

'Ammèl Faratèt

From all the sheperds, who during the night in front of our tent, under one blanket,
slept on a straw mat, 'Ammèl Faratèt was the youngest,
'Ammèl Faratèt; the butterfly, still a child with long bare
legs under his torn burnous
'Ammèl Faratèt, the dancer, the tamborine beater, the joyful
gnome on the back of his donkey
'Ammèl Faratèt, who every day drummed with thin grill sticks on
a pair of old sheep scissors the rhythm of his youth.

The night on the plateau was cold, a last star swallowed
by the clouds, which hung down in long black rain veils around the
top of the hills
chilly drops gave a roll against the canvas
when I saw the cloth at the entrance being lifted and a
small dark figure enter shivering

That night he layed beside me
I felt, through the wet burnous, his naked shoulders
resting in my arm, which I didn't pull back
the soft flowing of his breath I heard, as if the moon was
suspended from our canvas roof
he moved in his sleep and a warm, tiny boy's arm
slid over my body

He layed beside me and I watched over him
the warmth of his blood I felt and the beating of his heart,
next to my body
and his head which rested in my tired arm, and a foot
touching my ankle for a moment
and the hours went on and I didn't move, because a child
slept in my arms and then the morning came.

Through the opening of the tent came the barking of dogs and the first
pink twilight of the morning
he left my arms, but turned
once again on his way out
on his dark face I saw a sad smile:
"why Si Yoessef, didn't you kiss me?"

*(From: 'The liberated Eros' by Jef Last
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