



'Window in the Morning'

Author: Leonore Wilson

Source: *Moveable Type*, Vol. 14, 'Unfeeling' (2022)

DOI: 10.14324/111.1755-4527.148

---

Moveable Type is a Graduate, Peer-Reviewed Journal based in the Department of English at UCL.

© 2022 Leonore Wilson. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC-BY) 4.0 <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.



## **Window in the Morning**

*Leonore Wilson*

The light falls across the bed in the morning, for she had slept in and he had woken early, reading before toast and tea; and she called out to him, the light by now making its passage-way over framed family photographs, the jar of withered zinnias and carnations, and assembled books lying symmetrically like old stones piled on a hill. Almost a child's game for her, calling him, sing-songing his dreamy name until he comes immediately to her; his hands cold as flowers, his slightly screwed-shut eyes, and then from the open magazine he reads to her of his hometown called Muynoq by the Aral Sea, a once bustling resort where rusting ship carcasses now lie beached sideways in the harbor, fish-canning plants abandoned, where huge rivers once the size of the Nile had been sundered to irrigate the cotton fields; cotton, horn-of-plenty that once clothed the Red Army, then sold the whole world over; the inflow of rivers stubbed-out that used to feed the Aral Sea, the blue sea once smooth as a bed sheet, now suddenly evaporating. He tells her about the decades of wasteful irrigation and overfishing that shrunk the sea to a fraction of its size and thus the salt in Muynoq is three times more than any ocean, poisoning the familiar cotton fields that he knew as a boy, poisoning the Uzbek villagers; blowing in sandstorms upon sandstorms and where one in every twenty babies is ghostly-limbed, where mothers' milk is so ungodly salty babies will not suckle. He reads straightforwardly as if to stir the ear of God, and she listens closely to the thick near-Russian cadence of his voice unsparing, definitive like air-raid warnings. He tells her that his place of origin has much hotter summers and harsher winters and he is glad he left when he did in his twenties; and then she feels the nimble fingers that bracelet hers, beautiful fingers with soft white knuckles that can march singularly like sacred fountains over her young naked belly, breasts whenever they make love.