

# A Sick Throat

by Lev Atikoğlu

It gets bigger and bigger. Usually it heals itself and becomes a neglected illusion. M talked about how language failed at times to acknowledge some things and make associations, the difficulty of having cause and effect. "A sore throat, for example," she said "in the night a pale writing in my pencil case, a continuous suffering. When joy is found, itchy skin disturbs, when the itch goes away, the joy cannot be found" A sick throat has never been so continuous. "My back is turning itself to my front side and I am always seeing it as if it has become a mirror" M says... A sneeze is followed by a slap on the kitchen table. Mosquitoes bite, I get more spots on my back, on my legs... it gets itchy, it is hairy, an effect of surgery which should have given a less pain, the fear itself is real suffering. It is never complete, it is never quarter. Associations kill, I am not comfortable. The fan is open but cools the window and it makes the air circulate while I try to go to sleep. I can't even ease the pain to stop these fears. Everything will go through my throat or veins. Or I will gain weight. All these people who eat fried food will have spotless skin, reading poetry. Why can't I at least have a perfect skin and a destroyed soul? Why all these people who read something have bright skin but they cry? Why is my body hairy and I have hair all the wrong places but I feel so weak and fragile? I am not asking questions, I know all the answers, a birth control pill every mother should take. My anus is like a vagina, the hair looks like it, only it looks better. My anatomical interests do not go beyond theory. I waxed my legs once, the hair grew bigger and thicker. I guess it is a sign for me to keep doing that. Other boys talk proudly that they never waxed their legs, their armpits, their chest. I even shaved my neck with a Gillette.

My sore throat is chronic because I shout. My circumcised dick looks so used yet nobody knows I cut it the same year I cut my fingers. Well, my father did it. I was a kid and I was allowed to use the mincemeat machine. An eternal shout I am given, the socket was shut, too late to play the instrument. Too late to leave the story incomplete, too bad to say that no fiction was real enough, no poetry had a real villain. I squeeze all these in a sneeze and a 'bless you' is given, always. I am so tired of being afraid of this itchy and hairy body. Sleeveless t-shirts suit the others, they have perfect skin, better than me. I sometimes think how I live when I cannot breathe. Others smoke and breathe, they smoke and breathe. I smoke and it will show a different effect, I feel I am blocked. So I stop. But then the exhaust of the car, I close all the windows, I put my hat on my mouth. Heightened awareness of cause and effect. I live in a jar yet my oxygen does not belong to me. They don't walk on the road, they drive their cars. So, in order to poison themselves instead, unlike me, they smoke, but they breathe. Me thinks sometimes, the ones who smoke at a restaurant by the road, get double harm, I go insane, just thinking. How do I balance? All these fresh red peppers I ate proved me wrong, I am left



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with acnes on my back. Is it mosquito bite? Is it eating oily fat? Is it genetic? Is it a spelling mistake I make all the time? What is responsible for my body? All the boys and girls, when they eat something unhealthy, they think about they will just gain weight. All these oily stuff and the sore throat, you eat, your skin looks perfectly clean. My mom says that I shouldn't worry.

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