



## WHAT I FOUND IN THE MOVE

BY MATILDA ARVIDSSON

I packed boxes on boxes

and loaded them into the car.

I found a bracelet of colourful beadings

from a place afar and forgotten.

I knew I must have been there.

Remembered almost nothing

of most moments I'd lived.

When packing, a plaited basket

carried scents of fire and ashes.

I was fleeing from my home.

I'd forgotten the smell of burning garbage

in the Nairobi morning air.

I'd forgotten sting-weed rashes

and my feet in the Watamu beach sand.

All these me's had been mine.



I'd forgotten my perpetrator's face.  
But his social security code and his name  
remained carved into my body.  
Those are scares which remain  
unforgiven.

I found my diving gear in the move.  
I'd forgotten the extraordinary bliss  
of breathing underwater.  
And the joy of grasping in slow motion  
for a fish fleeing.

My fins didn't fit in any box.  
Nor did my scars.  
So they had to go in the car as they were.  
Much would remain forgotten.  
Fleeing must be made fast.



My travels had been called escaping.

But no. Those were searches,

lives of their own kinds.

Now, I was packing and moving

again, but for the first time.

To survive I had disowned,

forgotten, but I remembered now:

the aroma of cardamom spiced coffee,

the kiss of Sahara's burning sun,

the love and rage that almost took my life.

I packed my remnants into the car

and moved.

**MATILDA ARVIDSSON** was born in 1976. After some years in the Middle East and East Africa, she has now returned to her native Skåne, where she is pursuing a doctoral degree in law at Lund University. She has published a number of academic articles, book chapters, and essays on international law, political theology, judicial culture, and Islamic law.