

# Accretion

for Krikor Z. Yeghoyan, for Morris Bitterman

the quick and the dead shared  
I would see a cart full of bodies  
in my dream Koulou still exists  
a common grave Sakhors  
they didn't even bother covering it  
the wells remain in tact  
at night they piled up the bodies  
we were working late at night  
the barley still grows plenty  
and set fire to them Adzig  
after a whole day's work and so guards  
here there was no death  
in order to clean out the streets  
the head of pack said "Don't you want to  
here there was no great grandmother  
they brought some garbage trucks and  
stabbed 27 times who did not die where  
loaded them in the back  
she was supposed to here my genes were  
of the boys orphanage where  
not turned on by famine or a blade of  
so we worked with all our strength  
there was a ditch ready  
and I survived this too  
I fixed a place under the floor  
there wasn't a day we were not killed  
a subterranean hole hard to dig  
it was quite fast that they came  
I could not eat on the floorboards at burying myself alive  
almost the same evening  
I was more dead than alive  
they came into town with tanks  
seven weeks went by  
beneath a staircase as my father is shot  
it was August  
I am of a family— we were ten  
here I am not good at serving a woman  
the foul air, the fleas, the lice  
and until the war of 1939  
dressed in my dead mother's clothing  
I decide life was not worth living  
they— we were all together  
here I am not good at jumping into wells  
I had reconciled the idea of death  
everybody was in good health  
to avoid being beaten to death here I do  
I felt I could welcome death in any form  
shabbat meal was certainly very warm  
not hate potato skins here I am not  
than live in the miserable rat-hole  
warm [PAUSES & SECONDS]  
coming across fogged men as I walk  
started their romance  
when we got free from fasting here they do not use the  
this sheriff's target  
was the priest  
to the hospital because I was seven eggs  
of the boys orphanage where  
the lynching, the pillaging of nails  
and was too fat  
perseverance of faith does not make the  
there was a ditch ready  
and I survived this too  
crying because I had become a skeleton  
there was a candle for each member  
the scaring his tongue with a hot poker  
after two weeks of hospital  
I fixed a place under the floor  
one day two of the boys went out  
we've given violence  
he wants to put a kind of distance  
I weighed 45 kilos  
a subterranean hole hard to dig  
and returning back they each had a skull  
as soon as they get a near well  
if the war would have taken  
I could not eat on the floorboards at burying myself alive  
in his hand covered  
who survived here I am not thinking I am  
he throws himself away  
another day  
I was more dead than alive  
they came into town with tanks  
with long hair  
the last Jew that survived here I am not  
Koulou had lots of wells  
I would not have made it  
asking amha?  
performance of violence  
they told us the valley was full  
(that is where it is)  
city's name)

The red ink represents excerpts from Krikor Z. Yeghoyan's memoir (trans. Victoria Yeghoyan Dadekian). The blue ink represents excerpts from Morris Bitterman's USC Shoah Foundation testimony. The purple ink represents an imagined epigenetic "I." This is meant to be read through 3D glasses. Alexa Luborsky gratefully acknowledges the USC Shoah Foundation for allowing her to use transcripts of the following testimony: Morris Bitterman (1995). For more information: <http://sfi.usc.edu/>.