



De-Stress

SABRINA SAMREEN

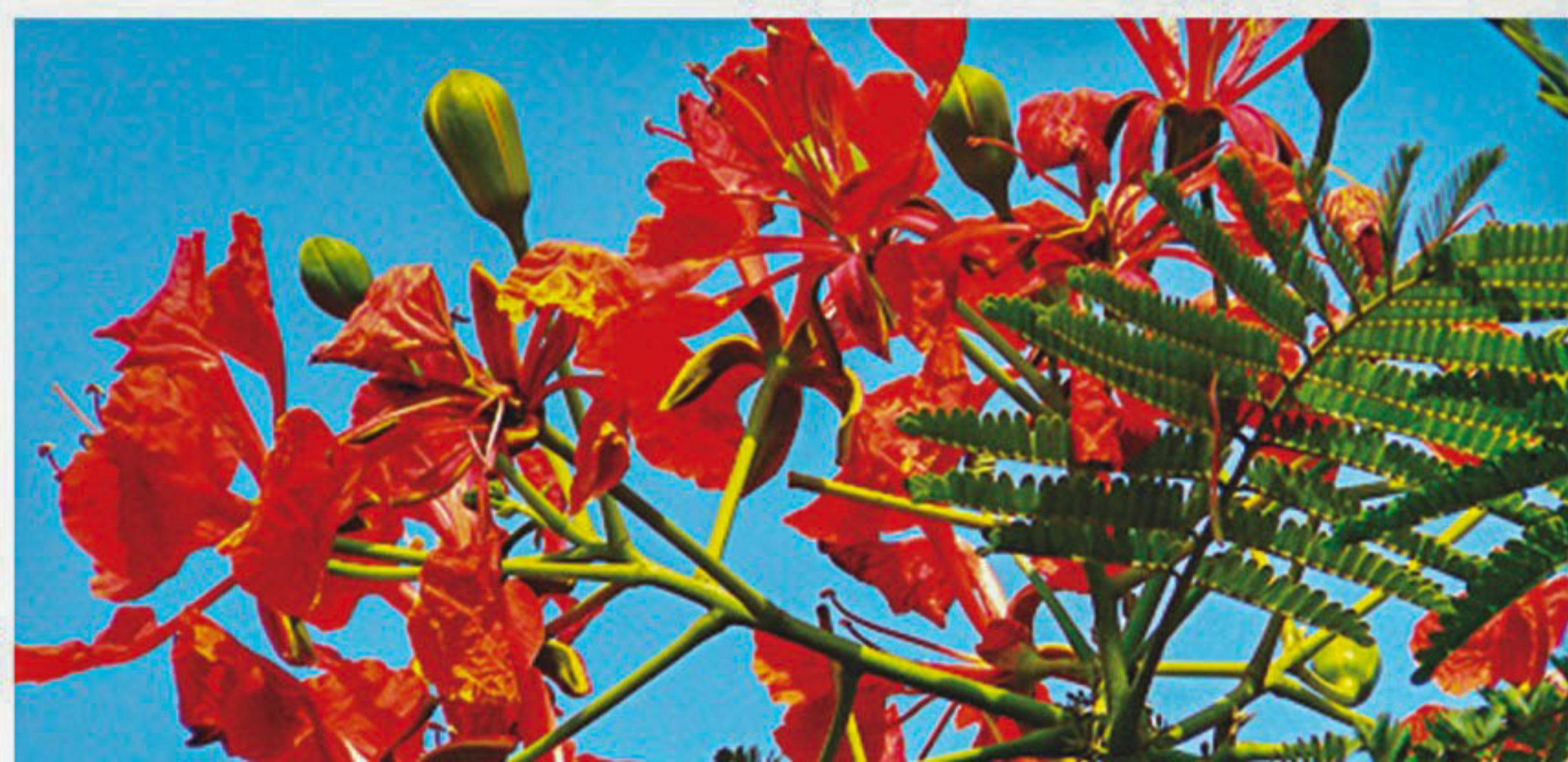
Raindrops, umbrella down, happiness seeping within,
Barefoot, wet earth, puddles mean no harm.
Sunrise, view through your window, bask in the charm.
Bus ride, winding streets, picturesque,
Old building, cityscape, post office, everything seems so new
Hi, hello, smile more, look around.
Doorbells, hawkers cry, cat's purr, sound of laughter, hark.
Cancelled plans, decelerate, let out the caged lark.
Chit chat, lunch at home, a simple affair.
Family, phone calls, Monopoly, friends, thoughts to share,
Distant memories, no clock ticking, April breeze on your hair.
Daydream, trace the clouds, lie on your back.
Kites in the sky, rainbow, butterflies, what are you chasing?
Are you done planning, analyzing?
Little things, pretty things demand your attention, Waiting.
De-stress, stare into nothing, nothing at all.
Talk, tap your feet, heads up, laugh so hard.
Photo albums, yellowed pages of story books, radio.
Office files can tarry on your oak wood table, stereo.
Breathe, live, count days, do, do nothing at all, fall.
In love, cry, feel, pray, breathe, you're only Human.
Street lamps, night guard's whistles, lullabies, fairytales, your eyes once shone.
Slow down, halt, pause, unwind, work isn't yours, yours alone.
De-stress, unwind, you've been carrying the world too long.
Let down your guard, you ain't that strong.

Daydream

MUSTASHFI MUSTAKIM

I'm daydreaming in this sunny afternoon,
Indulged in myself.
Fiery flowers have bloomed today in the *Krishnachura* tree,
I've opened my mind's door.
I feel tired today,
Spending time lazily.
Today I'm daydreaming with sleepy eyes,
Indulged in myself.
As if this immobile body's lying in a grave-
Still, motionless.
I'm at the depthless bottom of my mind's realm,
Riding Death's chariot.

The writer is a student of Class 10 at Bangladesh International School And College.



Of Silence and Wars

SHREYOSI ENDOW

Winter had lost its significance a long time back here in Dhaka. Global warming had stripped it off its grace years ago. Tonight, as you sit here in your balcony and the clock strikes two-thirty, a chilly breeze brushes past your face as if to remind you that it is indeed December and the date today lies in the very heart of the month.

Silence. The silence tonight is pure.

There are two stray dogs lurking in the yellow light that seeps out onto the street from underneath the gate of the building opposite. There is not a sound that reaches your ears until- until you listen carefully. You see, their soft footsteps create the smallest of vibrations in the air. Almost inaudible, but audible still.

A guard enters the lane. Had this been four decades ago, the sound of boots against gravel in the dead of the night would have stirred every single soul awake but look how the neighbourhood sleeps in peace.

The guard blows his whistle as his silhouette disappears in the darkness down the end of the alley. The dogs which lay curled up on top of a heap of sand and cement sits up in alarm and you hold your breath till the silence is restored. The dogs retreat to sleep.

Faint words, almost like chants, reaches your ears and you realize you are not alone.

There is a boy who sits on the balcony opposite. As you listen closely, you realize that the thin air between you two is a medium for you to hear his thoughts. You pay close attention to the words.

Inside his head is an empty space big enough for a battlefield and his thoughts are his soldiers. You stand somewhere in the middle of it with no weapon or shield but you soon understand, you are merely a witness. The soldiers surge past you towards each other with swords made of logic and slashes each other's heads clean off. You notice some of

them are mightier than the others but there is a certain equilibrium that exists among them.

A door creaks open somewhere and you lose your focus. You see a shadow of a man on the white-washed wall of the building across from yours. An old song from a Bengali movie you saw when you were a child zigzags through the air into your ears. You watch the shadow move around for a while before you hear the door slam shut. Once again, you concentrate on the battle.

Soon enough, the equilibrium ceases to exist and a warrior, whose sword shines brighter and is sharper than those of the others, emerges as victorious. You do not like him much but you remember, you are only a witness. The boy grips the cold, iron grills and you watch as he reaches a decision. The battle comes to an end and silence engulfs you again.

As he walks back to his room, you feel light headed. There is an emptiness inside your skull that is unfamiliar but comforting somehow. This is possibly what they call peace, or what they call tranquility.

But wait, what is that drone that you hear? A hum that gets louder by the second, a set of words repeated again and again echoes from your bones. You realize you have heard these words before.

These words are a call for war and this time, the war is in your head.

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