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## TASSEOGRAPHY

Aunt Vera reads the hieroglyphs  
of Turkish coffee grounds.

She sees me boarding a train, wearing  
    Father's fractured embrace  
    over my right shoulder,  
    eyes blinking fast to split  
    the salty light in two,  
    one sorrow for him, one for me.

She says that shapes of willow trees  
    streaming from the cup handle  
    down to the bottom of it,  
    stand for mercy and peace.

She spots Mother as an ivory cameo,  
    a Penelope knitting a shawl,  
    silken, diaphanous  
    like egg whites beaten to a soft peak.  
Her face turned to the road  
    waiting for the postman's arrival.

Aunt Vera claims that images formed  
    at the rim of the cup should be read  
    counter clock to avoid  
    future pain and disturbance, but,  
    do not worry my love, see here?  
    flocks of doves cross  
    the linear arc of your soul  
    foretelling good journey ahead.

She spies me in a city of money,  
    at night, opening a book  
    to the page of winter,  
    by day, walking the streets,  
    strange sounds fall on my ears,  
    and enter the chambers of heart  
    to warm up their long vowels.

She predicts worry-free seasons to come,  
    happiness in the plural of love  
    gold leaves hanging by the doorknob  
    to ward off evil spirits.

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## REGRETS

I should have asked you to stay  
—the rain was drumming the blues  
on the clay flowerpots  
out on the terrace.

I did not.

I should have put the kettle on,  
a slice of lemon floating  
on your mug of black tea  
like the full moon we loved  
that summer we spent by  
the shore of Tavira.

I did not.

I should have tried to entangle  
the words spoken in anger,  
stifle the name of a late love,  
rushing in like the silt  
of a raging, red river.

I did not.

The sound of your feet  
going down the stairs,  
a metronome beating time  
in the heart of the house—  
marked my loss.