24 October 2026

When Crimea Was Still a Place of Light

When Crimea was still a place of light,
when gulls
were free
of orders,
when sandals
beat light
on the border
of water,
and gulls were the only patrols in the sky;
when women in bright dresses
walked barefoot or in cheap sandals,
in sandals, in sandals
instead of boots,
before missiles.
Before missiles,
I, too, loved it all.

— Lyudmyla Khersonska
(translated by Ilya Kaminsky and Katie Farris)