

THE woman standing by the window now is more than 50. A rather tall woman is she. Now lanky, now haggard. Her enervated look is the index of long suffering...

Well, twenty or twenty-five years back, no occasion in Rabbani's father's house was celebrated without Ayesha's dance. She was the most sought-after amateur performer in the area...

His son, a boy of 13, big and flabby, with very little grey matter in the head, means a complete dudgery to his father. The father works with the tenacity of a bull to instill some kind of IQ into the son...

Today, however, everything is going on properly, though lack of sleep the night before soon fatigues Rabbani. Still he is not in a relenting mood. His son to him is a piece of wood or a rock whom he believes, if only he sticks to it, he will be able to give a desired shape...

Besides, the affair at the bank is worrying him. His transactions have been spotless; though over the recent years, habit or whatever you call it, he preferred to be lazy about keeping the accounts...

like crying today. All these years I have been living without a proper meal. You all help me I know. You help me more because I've no children...

Rabbani tries to console her. "Reality is hard you know... everybody has complaints." In a flux of emotion, he asks, "Doesn't Rabihia's son take care of you?"

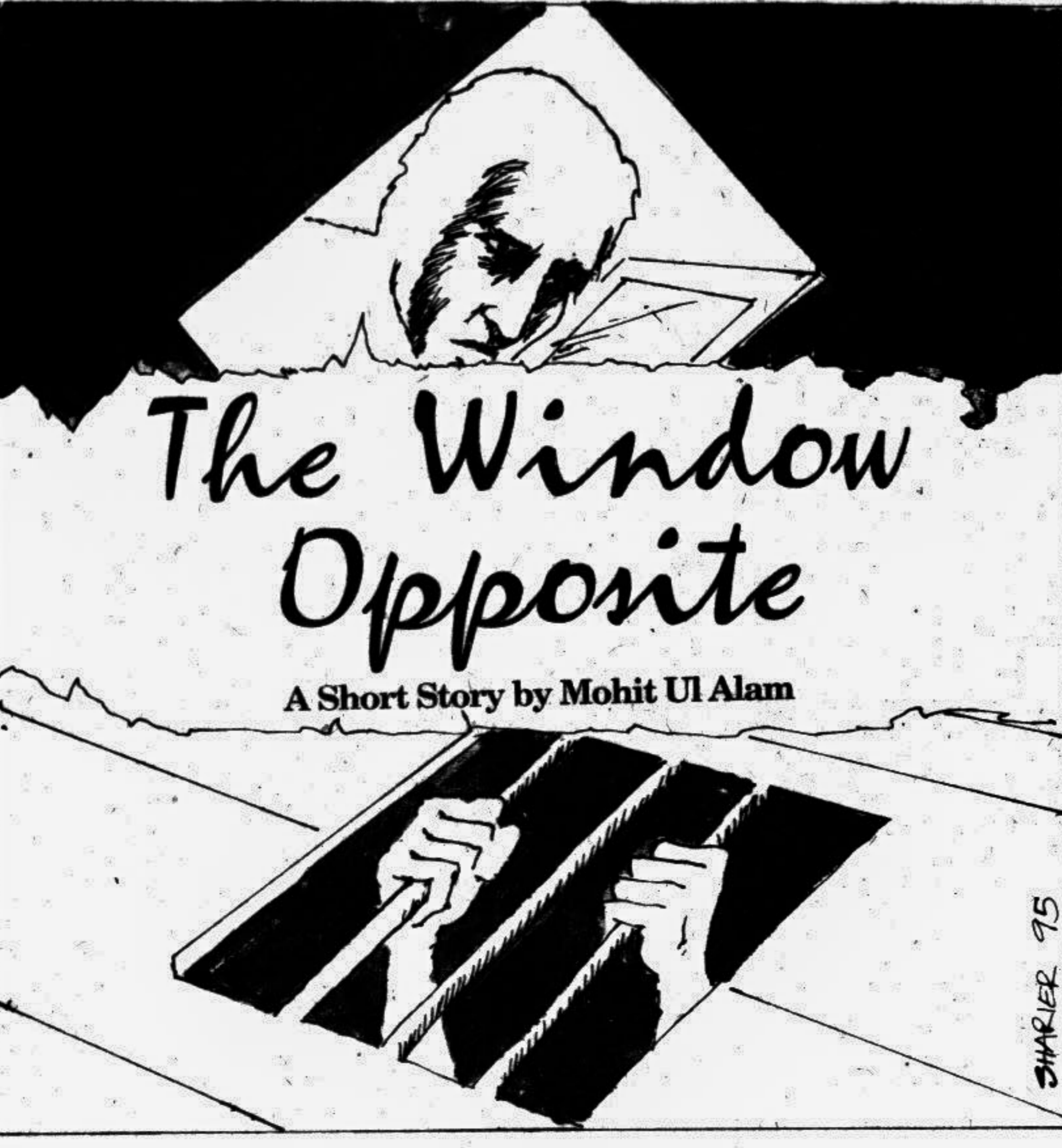
"He... ah... he doesn't. Why, he have eight daughters, you know." Ayesha dances.

warmly takes Iru in her arms. "Brother, I don't dance anymore in public." "No, sister, you must dance today."

The child swells with joy as Ayesha reorganises her sari for the dance. The boys' mother comes out of the house. She and the two sons, and the maid servant and the dog of the house, all stand up around Ayesha allowing her a small circular arena to dance.

Ayesha leaves, but the affairs at the office come to his mind again. An almost crushing feeling destroys whatever mood Ayesha's dance has raised in him.

Hopeless and crestfallen, he approaches his wife in the kitchen. "I'll quit my job," he says. The gas-burner is on. It is hot inside the kitchen.



"What about Mohammad Ali, Rabiz's brother?" "Ai, ai, you know that he drinks in season and out of season. His wife also left him, you know."

One or two cautious steps slowly at first. One or two markers by the hands. She is obviously riding back on a long-forgotten track. Then slowly her hands and feet get more concerted.

The bridegroom is at the gate. O lovely daughter tell us How will we decorate you O lovely daughter tell us O lovely daughter tell us By now, it's jubilant clapping. His mother's laughter, and the older son's mute smile all get

Birds, Flowers and Children

by Nazim Mahmood
Birds, flowers and children
Flowers, children and birds
All alike, the selfsame train
All are God's chosen wards

Lo! the birds in the sky
Rolling about, making fun
Like the children trim and shy
Like the flowers bloom in the sun

In the garden flowers look
Like the children in a school
Or like birds in a nook
Sipping nectar from a pool

When the children together play
Like the birds high above
In a bouquet roses say
To the mankind a divine love.

Promise
by Helal Kabir Chowdhury
Heaven's child is born
To a pleased couple
Ecstasy to a bevy of admirers
Babe is seen with
a feel unknown to all.

Involved in breakthroughs and breakdowns, the poetry of Sylvia Plath

Sylvia Plath: Dying as an Art

by Shawkat Haider



casual, fiercely candid Sylvia Unbound (but psychoneurotic and suicidal). Most of her poems centre around suicide, self-hatred, and disgust for child-bearing and other bodily functions.

Plath's syllables are probably best understood by way of Dylan Thomas, who used syllabics more than anyone seems to have realized — and then almost always in his most death-conscious lyrics.

Her fierce and brilliant language is all directed at other whom she wishes to overcome, but the giants and colossi of her poetry fall down only to rise again; the body immolates itself only to return to its old, guilt-ridden shape.

Africa's New trouble-shooters

Continued from page 10
Mandela put troops on the Lesotho border, sent jets over the capital of Maseru and with Mugabe and President Quett Masire of Botswana negotiated a package that restored the civilian government in August.

I shall come to you, she said, when the sun is setting... Caress your brow, make you sleep... and slowly, slowly slip away.

When sleep evades you, and you toss in your lonely bed... I shall come to you like the wind... hiding from everybody... Caress your brow, make you sleep... and slowly, slowly slip away...

Design with a Human Face

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general press, giving us the sparse keys to decipher his work. Out of all his key-words, there are six major ones: