

Ode to Bosnia

Oh Bosnia,
Battered green mother of turquoise running waters
Like a Garden of Eden, inviting tired travelers to stay
Caressing their pain with the kiss of your spring time rains
Aromas of lavender, lilac, jasmine, and roses

Oh Bosnia,
Dear mother, ravaged, and destroyed
You cried out when they butchered and raped you
The rivers of blood drowned out the screams
Ravens descended to feast on the corpses of your doves

Oh Bosnia,
The world deserted you when you called for help
Although you represented multi-cultural co-existence
Europe turned an eye much too blind, with no remorse or penance
Allowing for your division, ethnic cleansing, camps of death

Oh Bosnia,
My never forgotten love
Over the mountains and oceans, I can hear your voice
“Come back to me” you smile and wave your bruised old arm
Your tattered dress of forest leaves, your dishevelled chestnut hair

Oh Bosnia,
Can't they know and see the truth
Your immortality is a black cat with nine lives
A phoenix rising from ashes, a sphinx that survived the floods
Shaking off the blackbirds, with your scarcely revealed claws

Oh Bosnia,
Countless times they tried to divide you
Many empires broke their spears against you
And yet, you remained, bloodied but unbowed
To your tolerance and stoicism, my allegiance I have vowed

Oh Bosnia,
To you I will return
In your warm ground, when old, I will find peace
Embrace me then in the warmth of your earthly bosom
Kiss my forehead, let me sleep, cover me with yellow-red autumn leaves