

BUT BECAUSE THIS IS ONLY A DREAM

*Carolina Ebeid*







I was in Chicago in February and I made my father stand against a white wall while I projected old family pictures (from New Jersey, Baghdad, Florida) onto him. That's the house where I grew up in WNY on 67th Street. You could see me in a white dress, if you zoom in on his arm. Estoy con mi abuela. Adorno insists one must cultivate a sense of displacement in the world, so "not to be at home in one's home." I had to tell Baba to say cheese as the roof bisected his mouth.

My father was born in Yaffa in 1935. He holds an eidetic memory for the place as it was before 1948. He walked me down one of its streets of that port city, that neighborhood now only in his 87 year old brain. Memory for him is visual, spatial, and projective: he can see the cucumber stand in front of him where I'm sitting. I push him for other sensory details, noise, tastes, the feel of the air in May.



What do you hear on the street? Women selling cucumbers, sing-song chants about who's cucumbers are bigger. What do you smell? Fish. Oranges. I can smell orange blossoms, he says.

Auscultation.

My mother is the partial one in yellow terrycloth but because this is only a dream, she is also the exposed tree roots, the running kid in cap, the grassy tufts, peacock in my father's chest, the gold catholic pendants that now sit on my dresser, my pixie hair, the gesture between me and bird, hello, hello.