



ILLUSTRATION: **ABIR HOSSAIN**

Love won't you look at me

RAIAN ABEDIN

I have lived too long to not be crushed by desire and self-doubt? It is brought out every time I feel my words pass like the wind.

I have walked this city one hundred years ago, in shoes that won't fit me anymore, now I speak ten words an hour and I look on in despair whenever the nights come, you don't read me the way I am meant to.

Does the crowd bother you? The ones made by men and their eyes and the stone walls, the pillars, and the ceilings. When they collapse do you finally feel at home? I am not an old soul, I merely see lives unlived. My heart/your eyes. There is no need to stay this misery, I am but a passing moment. Not just, nothing but.

Nothing changes over the centuries, not your gaze, nor that of the walls around us. Closing in, hold me close now, don't loosen your gaze upon me. The streets get narrower as we walk.

A wild child passes us at some point, he is the only one who cannot see the walls, he is coated in the city's dust, he belongs to the starless heavens.

I hope to see you there as well.

The clickity clackity of a mechanical keyboard is the only thing that brings Raian peace. Find him on IG: @raian_is_burning

Double Dream of Dhaka

AHMAD SALEH ABDULLAH

for Maa

Dawn opens her eyes
And from the edges of the world,
Clouds shoot up through the pipes
Obscuring the undressing of the sun.
Her spectral, astral chest, still yellow at middle age,
Nourishes her children with eternal motion,
Churning and *churning* around morning news and coffee cups
—Seven sons obedient and one delinquent daughter.

The slowly brewing hurricane of crows
Mechanical crow, a cosmic synchronised dynamo,
Sometimes spiritual, perhaps, sometimes almost too lively
like the cold kiss of death,
Jolts the world in its orbit, cuts the umbilical cord of sleep,
And onto the screen roll the actors' credits.

Cars upon cars clamber on roads upon roads,
All the arteries choke with wristwatches' sorrows,
While sleepy-eyed children, shorn of dreams and unicorns,
Watch as the slow dance of death unfolds.
Through the skyline laden with future's intestines
Gets lacerated the fabric of reality.

Eve wraps up her night veil, exposing
White vast belly dotted with airline veins while
The moon hides behind the eggshells,
The dreams boil in sunflower oil, and in your eyes
I see flicker the auroras of Jupiter.

And in alleys Neptune's tears sing
The silent epitaph of our love.

Abdullah thinks he's the reincarnation of Lorca, which, obviously, isn't true. Break his reverie at asabdullah.ag@gmail.com



ILLUSTRATION: **SYEDA AFRIN TARANNUM**



ILLUSTRATION: **FATIMA JAHAN ENA**

When time stops

SHAIKH SABIK KAMAL

When time stops,
The world cascades into a shade of white.
The wind leaves its trail with undaunted spite,
My heart escapes from a maze with a faulty plight.
And the shadows crawl beneath the shades,
Crashing into our minds like hushed waves.
An aura of distinct demeanor fades;
Away from the bittersweet cage; I run

When time runs,
I wait for the hour to be mistaken.
Exhilarating tendencies lastly awoken,
With the monument of hope morosely shaken.
And the dreams we buy sell more than the truth;
For the lesser the days, the weaker the youth.
Cries of disbelief, nothing left to sooth,
Inside my demise once again, I return

When time crashes and burns,
We get lost in the dimensions of a broken compass,
While the Earth collapses like our uncharted memories,
The skies collide in the unseen terminus;
So, I wait, for the doors of this cage to be opened,
Freedom under the moonlight, unrestricted,
And I wait, for the time to once again be taken:
Then I shall run to the hour that reaches out to us.

I wait, and I wait till there's
Nothing left to wait for;
And I wonder, why, when time stops,
My world searches to find its true purpose.