

***In Translation***  
**by Matt Dhillon**

*Pink-* as in heart, as in love, as in pink lady apple, as in sin, as in love like it's a sin, as in blush, as in lips, as in gums, as in hunger, as in eat, as in tongue so dry, tongue as a desert with a story about rain. I want to tell it to you, but there are no words I have not already eaten.

*Rosa-* as in magnolia flower, as in plum blossom, as the petals falling from cherry trees. this much is lost from everything. even open doors and the men inside waving, even fire hydrants and stop signs, even buses are blowing away by petals and the morning is full of little thumb-sized smudges where someone has been wiping it away, even language, petal by petal we will forget all the words we know. then we will look straight into the face of things like mica, like quartz, like mirrors and our faces will be huge questions.

*Gulabi-* as in holi powder, as in shrines, as in everyday holiness and the gods of short walks and the gods of oatmeal and the gods of breakfast sandwiches, as in beef tenderloin, as strips of meat on bone, as in sacrifice, there is a country of sacrifice always standing right behind me, as in silk shawls, as in grandfather's turban, my grandfather's word for bone is not my word for bone, my grandfather's hunger sounds completely different from mine, if I heard it I wouldn't even understand it.

*Wardy-* as in 5am on marble steps, 5am on cool sand and snow on the mountains, as in the ruins of old cities are not that different from the ruins of modern cities, as in cypress, as in cedar, as in heartwood, as in rings inside of rings, as in cities inside of cities, as in mothers inside of mothers, there are countries we will not return to, there are people we will not return to, there are things we've imagined that we will never do, there are words we know that we will never say again. still, we need their silence, we keep it. there are dead languages we carry, they speak to us when we kiss.