

Poetry Series

Harun Al Nasif
- poems -

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Harun Al Nasif(14 March 1972)

Aquatic Complex

Aquatic Complex

Nay, I am no worshipper of nature-

but being a floating bubble on this earthen heaven

I simply could not slough off the aquatic inertia.

This fervent festivity of my saturated soul

and this lapidary lattice of life is the legacy of water.

Once as I drew a deep drought off the fount of life in a terrible thirst,

today my mortal flesh is affluent with numerous divine streams.

In the pervasive wilderness of this dry and desolate earth

I am the itinerant pennant of the triumphant waters,

I am the blossom of life bloomed out of the bud of brine.

Though I left the womb of water destined to be a desperate warrior,

yet this carpet of water is my prayer-rug since the very birth of mine.

You may well-nigh call it aquatic complex- I should have no gripes,

but why laying imprudent blame of adulating inanimate matter?

Harun Al Nasif

Butterfly Effect

Butterfly Effect

My very birth sent forth a tremor
through the earth and heavens,
that unique frisson caused a stir
across the whole universe,
In the mosaic stretching
from the north-pole to the south-pole
it keeps engraved the perpetual hallmark
with great grace,
In the seamless muslin of the blowing
air tier by tier
is laced precisely the adroit tapestry
of that solitary resonance,
It's trace is held with the fragrance
emanating from the florescence of time,
All over the ever-expanding space
its blooming buds are strewn
delineated with the streaks of lightning,

In all the organisms of the ocean
and every fold of the brine
the exact graphic grandeur of its culmination
is drawn exquisitely with subtle touch.

Once just the first breath of mine
growing into a turbulent typhoon
swept across the wide continent
with its boisterous billow...
But today how do you show
such sardonic bravado to deny me
in immense ignorance,
Want to flout my abiding impulse
in a sheer negligence
as the trivial flutter of a trifling butterfly?

Without my hues the azure
would not have grown so cerulean
or the fauna verdant as much-

Despite knowing all these
should you have the audacity
to negate my distinct contributions
in the vibrant soiree of this colorful world,
shall I understand,
you want the drab and dreary wilderness
to reign over the entire creation.

Look, Have I not been here,
the visage of this vast landscape
kissing the sky-line
have never turned out to be as such,
in no way.
Who knows not that my arrival
has totally changed the panorama
of the operations of nature time and again?
But for my emergence,
the propelling tempo of the world
would have fallen into a stupor
and the wheel of eternity
would have come to a grinding halt.

Harun Al Nasif

Celestial Rhapsody

Once my heart set itself on the flame of celestial rhapsody
with the flutter of its luminous wings of lustre
it triggered a turbulence in the firmament
smashing the sphere of stellar waves it went wild in its axial fury
amid the waltzing gala of swimming stars.

Henceforth
growing into a fireball and then a giant supernova
in a fête of transit blowing itself up
it erupted joyous scarlet ecstasy of its forge
exhausting exuberance inexorably in the eternity
it went through a cryptic crunch to be solidified with the gravity
and reduced to super-dense ultra-heavy lump of a dwarf

Henceforth
absorbing all the neighboring cosmic venom
in the niche of time turning into blue-necked charred carcass
of a deceased star
with the mummy of memory
wrapped up in a sachet of sorrow in the chest of its breast
it bears the ignominy languishing eon after eon
lying beneath the frozen light with eyes wide open
the in-satiate fossil of the sanguine soul of an obscure lover.

Harun Al Nasif

Eight Years Ago

Thus broke the news:
He was carted to the corpse dissection room;
Last night—in the dark of early spring night
When sank down the crescent moon—
He did feel like taking his life.

His wife lay beside him—the child as well—
There abode hopes and affections—in the moonlight—
Yet what nightmare he had? That his sleep was gone?
Or he had no sleep for ages—now sleeps
in the corpse dissection room.

Is this sleep he wished for!
Like a plague-ridden rat, mouth smudged with blood and froth
Now having slumber in the nook of darkness;
And never wilt he wake up again.

Whilst the moon was sunk and away—in a weird dark
certain silence as like as a camel's neck
seemed to have appeared his window and told him:
'Never shalt thou awaken again,
nor thou shalt suffer
the inexorable burdensome agony
of being any longer'—

Yet the owl stays awake;
The decaying frail frog begs some moments more
to witness another morn—in the lap of fervid passion;

In the all-embracing murky wilderness of night
the mosquito-net is ever-vigilant with all its defiance;

Yet the mosquitoes keep buzzing in their dark sanctum
to pursue their love for the stream of life.
Off the filthy garbage, flies make their way back to the sunny patches;
And the flying bugs revel in the auriferous sun-rays.

As though a fond sky—some fulgent life
held sway over their minds;

The dragonfly squirms frenetically in the nip of a playful child to escape the death.

Yet when the moon sank down, in the prime of dark
You went up to the aswattha tree with a rope, all alone
Enlightened that human beings are not destined to meet the life of a dragonfly or a magpie.

The aswattha-branch protested not?
Not the glow-worms swarmed in and joined the pleasant golden flowers?
The fragile blind owl came not and said:
'Poor old moon seems to have flown down the stream!
Well-done!
Let me feast on some rats now! '
Not the owl came and broke this top secret?

Savour of life—the odour of ripe corn in winter afternoon- seemed unbearable to you; —
art thou at peace in the morgue now?
At the morgue—in its sultry confines
like a battered rat with blood-stained mouth!

Yet,
Listen to the tale of this deceased; —
Not that he fell out of his affair with any woman,
Of marital bliss
nothing let he go amiss,
His wife ahead of time let him relish in
the essence and essence of being;
Never was he exposed to
the appalling hunger or tormenting cold;
So
Now in the morgue
he lies supine on the table.

know—I do know
woman's heart—love—progeny—home—don't mean everything
neither money, nor feat, not ease
rather some other abysmal anguish
turmoils in the veins of our blood;
It leaves us weary,
and keeps on languishing us;

In the corpse dissection room that ennui exist not.

so,

in the corpse dissection room

Supine he lies on the table.

Yeah! yet every night I behold the old owl alights on the aswattha bough and
mocks:

'Poor old moon seems to have flown down the stream!

Well-done!

Let me feast on some rats now! '

O beloved Granny, well-done even now?

Once I'll also grow old like you—

and at the Kalidaha will sent the old moon down the tide;

Then two of us together

leave the bounteous treasures of life void and bare.

Original in Bangla by Jibanananda Das

translated by Harun Al Nasif

Harun Al Nasif

Gangetic Dolphin Goes To The Ocean

Move aside, Keokra-Dong
Get out of my sight, Tazing-Dong
Let me see the sky-kissing Himalaya.

To be born as a simple Sherpa in Nepal
would have been much better than it is,
both eyes would sparkle with the dream
of conquering the Everest
and in mind
there would be a fulgent fervour
for having honeymoon
on the crest of the mountain...
The ill at ease deride of the Adinath
and the Chandranath
and the unseemly ridicule
hanging from the chin of the Chimbuk
should I stand how longer?

Behold, by swimming on and on
in the turbid water
of the Padma, the Meghna and the Jamuna
die my days and comes the game to an end!
My flippers are hitting
the bed of the swatch-of-no-ground.
Now I want to season my fins
in the Mariana Trench
and expose the verve of my lungs to a trial.
For I want with the exotic posture
of the gangetic dolphin
the whole expanse of the Pacific to the Atlantic
wax all smile, at least for once.

Dip down O Horizon
Let me dye my cataract-clad eyes
with the crimson of your after-glow.
Undo the knot of your sari-end
and grant me leave O mother mine!
For once in the rain-forest of Amazon
let me wash off

the scorching heat of high summer
and forget the legendary cooling air
that the shade beneath the banyan tree offers.

Himalaya, your birth, lineage and
the plate-tectonics of your rise...
I know of all.
Like playing horse-riding
on the back of my maternal grandfather
I would sit astride with ease
over your snobbish ridge
and swish you whopping whack
with a swiping whip.

Beware!
Dare not emit even a neigh,
I enjoin thee-
Let the steed of my sight
galumph on all over the horizon.

Harun Al Nasif

Ode To Water

Nay, I am no worshiper of nature
but as I am a bubble
floating on this earthen heaven
I just could not shake off
its aquatic inertia.

This gleeful festivity of my being
and this passionate lust for life
is the legacy of water.

Once as I took a deep draught
off the fountain of life
with an intense thirst,
today all through my body
flowing are the numerous streams.

In the pervading wilderness
of this sear earth

I am the itinerant colors
of the triumphant waters,

I am the bloom of life
blown out of the pollen of water

May I be the combatant child
arrived leaving the matrix of water

but since my very birth
this carpet of water

is the prayer-mat of mine.

You can call it aquatic complex-
have I no objection,
but why laying reckless blame
of worshiping inanimate nature?

Harun Al Nasif

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Harun Al Nasif

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Harun Al Nasif