

FABLE FACTORY

OLOKKHI

AAHIR MRITTIKA

Spilled tea over expensive emerald tablecloths,
 Lost earrings and rough hands,
 Tripping over nothing,
 Laughing like the storm,
 This daughter flies around the house.
 Thunder crackles each time she touches the ground.
 Not the sun or the joyous tunes of harmonica
 Or the sweet Bengali mangoes of summer
 Compare with her eyes.
 Eyes of brown:
 Like the cinnamon, a secret spice,
 A little sweet, a little bitter.
 This is the child with clouds for a soul,
 This is the child who brings tears to her home.
 Like a fish that can not swim, or a sour orange,
 The daughter is not a wife.
 Not a person, not enough,
 Not a mother, we shall call her monster.
 Claws for hands,
 Everything she touches turns black
 As poison drools down her nails,
 Blankets everything in sticky pitch-black tragedy.

Aahir Mrittika likes to believe she's a Mohammadpur local, but she's actually a nerd. Catch her studying at mrittikaahir@gmail.com



ILLUSTRATION: RIDWAN NOOR NAFIS



ILLUSTRATION: NAFISA AFSARA CHOWDHURY

You, my favourite things

SAMIN SABAH ISLAM

You're a work of fine art.
 Though a few strokes are notched
 Some colours seem blotched,
 But drawn with a dotting heart.
 You're poetry at its best.
 Two of the lines don't rhyme
 Losing track from time to time.
 Yet dripping with spirit and zest.
 You're a movie on a school night.
 Bold, stirring yet stress relieving
 3.30 am and you're sleep-thieving.
 You make me feel just right.
 You're the book I'm reading next.
 Capturing my restless thoughts
 Thrilled, with my stomach in knots.
 Oh wizard, you've got me hexed.

Hidden behind the ancient curtains

SHOUNAK REZA

Someone told me the music went on even after the fall of the very last curtain, the end of the very last act. The young violinist played away, hidden behind the ancient curtains and the many Corinthian columns. His soft brown eyes noticed nothing. The storms outside were of little importance to him. He played and played and played and took no notice of me, of the words that flew past him and into my heart, of the flowers that remained on the abandoned stage, untouched, unnoticed.

I could not ask him to come away—the storm was raging on. I wondered what he was waiting for. It had been years since the curtain fell, years since I hugged him goodbye, years since I was told how he waltzed and waltzed to the tune of nothingness before losing himself in the middle of oblivion.

I had been asked to not try interrupting him—the music couldn't stop, it needed to go on. They said he remembered nothing of the years we had spent with him. He paid no heed to the memories that now reside else-



PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

where, far, far away from his heart.

Fourteen years ago, on the fourteenth of July, we had watched a flight of pigeons as a hazel-eyed artist painted us on the rooftop of a homely art gallery by Dhanmondi Lake. I would aimlessly walk the streets of Dhanmondi exactly three

years later, looking for a melody long gone, a trace of the moonlight that had once engulfed bamboo mats and freshly brewed tea, the pigeons, the gallery...

Perhaps I was stupid enough to expect a sequel.