

# FIREFLIES

SAMIN SABAH ISLAM

I wonder where the fireflies fled  
And how they must lament.  
Defeated by the floodlit streets  
And forced to their descent.

I wonder whether the fireflies deem  
We stole their precious lights.  
On countless lives of their own kind  
We've been lighting up our nights.

I wonder if the fireflies return  
To claim their midnight reign.  
I'd like this though as all I wish  
Is to see them once again.

# ENIGMA

ADHORA AHMED

When I first met you  
I was drawn to your eyes.  
I couldn't tell the colour of the irises  
But they were filled with secrets  
Leaking, pooling  
Into the dark circles underneath.

You dipped a quill  
Into those endless voids.  
I touched the tip to a dry leaf  
And heard voices long forgotten,  
Saw places nowhere to be found.  
I have no name for this experience.

A winged creature crooned melodies  
Found in no song  
In a tongue no one speaks.  
Sparkling droplets rained on its wings,  
Melting the strange angel into nothingness.  
My own tears had washed it away.

The ink ran out.  
It was your story,  
But I had lived it.  
Your dark circles were gone.  
Giving me the quill, you said,  
"Now write your own."

*Adhora Ahmed daydreams too much. Send her  
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# IT RAINS WHEN I WRITE

MAISHA NAZIFA KAMAL

A cloud of thought looms over my sky;  
The sky is a backdrop of blooming lilac,  
With smoke and dandelion puffs chasing the light,  
Cleaving asunder this monochromatic horizon.

Sprung from memories, another cloud nudges  
That estranged, numb cloud.  
Filtering its burnt down tentacles,  
And entwining it into something sinister.

These clouds fight, coalesce and drift apart,  
Simmering and condensing my copper sky.  
For my chocolate hands and linen lips  
Couldn't forge them into the carcass of my life.

It is painful when there's only infernal light,  
Blinding and charring my ambivalent soul.  
Feels unforgivable when the birds I chase die,  
Before I can free them to chain others.  
I don't know if I want them to take over me,  
Or to abandon me as I did to their feathers.  
I can't tell if I need them to be my voice,  
Or myself to be their unfinished stories.

But my hand touches the sheaf of papers,  
The rivulets of ink scarring that lilac sky now.  
For light and darkness have breathed together,  
To reverse back into their primal selves.  
And within the shell of my existence,  
Articulating in my veins, purging my eyes,  
Words escape like blue paper planes,  
As they morph into fireflies and die as black swans.

And so it finally rains,  
It finally rains when I write.

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