

Hamsi

Dull heat and dust choke my soul,
as bright red life drips, drips
Into this place of brown and waste.

The shallow smiles I see,
are only for our money.
Their sullen stares behind bright veils
are more the timbre of reality.

Dried ochre was once his life
that I can't scrub away
no matter how hard I try, and try.

And I'd never have been here,
If it weren't for their hate
Of the green and joy
I've left behind.

—Lt. Col. Sean Michael Salene, U.S. Marine Corps
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