

© Copyright Princeton University Press. No part of this book may be distributed, posted, or reproduced in any form by digital or mechanical means without prior written permission of the publisher.



CLOSER TO CLOUDS

© Copyright Princeton University Press. No part of this book may be distributed, posted, or reproduced in any form by digital or mechanical means without prior written permission of the publisher.

For general queries contact webmaster@press.princeton.edu.

MORE VULNERABLE THAN OTHERS

So what if I break
I will continue to eat mud
unwind underground
 mask banned signs
chew holes in every tall grapevine
 breed my roots after a nap
spread fronds as free
 clothes free money
lay branches bare for the moon and its jaws
 while each flower falls
to its own bad dream

WALKING OUT ON THE LYRIC

When men take from me all the heat and light, I content myself
with echoes, sounds, and radio waves in every room up for sale inside
this body. What's gone stretches each wall so terribly that when
I cough, mud bricks give up their secrets and poor decisions. One
of the corners keeps the song alive, another too wet for dust
or sprigs to rot gently. I manage. Each furniture piece makes its
long speech to accept my dual friendship: one from France,
the other to inherit an armoire. To obey an inner despot, I check
the doors, sweep the balcony, and reframe each picture with clouds
or perfect fruits as focus. For inspiration, I look out the windows.
I am inside each window, the window moves in me. Anything you see
from the outside—the garden, the hare, disposable bin, and wayfaring
tree—teaches you to live with used spaces. Touch pain by its rim:
under your bed, in the cellar. I am still here because of my dilemma.
In this scenario, a glass of water and a pill are two separate issues.
Look at you. The solitude. Even the cactus is softening each kill.