Something Evergreen Called Life: 
Selected Poems

Rania Mamoun

ABSTRACT
Two poems on the experience of womanhood and exile

KEYWORDS
Motherhood, exile, fear, desire
POEMS FROM:
SOMETHING EVERGREEN CALLED LIFE

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winter I loved
curled around mother
making tea on the stove at the room’s center
    in rapture
I watched the embers’ slender flame
turn yellow to orange
    to red
nuzzling like a cat at mother’s lap
looking for warmth
but wanting love
    more

now
in exile’s bleak winter
    with cold set in my bones
and mother’s stove gone
the tea has lost its taste
embers their glow
    everything
reduced to grey
like those ashes
heaped in the grate

    with mother gone
life’s colors pale
and ever since my heart
thirsts for love

(3 April 2020)

Diane Samuels
Poems from: Something Evergreen Called Life

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glint of water on the river’s skin
pleasure glittering my daughter’s eye
face of mother beaming love
merry dance of light on the glass rim thought
lighting up the brain
a silver handle shining within reach
all the radiance in my life
is powerless to cancel
my fear that day
age five
sheltering under the bed
after one glimpse of the drawn blade come to cut me
for fear some casual sin
perhaps committed in youth
would bring disgrace on the tribe’s honour
they bridled my desire
and since the age of five I live
a permanently stifled life
(4 April 2020)

Rania Mamoun
City of Asylum

Yasmene Seale (trans.)