



GHAZAL IN GLASS

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Leaves of the olives glinted there, crushed glass.
A broken sky flashed in the city's glass.

Passing through is a game of waiting, hemmed
for hours by conditioned air and glass—

paperless and cross-examined, to cross
a membrane of creek, the Jordan's clouded glass.

Sky pales and clings to the face, the shoulders
of hills suddenly bare as broken glass.

Shards of territory carve up the sky—
same anthem: *A palace of oil and glass*

*at my right hand; at my left, a nation
of torn paper, tents, tires.* Dim looking glass—

divided at the nape, your darker face
turned always away, each socket a glass

dried in the sun. No rain wets your lips, no
breath moves the olives, ashen under glass.

Alford: Ghazal in Glass

It's over, here. There is no end in sight.
Amma unrolls her scarf, bright coiled conch. Glass

fragments fall from the sky. She binds the wound
in the olive's root; a city's cracked glass

renders her shorn braid bandage. It's over.
No wind from the east, no birds glinting glass.

Sky reflects sky, the city the city.
The olive toils a braided root in glass

dust, fine as any Nile's silt but barren
as Ramallah's stilled vein, its blackened glass.

The poet scrolls these lines across a glass
screen, frozen in distance, barren as glass.