

The Stranger and the Tree

Look at this idiot

This papaya tree

Who has not considered where to put roots

On a crackless rock out of place

And on top of a short wall made from the hard stone of the island

Without soil it is hopeful that

It will live it will thrive it will give fruit and make it to
market

Even though it is two or three arms taller than me

It is today or tomorrow

That it will dismount the rock or just topple down

But if

If it could convince me

That only the moisture and the air

In this half-tropical place

Can nurture it

Then she showed me the lusciousness of the woods

And put in my face the flowering and easiness of growing

And dried my criticism on my lips

What a wonder that moment

I have to tell her

My lady! Now I understand

The law of your land

May you remain green and prosperous

You are not the idiot

That

I am

Bermuda, December 29 2005

Manoucher Yektai

From the collection of Poems "Paintbox"

translated from Farsi by Iraj Anvar and Darius Yektai