

## **TOUCH**

Textures of bath mitts, from coarse silk to wool gabardine to the near-Brillo pad of black goat-hair; pumice stones on street-calloused heels.

Fingernails, ragged from opening pistachio shells.

Brittle newsprint that yellows in fifteen minutes of sunlight.

Fleece of new lambs; slippery satin bridal quilts.

Plumes of dill-weed; salt-wrinkled black olives glistening with oil.

Cool Iznik tiles with tomato-red pigment in relief, like drops of ketchup; Persian verses deeply carved on marble tombstones.

## **SCENT**

Rain—laying dust and diesel particles on cement sidewalks; coal smoke in fog; the tanneries of Yedikule; *raki*; ox-dung fires.

Samanpazari: lentils, henna, and naphthalene; cubes of olive oil soap; copper-tinning; tarnished silver; horses.

Damp, musty mosque carpets.

Dervishes perspiring.

Artemisia, its fragrance released by the hot marble of a toppled column.

Fresh fish and gasoline; citrus peels, parsley, pickles, roasting kebabs; *pastırma* cured with garlic and fenugreek; Ramazan *pide* late afternoon; roasting chickpeas; Bursa peaches.

The “acceptable” lemon colognes: Pereja and Bogaziçi; cheap scents colored like liqueurs.

Alcohol and cotton balls in pharmacies; Omo laundry detergent.

May nights drowned by Russian olive and linden in bloom; privet in June.

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## Holly CHASE

Working Notes  
from Turkey

### SOUND

Foghorns and ferry whistles; feet on the gang-planks at rush hour.

Startled pigeons at Yeni Cami.

Street vendors' cries; *Boza ! Eskici ! Süt ! Enginar ! Millet beer ! Rag and bone man ! Milk ! Artichokes !*

Brake-screaching vehicles, klaxons, jingling harnesses; cars going over the speed bumps at the Hilton; trains inching across the Plateau.

Muezins; wedding, circumcision, and Janissary bands; bagpipes, finger-cymbals, *dolmus*, radios.

Quavering echoes of welcome from nightclub microphones: "*Hos-hoshos gel-gelgeldiniz....*"

Sheep bells, cicadas, Toros winds in the pines.

Eerie song of the Egyptian nightjar, like breath blown over an empty bottle.

### TASTE

Hoofy white cheese; yeasty warm Tekel beer; salted purple carrot juice; smokey *ayran* at the Cihanbeyli bus stop; bitter tea and breakfast olives; slightly burnt sesame on *simit*; syrup-drenched pastry with unsweetened coffee; cornelian cherry and pomegranate juices; bergamot-scented *helva*; Kizilay mineral water; dried mackerel and sweet cucumbers; watermelons; *raki* and salted chick peas; fresh pistachios in Antep; *roka* greens; dark Buzbag wine; *Iskender* kebab; mealy yellow potatoes; apricots with *kaymak*; caramel "Roma-style" ice cream in Yesilköy; baked quinces and pumpkin with walnuts; rose-petal jam and nigella seeds on bread; *lokum*, black radishes, fresh figs, grilled cow corn, hazelnut butter, Thracian rice, *bulgur*, yogurt with a skin of yellow cream....

Sandoz 1000 mg. vitamin C tablets, artificial orange flavor. Dropped in a glass of water, they fizz...our tonic against Ankara's cold winter smog.

**SIGHT**

Back-lit arabesque panels on the Galata Bridge; the curved shore at Bebek and the Egyptian summer residence; mammary domes of the Otel Splendid on Büyükdada; Ottoman stone bird houses; iron window grates of Roxelana's tomb.

On the sidewalks: sellers of plastic combs, postcards, and nail-clippers.

Against Topkapi illuminated for night: ferries dancing in the Golden Horn.

Heavy-headed dowager lilacs and blowsy roses; lavender Judas trees on the grey slopes of Rumeli Hisari; blue-stemmed thistles; lavender opium poppies.

Rainbow plumage of migrating Abyssinian rollers.

Herds of grey speckled horses on the steppe near Ani.

Women with hair rinsed a coppery purple tone actually known as "eggplant"; long lacquered toenails; schoolroom images of Atatürk; eight year-olds with flat skulls and creased foreheads.

Sunset on the Bosphorus: A Saudi man in white and a quartet of women in sheer black veiling wave to us from their boat. In response, we toss them a bouquet of miniature carnations; they drift in the wake of our craft.

The Salt Lake in July, seven in the evening: lens at F 22, diamond glare. Emerald crater lake atop Nemrut Dagı. Ararat above the clouds; charcoal sky and lopsided moon over Armenia.

Striped *hamam* towels drying on the roofs, like lines of signal flags.

Crocheted amulets sewn to the underwear of children going away to school.

Over doorways and hotel reception desks; in elevators; on gold charm bracelets and orlon baby sweaters; hung from horse bridles, keyrings, rearview mirrors, and exhaust pipes — BLUE BEADS.