

When we live

When you live and step in a tram, that takes you past an old factory that spews gray clouds into a blue sky and you think about the transition to clean energy, and how we all strive to be so clean

So clean we wipe the dirt from our grass and dump our waste into large pits we cover with earth

So that our grass stays green and no one worries about what grows underneath

I imagine plastic roots that leak a tragic sap

Toxic tears deprived of air

The leftovers of our scraps of indifference

And perhaps mortality

When you sit back in your room and think of your exams

Studying a pretty map while ignoring the one that instructs a nation-state where to strike its drones

You think of the gridded plots, the arbitrary squares that huddle people's homes

And you think of the olive trees of which so many speak and you think if you know what it means to truly belong to this globe

One dirty and throbbing and raw

While outside tractors scream on city streets

Mostly men with big machines

I've never seen a Palestinian map

Only heard one

Through stories and songs