

LAST DANCE

AHMAD SALEH ABDULLAH

Embers smoulder.
In the white smoke, like the jewellery.
In a store, or the innumerable pearls
By Eden's seashore, our memories glitter.
With the same intensity as that of
The oxygen-starved air, those memories –
our friendship – wring our senses,
Our hearts, our souls; Mnemosyne reappears.
She hands me the past in stoppered bottles.
The air becomes heavy with her chants,
The past seeps through the lid,
And settles on the environs,
Enveloping us with an intoxicating scent.
Time moves backwards,
And the past is reborn.
Ballrooms are embellished, new curtains are
hung.
Daffodils and forget-me-nots smile under the
Autumn Sun.
The chairs are burnished, the furniture in the
room
Are freed of their decade-long gloom.
The windows refract light that breathes life
Into the paintings on the wall.
Ten lovers from my ten best years come
Asking me to honour the promise of a last
dance.
But why does the sky still break into
A violent cry, shearing the skin of the clouds,
While we waltz among the stars?
Gazing at the white rings of pigeons
Do we dream of better days? No.
What's best is already past, there's nothing
More our hearts could ask for.
O Insomniac Moon!
Would you let me drink your blood
And make me immortal as you?

Abdullah gracefully drowns in the proses of Joyce, Dostoevsky, Faulkner. Call him ashore at asabdullah.ag@gmail.com



DESIGN: FATIMA JAHAN ENA



The Last Waltz

MAISHA NAZIFA KAMAL

Chandelier glimmer and sculptures of ice,
Gold banners and curtains of lace,
Oh, there's a staircase now,
And it only goes down.
I see scattered pearls and footsteps left behind,
Sense the warmth of hands on the banister,
And I wonder who went down,
And never came up.
I hear violins and the piano play,
I hear the sirens' promises ring in the air.
The smell of some grand feast wafts up,
And I'm bewitched.
Oh, I'm waltzing down,
Down this wicked set of spiraling stairs,
That goes down and down,
That feels eerily familiar.
Oh, I'm waltzing down,
Marvelous and alone in this careful dance,
Nobody really bothers,
Nobody sees me go down.
Or they do,
As they stand at the head of the stairs,
Like I once did,
Contemplating the search of peace and something
nice.
And maybe they too wonder,
Like I once did,
If anyone ever came back,
From this magnificent spiral that only goes down.

Maisha Nazifa Kamal has lost track of time and is living in a world where she never existed. Break her reverie at 01shreshtha7@gmail.com

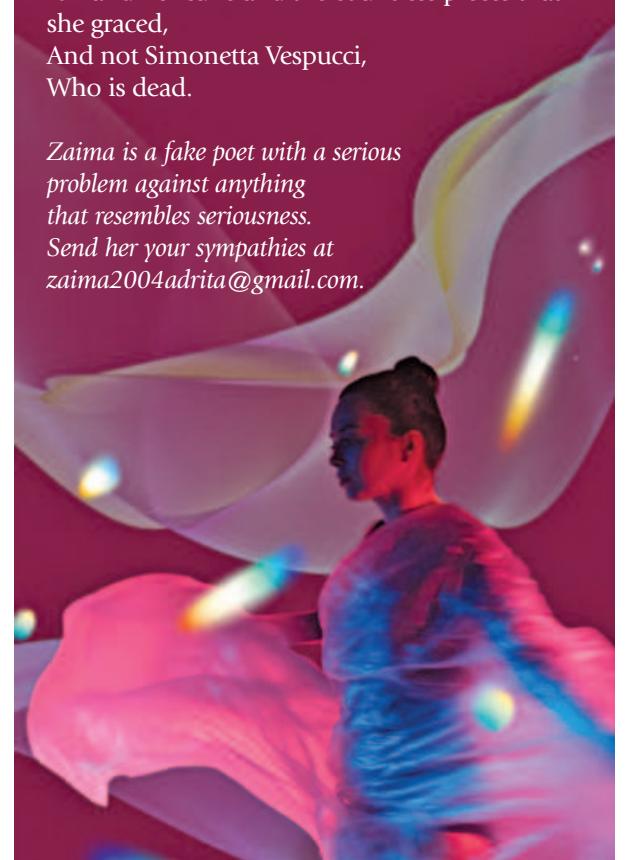
DESIGN: ABIR HOSSAIN

Simonetta Vespucci, Dead

ADRITA ZAIMA ISLAM

A vision in white,
Rings out the collective tide.
As the luminous coffin,
Carved from the grieving bodies of a thousand
magnificent ashes,
Is shouldered by four men
Who once loved her etherealness.
The men are rugged,
And their edges ever so slightly frayed
As though temporarily worn away by the weight
of the weightless spectre in her open prison –
The prison that they are carrying through the
streams of her wistful admirers,
Across the streets of a city
That she called her home.
The sole man at the back of the procession
watches bitterly as
The sun lights his wife's hair,
Stirring it up into ambers
Almost as if it doesn't realise that its trials can
no longer bring mirth to the face that now
reads peace;
But his bitterness will soon be forgotten
As he falls into another's arms.
The paupers and the painters,
The addicts and the disillusioned
All weep with the husband as their beauty
makes her last circuit through her adopted
land,
But like him they will remember her complex-
ion and her curls and the countless pieces that
she graced,
And not Simonetta Vespucci,
Who is dead.

Zaima is a fake poet with a serious problem against anything that resembles seriousness. Send her your sympathies at zaima2004adrita@gmail.com.



DESIGN: FATIMA JAHAN ENA