her,

Sheepishly

I remember

How much awkwardness stood between us

One blood

And two muted tongues

And she rinsed the yogurt container

Silently

Filled it with water

And placed the flower inside.

I never understood

A word she said,

My grandmother,

But I understood her hands

I understood her flesh

Even though she never

Really understood

The words I spoke

And simply loved my little body

The daughter of her daughter.

And sometimes the heart asks strange things for itself

Like to learn Yemenite

And return to her grave

Press my lips to the earth

And cry out inside

Everything that little girl had to say

And mainly to warn her

That the flower I gave her

Was full of ants.