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## Bulgarian Soldiers Distributing Cigarettes to Turkish Prisoners // **Мушкато**

Tanya Korichkova  
*SUNY Geneseo*

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# Bulgarian Soldiers Distributing Cigarettes to Turkish Prisoners

Underneath the false acacia,  
black lotus,  
my grandmother tells me a tale  
of slaughtered Bulgarians  
in a war I can't remember  
the name of.  
Childrens' necks sheared on  
wood stumps so raw  
they bled out  
from splinters before their heads  
rolled onto Mavrud mud.  
Baba holds me captive in her wool  
sweater that chafes my cheek.  
I was never taught  
my history in America,  
so she fills the gaps  
with cruel wars

as punishment to my father  
for taking us away from her.

# Мушкато

Even as a child, I'd bite my nails, but  
that never stopped the dirt  
in my grandmother's garden  
from scratching them underneath  
until I'd pick them clean with the thinnest  
stick I could reach off her fig tree.

Young branches don't break  
easily, so I'd twist them until  
they frayed like the bottom hem  
of my jeans. I never wore shoes.  
My grandfather built this house  
for her, and she built a home  
and a garden to feed her children  
and their children—three generations  
living in one house.

Никога не съм помагал с градината,  
но щях да гледам как баба разкопава градината  
със същата свирепост, която използва,  
за да скъса възлите от косата ми, винаги мрънкайки,  
*малки момичета не бива да бягат наоколо така.*