

Tower of Silence

You, left her here
Such a pitiless deed.

You, left her dying as a rabid dog
Scavenging in the dust.

You did not place her tenderly on the bier
And carry her to the Tower of Silence.

Patiently, Proudly,
I wait to fulfil my duty.
Respectful. Meticulous.
A vocation of value
My intentions are pure.

My task remains the same.
High on the sacred tower
Or on this littered ground below.
I clean the bones.
Returning to nature
Those lives entrusted us.

A tiny shuffling sound

I watch her drag her belly,
Only to collapse.
Life within has almost left.
The scent of death nods at me
Her time is very near.

Do you hold your head high
Or hang it in shame?
Discarding your own
To suffer alone.
Aching and yearning.
Too weak, too empty, to cry out her tears.

Yet, the finger points at me!
Ironic.

I am her saviour, not the villain.
You left the child to rot.
A dragged-out feast for vermin and flies.
Decaying on the earth.

You, turn your face, from me
And ignore this apparition.

I, wait patiently
To honour and return her.

I am but a reminder.
I am not the cause,
Just the one who clears away.

You, wrong your own people.
Inhumanity to your own kind.

I, bide my time,
Not understanding
The torture you inflict.

Make your choice.
Save her, feed her
Or take her life swiftly.

Do not desert her,
Turning from her as if she never was.

Did she deserve a destiny like this?
Deprived of subsistence?
Deprived even of her death
And left to putrify?

Clawing at the earth to reach her end.

And when her cycle is complete
Will you be there to lift her,
Prepared and anointed,
To the Tower of Silence?
Where we can cleanse her withered carcass
Before her bones are strewn to the well
To crumble into dust.

I stand guard.
I, who will not leave her in her hour of need.
I, wait with her.
To escort her to the end.