

WORDPLAY

Yonder beckons an impeccable ache
For it is the morrow to which I shall lose you.
I will no longer dream of you and I;
There will be no need of monsters
to guard the princess to be saved,
No train rides through villages
neither escapes to the beach;
Those dreams will become graves,
In which, like the dead, you and I shall live.
That 'someday list,' forgotten, shall reek in dust
My poems lost, swoon away like the wind.
You shall not know my lips, and I not your smell
You will forget my warmth and I your smiles;
Like so many a lovers' tale,
I will not love you, and you not I.

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.

Sacrificing Fools



SAMIN SABAH ISLAM

Mariah and Aarav, being incredibly close friends since childhood, gave their parents the impression that they would make a perfect married couple. Mutually agreed by both the families, the parents wasted no time in getting busy with their children's nuptial arrangements.

Mariah came home one day to find her family and Aarav's chatting away jubilantly in the living-room. Overcoming the surprise, she greeted her best friend and his family. After sharing countless laughs the elderly finally decided to drop the bombshell. Aarav's parents had mentioned how they always adored Mariah as the daughter they never had before finally asking for her hand in marriage, to make things official and make her their daughter-in-law.

Mariah was at a loss for words. With bemused eyes she looked around to find her parents content with the newly revealed information, which could only mean they were in agreement. Aarav knowing his best friend, knew the look of unease on her face when he saw it.

"May we speak in private?" Aarav asked politely, "Before you guys get too ahead of yourselves."

They were excused to go outside to converse.

"I can't get married to you," Mariah blurted.

As much as she longed to tie the knot with her best friend, the man she had loved since she was in pigtails and he wore those gawky braces; she knew his heart belonged to someone else, a third party. Knowing her best friend, she knew Aarav would go out and beyond to please his parents. But alas, he would never be happy. They would never be happy. Aarav deserved Ayesha and wanted her.

"If that's what you truly want," was Aarav's brief reply.

That night they had explained to their families who reluctantly agreed.

Breaking several promises made in their childhood years, Mariah and Aarav eventually lost touch. Years went by as they got carried away with their own lives and marriages. Eight years had passed when they met at their high school reunion.

"How is Rishan and the kids?" Aarav inquired his long lost best friend after they greeted one another.

Mariah sighed, frustration clearly written all over her face, "Rishan won sole custody of the kids in the divorce".

Divorce. Aarav's heart shattered. If only she had given *him* her heart instead, he would never have left her, the girl he adored to every last freckle on her cheeks.

"What about you though?" Mariah casually changed the topic, "Where is the beautiful Missus Ayesha Ashraf?"

"Ayesha? Who?" Aarav asked, with furrowed eyebrows, clearly incredulous. "Ayesha? The girl you loved?" Mariah's voice mirroring the confusion in Aarav's. "The girl I sacrificed my best friend for?" She continued.

Aarav's eyebrows jolted upwards in shock. A moment of silence followed.

"If that's what you thought all these years, Mar." He looked deep into her eyes disbelievingly, "Then we have a lot to talk about...."

CARMEN

AYSHA AMIN

Last night I dreamed you crawled under the covers with me
And I whispered in your ear
You're so beautiful, don't go just yet
You're so magnificently beautiful, Carmen.

Someone kept telling me
In my sleep
That everything was going to be alright
You'd grace this world of filth forever.

The sun didn't come up today
I heard you've breathed your last
I had been dreaming of you last night
While your magnificence lay as a carcass
In the dark winter night.

In my imagination you're still hiding under my bed
And if you never want to step out again, that's okay
Because I understand how beneath you this world is
And how tired you are of waiting for me

I'll be waiting for you
In eternal time.

I drove through the clouds
With your China doll corpse
Lying stiff in the passenger seat
I tasted the soil and dug a grave.
Now I'm back home watching you
As you sit by the window
I'm counting the times I let you down
But I'm running out of fingers
And excuses
I hold the love of my life for days
And pray for the blood to warm again.

For you, there's only love, Carmen.

