

SALWA AL-NEIMI

Dracula

Protruding, rebelling against the lips,
the long, pointed, ill-fated fang stared at me,
(in spite of awkward attempts to hide it).

Stealing adolescent glances,
I dreamed it pierced me, pushing deep in the base of my neck.
I bit my lower lip, flushed,
but not before blushing under its spell.

Yesterday,
Yesterday when he smiled at me, with teeth in perfect alignment
(dentistry can work miracles),
I turned my apostate face,
and squinting, pretended to watch passersby.

Translated from the Arabic by Shawkat M. Toorawa