



INNOCENT SIN

SADIA TASNIM TUBA

Throbbing hands
 Rusty pens,
 Sleepy eyes
 Lashes die!

The beginning, the end,
 Wearing the same.
 Divine nature, how obedient,
 So tame!

Bare room
 Counting claps,
 Measuring inner howl.
 Taking thousand naps.

Open sky
 Full of stars,
 Hues among the clouds
 Remind of scars!

Stubborn winter
 Gives birth cotton snow,
 Long verses;
 Lost and aimless.
 Seeking for a master to vow.

I know a boat called 'life'
 where people come and go.
 Few are genuine,
 Later you will know.

My poems are aging
 like my shrinking skin
 so feeble, so naïve
 Tell me-

Will they be pardoned for an innocent sin?

The writer is a student of BRAC University.

MAY I DREAM?

SAFIN JUNAYED ROUF

The sky was dark but filled with specks of light, the mountains towered over everything but there were people on them, the air was dry and stale and ready for rain, disparity plagued the town but hope survived inside their rib cages.

It was cold, so cold that your bones would turn brittle and your soul would curl up. At the centre of the town was a bonfire, and the people surrounded it covered in their warmest clothes, blankets and whatever else they could salvage. When nights were as cold as this, the older inhabitants of the town would start feeling so sick that their souls would end up leaving their body looking for somewhere warm. Everyone held each other close hoping to conserve even the slightest of heat, teeth chattering, body shivering and minds screaming. Everything wasn't so grim of course, after all, hope always manages to dig itself up even in the darkest and coldest of places, whether it be in mountain towns where the people are freezing to death, or underground where the magma burns you alive. Was heaven meant for the people of this small town who only want to survive till the next day? Would those specks of light grant them the warmth and light they so desperately seek?

He stared at the fire, his eyes burning. The wind would crash against his bare back chilling his spine, but he took it, gritting his teeth. His mind thought about something one of his elders once told him and his brother about—the origin of their world. Once, before any of them were born and even before this village existed, this world wasn't barren and there was more than just mountains, flatland as far as the human eye could see, fields of grass spreading into meadows and pastures where man and beast would live in a symbiotic cycle. This was the first time he heard of the word grass, but not the first time he heard beast. The elder told him about how there used to be buildings as tall as these mountains and towns so big you couldn't even see where it ended. What surprised him the most and still excited him to this day was when the elder told him

that back then light existed everywhere, even when it was dark outside. He had heard of this before, light. Kazuki had listened to other elders describe it to him before. Some kind of ray that would fall from the sky and was much stronger than the specks in the sky. How it would make everyone feel happier and make everything green. Kazuki loved those stories and tried imagining a world like that where him and Kishi could get hit by those rays of happiness. They deserve to be happy don't they? No one else thought about that, their own happiness that is. Kazuki held Kishi tighter, his fingers against Kishi's chest, feeling his heartbeat.

Kishi felt guilty wearing his brother's jacket, but he was also grateful; he loved how warm it was and the way it clung to his body, bringing with it a kind of wholeness. Kishi was falling asleep when his brother suddenly grasped him so tightly that his heart started pounding against his chest. It was soon after that, that the ground started shaking and he started hearing loud thuds. They came in large machines that made such a thundering sound that he couldn't hear what his brother was saying. He gestured for Kazuki to repeat himself, but was still unable to hear him over the roars coming from the machines. It wasn't until the first shot that everyone started screaming, and it was after the second one that they ran.

Kishi remained still for he had seen something for the first time. A tiny glimmer every time accompanied the rings of the shots. Engrossed in it's bright spark, Kishi was only pulled out of his fascination when Kazuki dragged him away from the sparks by his arm, heading to one of the ditches where no one could see them. Kishi was in a daze, but the noise had finally died down and now he could hear someone talking but he didn't recognise the language. He could also finally hear what Kazuki wanted to say to him. He looked at him expectantly, but Kazuki only raised his fingers to his lips and signaled him to stay quiet. He then leaned closer to Kishi, and whispered into his ear, "It's the humans."

The writer is a grade 11 student of Sunbeams School.

