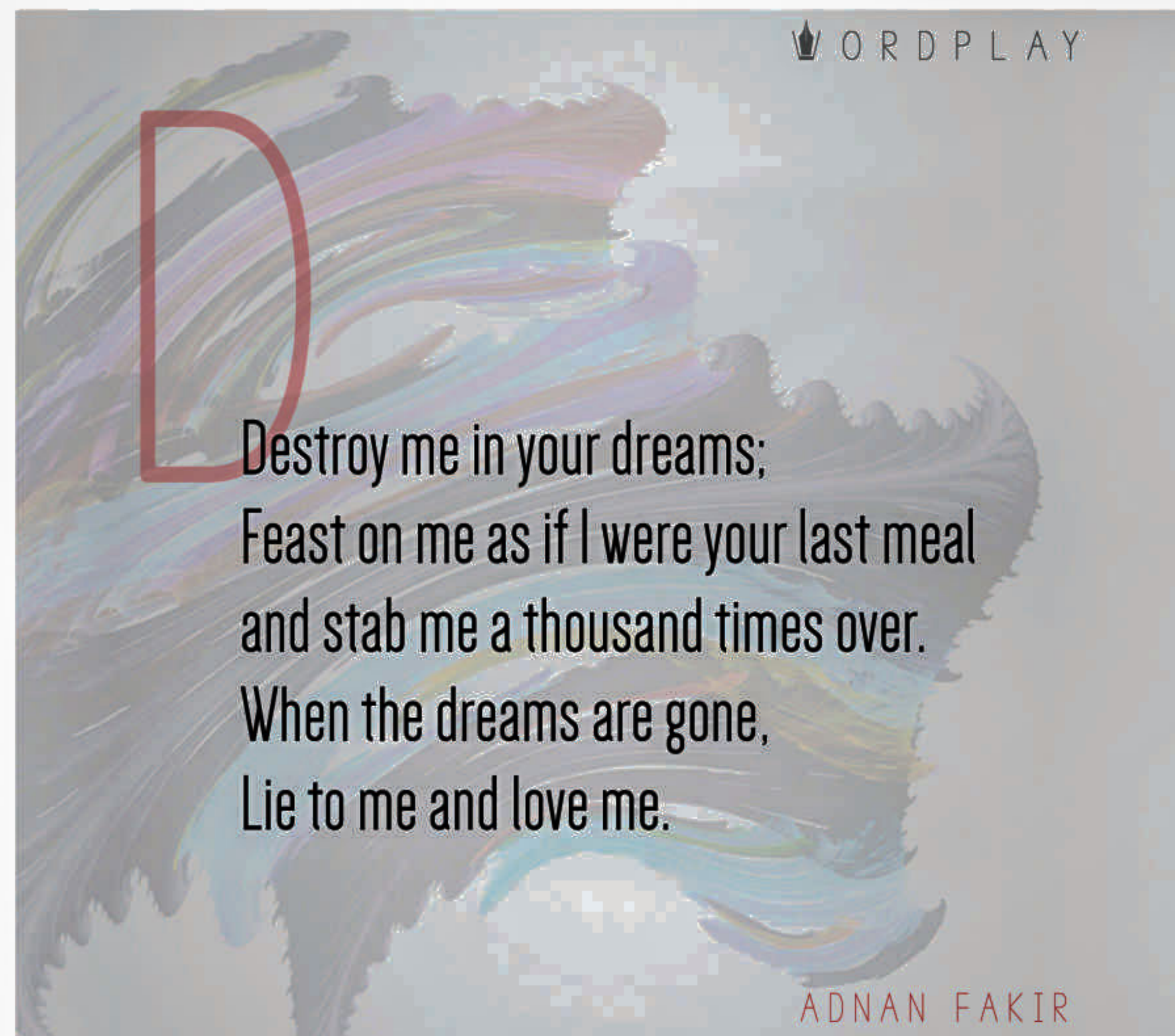


Dear mother.

AAHIR MRITTIKA

Dear mother can I be honest for a day?
I've lied so many times, I forgot the truth.
I have so much in mind but I just don't know what to say.
Where to start, or how to end.
It wasn't the thief that night when you all got afraid,
It was me by your door with a candle in my hand.
The nightmares were suffocating and I was scared to fall asleep.
So I thought of your warmth and my extreme need.
But when I reached your door fighting the fear,
I left without a word too frightened to hear.
For daddy was screaming, and I could feel you sobbing
Trying too hard to be silent, so that I don't wake up to the shouting.
The Monday morning when you left with that man,
Arm in arm, with a smile I had missed.
I was standing by the window, behind the blue curtains
Your favourite, the ones father and you had got stitched.
When my sister came home drunk,
and you weren't there to hold her
I saw her crumple to the floor and whisper meaningless words.
And when you finally came, still wearing that smile.
I saw you alive, for the first day after forever.
Yet entering your world you died once more,
With the first sight that welcomed you at the door.
You should really stop wearing those long sleeves
For everyone knows what lies underneath.
They know the screams that go on every night,
They know the truth, they hear every fight.
When you think I can't hear you, and you cry in the bathroom.
I stay right there because I know If I don't stay, you'll be alone.
For daddy loves me and sister but he ain't human to have hurt you.
Everyday he needs to remind himself that he's right, and deny the truth.
I hear him speaking to women every day,
With glittering eyes and ways like on a prey.
Except when he talks to you, and refuses to look into your eyes
I know he's afraid because he'll only see his own lies.
I see my sister dying every day, losing her reason for existence.
I see you breaking every day, the pieces of your patience.
Daddy's lonely too, for even his shadows fear his demons.
He fights them every day, the debts and the loans.
And I'm sorry because I know I can't help you,
I'm sorry because you've to believe the truth.
My life will be a reflection of this after ten years,
And everyday I will live my worst fears.
I know I'm your only hope, I know I'm your escape
But I'm no one myself, no soul alive enough to be true.
And today I'm writing this to you, because I don't know
Who I am or ever was, and my end is the best for your start.
I promise to watch you every moment from up the land of joy
But for now I must say goodbye, and before into the river below I dart
I want you to remember this truth without a given choice
I love you, I love you, and I'll love you till existence ends.

The writer, aged 14, is a grade 7 student at S.F.X Greenherald International School.

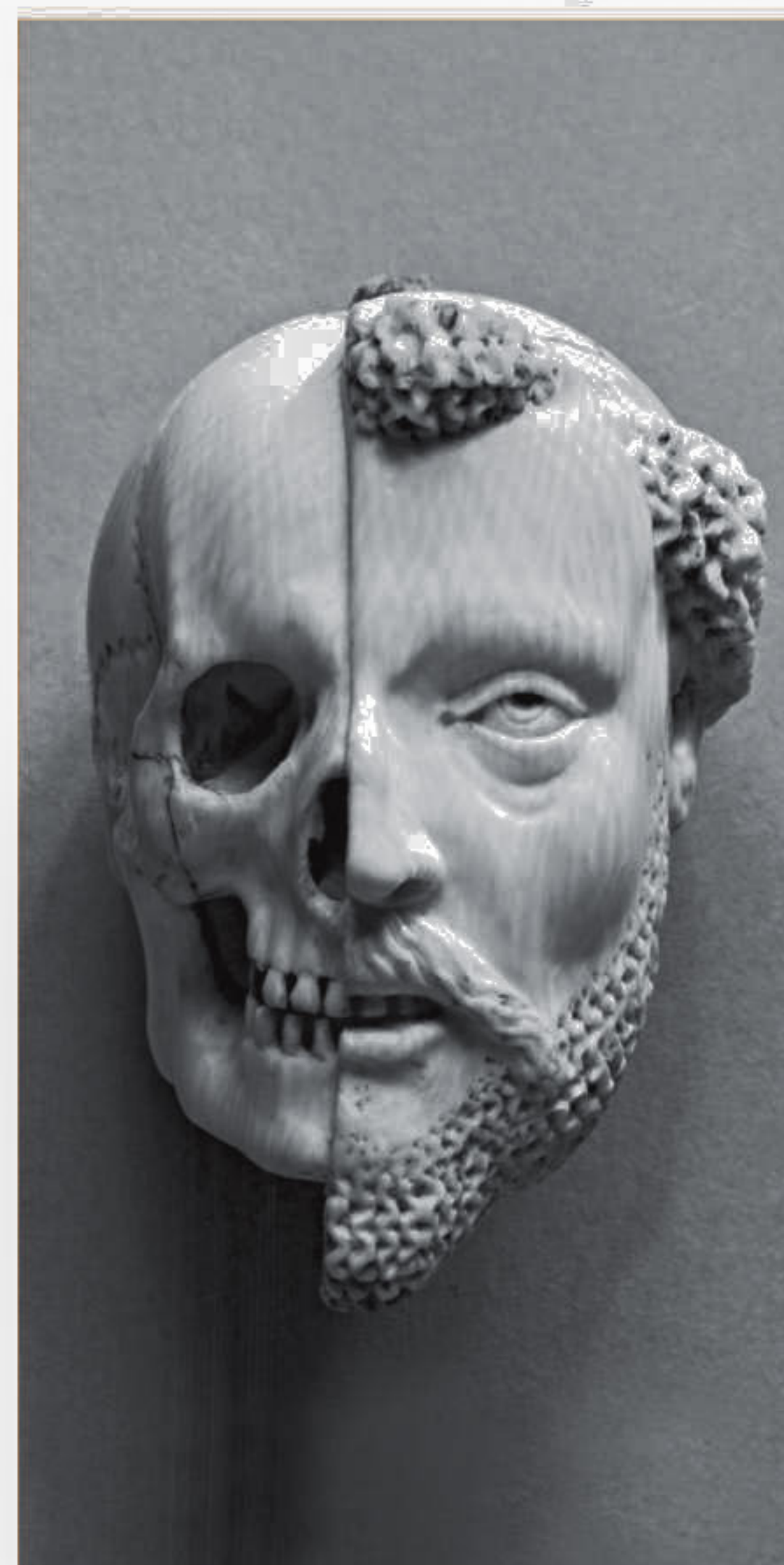


Destroy me in your dreams;
Feast on me as if I were your last meal
and stab me a thousand times over.
When the dreams are gone,
Lie to me and love me.

ADNAN FAKIR

Adnan M. S. Fakir teaches Economics at BRAC University. Outside he directs a documentary film series called "Finding Bangladesh," writes, takes photos, does social activism and travels a lot. He can be reached at adnanfakir@gmail.com.

Afterlife



R.M.

I fear
That my afterlife
Will be boring.
I fear getting bullied
By other
Dead guys.
I fear having
No friends
Down there.
With no one

By my side.
I fear
That life
Has turned us
Into stupid,
Stuck up optimists.
Making us
Immune
To thinking
How truly lonely
Death is.
I'm insanely scared
Of suffocating
In the dark
Depths of Death.
I can't imagine
How numb
I'd feel
From hearing nothing
All day.
I wish
I believed
In a heaven,
So I'd feel
Pacified.
Knowing that
There's a better place
Where happiness
Is in-finite.
I can't.
So the thought
Of death
Engulfs me,
Makes me lose
My mind.
It sinks me
To levels so deep
That I can't
Even hear
Me cry.

The writer is the founder of Thought Kitchen, www.facebook.com/thoughtkitchen