Farmer's Symphony

A gentle southern breeze made the trees rustle and sway at a distance. I gave a vague stare at the horizon. As far I could see, the surrounding fields had a beautiful contrast of green and yellow, claiming the presence of winter. The fog was fighting a battle with the morning sun, one it would eventually lose at some stage.

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"How many hours do we have to endure this pain?" I didn't answer my friend's question, because I knew I couldn't. Instead I chose to stare out the window. A gentle southern breeze made the trees rustle and sway at a distance. I gave a vague stare at the horizon. As far I could see, the surrounding fields had a beautiful contrast of green and yellow, claiming the presence of winter. The fog was fighting a battle with the morning sun, one it would eventually lose at some stage. I sighed. How many of us take time off from our daily life just to see the charisma of nature, its' treachery and the affection with which it embrace us all? I turned to my friend, him with his i-pod earphones plugged in, detached, eyes closed, mouth wide open, waiting for his orchestra to begin. The highway towards Chittagong was blocked on account of repair works and we were one of the victims of the circumstances. I got down from the car and decided to go for a walk. Avoiding some weird and unique expressions from fellow travelers, I changed my course from the pitched surface to a dusty pathway. I scanned the region, which was quite empty. It was then that I suddenly realized the presence of a figure.

He was working with his back to me, not knowing that he was being watched. I could hear the rhythmic synchronized sound of the tool with which he chopped off the crops. It was quite amazing to observe his dexterous activities, as if with each slice he was gaining perfection. I could see the determination in his eyes, eyes that were so focused. His mind was concentrating hard, as if he knew all his hopes depended on this job. His battered and bruised body was using all its muscles to assist his desires; the sun burnt face was reflecting diverse sentiments. Sweat trickled down his square chin and he did not bother to wipe it. He was breathing heavily, but his fist was clenched tightly, the grip strong on his tool as he went on. I knew he was racing against time. Reeling thoughts were storming his mind with every move he made, maybe about his family, life, survival, I don't know; but I at least knew he didn't have any intentions to give up yet. As long as he could go on, he would support his family. He was very old, and the experiences of life had left their toll on him. After working for around twenty minutes at a stretch, the old man let go off his grip. He was upright and looked at the basket next to him. He chuckled, and a smile appeared on his pain stricken face. Gasping for some breath the farmer turned, and his eyes met mine.

There was a moment of silence, and it seemed to me as if I could read his mind. The old man was waiting for a perfect time, a time when all his dreams would be fulfilled, a time that would solve all his problems. His eyes glistened as the morning sun fell on them, and the spark told a different story. Although he was overwhelmed from his achievement there was still some uncertainty. He knew these feelings would be short lived. Soon he'll hand over his fate to the middleman, and the rest we all know. We never think of their contribution in our society, how much they have to stretch themselves just to meet our demands. It is quite an irony that we talk about changing the state of our country and then just as the curtain falls we put on a mask of brutality, deception, and fraudulence to which we are so habituated. I find it surprising to see how we go on complaining about price increments and pointing fingers, but we don't stop to consider the person who actually deserves something better in life. The cycle goes on, we move on with our usual routine, apathetic about the most important issues. This is how we try to create a difference. The voice of my friend interrupted my thoughts. Although I could see the farmer's dream and happiness was all in a certain symphony I wish it stayed forever. The tire screeched and we started off, leaving the rubber markings that will erase in no time.

N.B. The writer is a student of East West University.