

BEHROUZ BOOCHANI

Manus, 2019

*Flower Love*

Salim loved flowers, he had an extraordinary relationship with flowers. Salim would pick them from along the prison's fences, and playfully put them behind his ears or in his hair.

No doubt to watch Salim was to watch death endured over and over again; death by a thousand blows; death of the body, death of the soul. But to see Salim was to see flowers dignified, ennobled, cherished.

During the last days of the siege, when Australian immigration and PNG police came to attack us with even more force, Salim took his flowers and went to welcome them to the prison. Salim showed compassion and respect to the same people who had come to beat us.

Note: Salim was driven to suicide in Manus Island in 2018.

Translated by Omid Tofighian