

Cover Shot

I

after the days and nights tearing up her feet
the bundle of this or that she let go
the child on her back too still

after the treacherous boat
taking on high seas
bare hands can't bail out

after the salt burn, sun burn
sand burn, wind, her throat blistered
as if by fire, that thirst

after the men, angry in a tongue
that buzzes like locusts, pelting her
with shards of blame

now this bowl of bulgur, grainy dollops
their shimmer, the shadow
of her cheek leaning into fragrance

that swirls into memory
blurring her hunger
the child dips a finger in, sucks, dips

from her belly, a warming yellow, rising
like her mother's hum
serving fattoush, kubbah, mahshi at the feast

II

oh, to keep her here, remembering
the meze her mother offered
as if to celebrate a birth

oh, to keep her nourished, the child too
safe in the promise of, the saving grace of

food, always a bowl in the hand

(break)

always the face glowing
preserved in this magazine glossy
that invites us to imagine

mother and child
buoyed on a current of mercy
beyond the cropped shot

into the open field
of a good story
that reseeds in each of us

as perennial hope or wish
but the background resists
insists

and we too
feel the world
askew