The Poems of David Allen Sullivan

ARMY SPECIALIST DONNA MENESINI

To the east, beyond graffitied Abu Ghraib walls is a stand of palms.

Every morning flocks of blackbirds explode from them, darkening the sky.

Behind, the sun flinches, stutters back into focus, continues to rise.

All day they travel, nights they fluster to their roots while I go nowhere.

Their raucous greetings echo off these shouting walls—aggrieved villagers.

PROFESSOR NADJE AL-ALI

I have read of your Persephone. She took six pomegranate seeds

In her mouth, bit down to release bright blood capsules that stained lips and tongue.

The one who kept her laughed, for she would be his bride half of every year.

How to say? Sorrow cuts us in two with sweetness. Half the world is dead

to the other half. Above us, mothers walk under bare branches.

Editor's note: David Allen Sullivan teaches English and film at Cabrillo College. The following poems were taken from his latest book of poems about the Iraq war, entitled "Every Seed of the Pomegranate," published this month by Tebot Bach. A publication celebration reading will be held at 6 p.m. on Sunday, July 15 at the Cabrillo College Horticulture Center, Room 5005. Photo of the author by Antina Barwani.