

THE SUNSET

AFSARA KHAN

High up on a roof, away from everything,
My hair tossing around in the gentle breeze.
The golden rays of sunlight
Painting the horizon with colors so bright,
Reds, blues, yellows and white.
Clouds so out of reach, so soft and majestic,
Aimlessly drifting, over the land and waters beneath.
I face the sun, feeling all the noise in my head vanish.
I can close my eyes, the soft yet dazzling yellow engulfs me.
Like a warm embrace, I feel euphoric, weightless,
The celestial light, burning my skin,
Reminding me how to feel, ridding me of all sin.
And for a moment, it erases all memory
Of fear, desires and regrets.
Oh, how blissfully insignificant we are.
Our problems; a grain of sand in an endless desert
Like a drop in a never-ending ocean,
Alone with the clouds, all I hear is the deafening tranquility.
Catching this fleeting glimpse of heaven gives me hope
That maybe, in the end, we're not all doomed.
Maybe it will get better, that it isn't too hard to cope.
I know these thoughts are momentary,
Life so unforeseeable, confusing and scary
But sometimes, one needs to turn a blind eye,
In order to be happy.
Everything is so difficult in life, but in this moment,
It couldn't have been more easy.

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Building of life



SYEDA ERUM NOOR

She lost herself to the building of life.
Sitting in the center of the vast open space,
with her eyes trained on the building. It
was not a new sight. One she had seen ever
since she was a child. One she had grown
up seeing. Or rather, one she had missed.

But tonight, there was something about
the building that held her captive. Unable
to look away, she pulled her knees to her
chest, her eyes shifting from one window to
another on the large pile of bricks that sat
in the distance.

Tonight, this building was unlike the
other ones. It stood out. Each window lit
up in a colour of its own. Each window
offered her a peek into something that was
worlds apart from her. One would say there
was not much to see. It was much too far to
make anything out. Yet, the slight shifts in
light, the bare movements in each window
was a sign of life.

If it wasn't for the building with the lit
up windows, she may have faded into the
nothingness that wallowed around her.

Worlds apart. She was peering into the
lives of strangers that she couldn't see. The
distance and the foreignness of it all should
have made her feel small. It should have re-
minded her of her insignificance in a world
of so many. But it made her feel connected.
Grounded. As if a part of her was connected
to those strangers that had no idea of her
existence.

It was like driving alongside a train. A
simple thing really. But there was some-
thing beautiful when you're sitting, peering
out the window into the train. Once again.
The distance is almost tangible. As if, if you
reached out, you could just barely touch it.
You could let your fingers graze what sepa-
rated you from them. Yet, in that moment,
nothing seems to exist other than you and
the train. As if everything and everyone
else fades away and you are transported in

an unworldly space and time where only
you and the people on that train exist. You
move in a time so synced that no power
could separate you. As if your existence
depended on that momentum. And in that
moment you feel an unspoken, inexplica-
ble connection to a group of unsuspecting
strangers.

The night faded, as did the lights of the
building, one by one flicking off, severing
her bond to the lights of those windows,
disappearing against the pitch black that sat
behind it.

The next morning, she came yet again,
in hopes of experiencing the magic she had
felt last night once again. But to her disap-
pointment, the building that seemed to be
booming with life just hours earlier now
sat against a clear blue sky. She could barely
recognise it. The curtains of all the windows
were drawn. There was not a sign of life in
the drab of a building that sat there in its
place. The unforgiving sunlight pointed out
the age and the ugliness of it. This was a
completely different building than the one
she had seen last night.

With any and all hopes having left her,
she trudged away. But with the sinking of
the sun came the calling she had felt. The
building was lit up once again. The mellow
night sky had breathed life into it. The
building was once again almost blending
in with the sky behind it, the floating boxes
of light keeping it alive. It was bustling with
movement and life and again she was trans-
ported into the world where only she and
them existed. Where time and space were
foreign. She lost herself to the existence of
lives that stood at great distances from her.
And for a second time. She lost herself to
the building of life.

*Syeda Erum Noor is dangerously oblivious
and has no sense of time. Send help at erum.
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PHOTO: KAZI AKIB BIN ASAD