

A YELLOW MEMORY FROM THE YELLOW AGE

a radio play by

Joe Namy

Scene One: Int. School for the Blind classroom - Day

1. CHILDREN: Kan ya makan fi qadim al zaman, kan fi..

Scene Two: Ext. Somewhere over country ■ - Day

2. SOUND: A PREDATOR DRONE WITH A FAULTY PROPELLER

3. A VOICE: A yellow memory from the yellow age.

Scene Three: Int. The Task of the Translator - p.79

4. SOUND: THE HUM OF A WATER TRUCK IN COUNTRY ■

5. W. BENJAMIN: In all language and linguistic creations there remains in addition to what can be conveyed something that cannot be communicated; depending on the context in which it appears, it is something that symbolizes or something symbolized.

This is the impossible task of the translator.

6. SOUND: [REDACTED]

Scene Four: Ext. Dearborn - Night

1. A VOICE: I remember there was one on Warren, one that popped up in the South End, and one in Southwest.

Big, bright, yellow billboards with Arabic text in black, a US flag, and Army logo.

It loosely translated as:

2. B VOICE:

في أرض عامرة بالفرص
هذه واحدة منها ربما لم تخطر لك على بال

Um, this is the land of chances, this is one of them maybe it had never occurred to you before.

3. A VOICE:

This was 2008, during what they called "the surge" in Iraq. They were trying to recruit native Arabic speakers as translators, or "09 Limas", short for "09 Lima Army Combat Interpreter Translator."

4. SOUND: [REDACTED]

I found the signs to be disturbing.
I think what bothered me most was the yellow.

5. SOUND: [REDACTED]

Scene Five: Int. Chroma - p.93

1. DEREK JARMAN: Although yellow occupies only one-twentieth of the color spectrum, it is the brightest colour, although there are no yellow receptors in the eye, its actually a combination of red and green light.

Chrome yellow darkens on ageing. The modern yellows: barium yellow, lemon yellow ... stable in light and invented in the early 19th century. Cadmium yellow, sulphur and selenium. The modern production of cadmium pigments began during the First World War.

Scene Six: Ext. Detroit - Dusk

2. SOUND: 'ARMY STRONG' BACKGROUND THEME MUSIC

3. A VOICE: Army translator yellow
this was a whole new shade.

It was no golden yellow, cartoon banana yellow,
happy sunshine yellow.

This was a caged canary yellow.
A yellow meant to capture your attention,
and to let you know

4. SOUND: [REDACTED]

1. A VOICE: And then one day it just seemingly vanished, as quick as it appeared, back to a regular Faygo ad.

But if you look closely, you can see that it didn't just disappear. The yellow on the background of that billboard actually leaked off. It spilled onto the ground. It dripped quietly into our everyday.

2. SOUND: [REDACTED]

Scene Seven: Ext. Operation Desert Shield - 1990

3. A VOICE: You'll notice that yellow started appearing all the way back in the early 90's, in the residual of the first Gulf War.

4. SOUND: "BE ALL THAT YOU CAN BE" JINGLE

It's called the 1033 Program, which transfers excess military equipment to civilian law enforcement agencies. Militarizing the police.

Scene Eight: Ext. Ferguson Missouri - 2014

5. SOUND: Long Range Acoustic Device sound cannon

1. A VOICE: This is where Ferguson got those assault rifles, concussion grenades, and the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles, or MRAPs, that have become ubiquitous to the U.S. military presence in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Scene Nine: Int. Compline, lines 3 through 6

2. PHILIP METRES: every boot, every improvised explosive, Talon and Hornet, Molotov and rubber coated bullet, every unexploded cluster bomblet, every Kevlar and suicide vest, and unpiloted drone raining fire on wedding parties, will be burned ...

Scene Ten: Ext. Dearborn - Day

3. A VOICE: This yellow is really an undertone for war, a residual tint accompanying those coming back home from the Gulf.

(FILTER) Where do colors go when they fade?

4. SOUND: [REDACTED]

A friend of mine, in between active duty tours, leaves a message on the voicemail from Kuwait:

5. SOUND: BIG TONE VOICEMAIL (MIKE E EYEBROWZ EDIT)

1. A VOICE: Faded from reality, forced over two decades to design and deploy a literal army of 21st-century weapons to fight insurgent masses during protracted Middle East wars.

The forever wars, a jaundiced societal condition.

Scene Eleven: Int. Youtube - "Feelings"

2. NINA SIMONE: I do not believe the conditions that produced a situation that demanded a . . . feelings

Scene Twelve: Ext. Beirut - 2:53PM April 9, 2015

3. A VOICE: It is under these [REDACTED] that allows such an opportunity for this yellow to exist.

4. B VOICE: في أرض عامرة بالفرص
هذه واحدة منها ربما لم تخطر لك على بال

5. A VOICE: was what they asked us to translate, but the translator knows there's a deeper meaning.

Scene Thirteen: Ext. Pentagon - 2008

1. ERROL SMITH: They hear things that are said around them, they are able to see things that others can't see.

2. A VOICE: Errol Smith, assistant deputy secretary for foreign language programs at the Pentagon, referring to native speaker translators in combat.

3. SOUND: [REDACTED]

Translator as mystic,
bringing meaning to otherwise empty words.

Militarized words.

Scene Fourteen: Int. "I don't usually talk to strangers..." - 2004

4. CLAUDIA RANKINE: and Afganistan is Iraq, and Iraq is Syria...

5. A VOICE: De-militarized words.

6. SOUND: [REDACTED]

Scene Fifteen: Int. Black Skin White Mask - p.17

1. SOUND: Nass El Ghiwane - Trances

2. FRANTZ FANON: To speak a language is to take on a world, a culture ... To speak is to be in a position to use a certain syntax, to grasp the morphology of this or that language, but it means above all to assume a culture, to support the weight of civilization.

3. SOUND: [REDACTED]

Scene Sixteen: Int. Poets Forum - 2010

4. KHALED MATTAWA: and I know there is wisdom and lyricism coming behind me, so I will engage you in some panic.

Scene Seventeen: Int. Unknown Site

5. SOUND: SUB VIBRATIONS FROM A PASSING M.R.A.P.

THE END



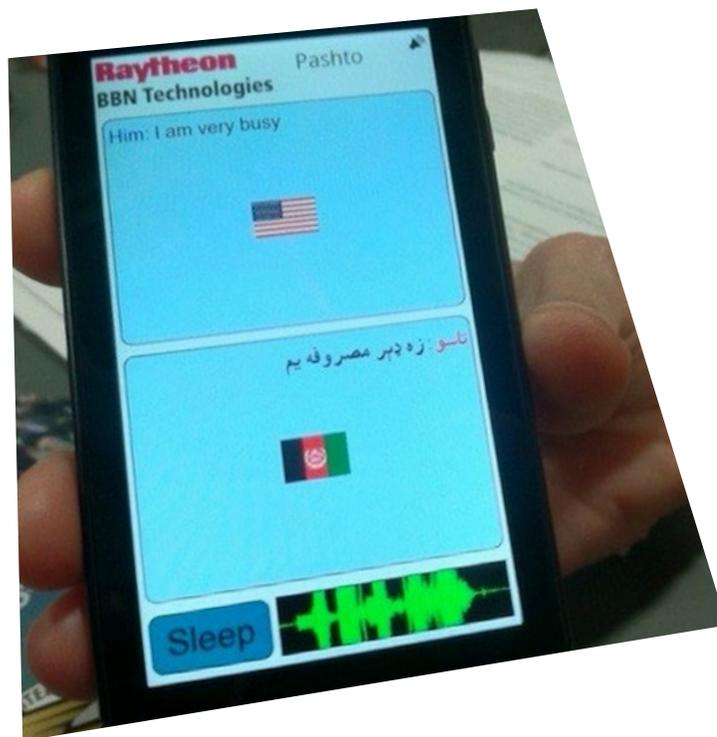
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