POETRY

Cuminte

by Adriana Oni??

"Noi suntem noi," Mixed media and digital collage, 2022, by Adriana Oni??

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I carry you, Rafael, like I carry drafts
of poezii in român? ?i spaniol?,
like I carry grief, dor, rug?ciuni.

You've carried me across
livezi de vi?ini, lilac groves, grotte,
fields of *eu* to become *noi.*

For you, *I* doesn't exist.
Noi suntem *noi,* we are new
to this surrender. We enter
the ravine alone, împreun?.
We gather bouquets of creeping bellflower,
yellow toadflax, tufted vetch.

Even when I thought I was *I,*
ai fost cu mine. Ai fost cuminte.
Cu minte, with my mind, like when
we painted those crooked trees, and
sang while biking to Torre Sibiliana.
You were a pomegranate seed.

S? fii cuminte. First time you go
into a ravine alone, don't even
tell me. Trust our hemispheres—
the way out of the lilac grove
is through livada de vi?ini.

When Romanian parents urge their kids to be "cuminte," this can mean: be good, be quiet, be kind, be careful, be polite, be smart, or be obedient. I wrote this poem for my newborn son, Rafael Mihai, returning to the original root of the word (cu + minte) to remind him of how we will always be connected with our minds.

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