

# Explorations on Time

WAZIHA AZIZ

I've found that time is a magic trick  
we're taught at birth.  
One where Houdini wraps himself  
in a locked mesh of rusted chains,  
plunges into deep water  
And loses the key.  
I long to search for it but my numb-  
ness exhausts me.  
I'm sorry  
that all I can do with time, is lose it.

I'm tired of turning the days over and  
over in my head only to find there  
was always just one.  
Just one that kept knocking on my  
door and  
Just one I'd refuse to answer.

I used to wear my minutes as acces-  
sories and now the minutes wear me.  
And I'm wary, that this exhausting  
play on words that I so eagerly label  
as poetry  
could be nothing but a waste of my  
precious time.

*Waziha Aziz is a really loud person with  
an inflated sense of self. Remind her  
that she's not all that via Instagram  
@useless\_depressing\_poetry.*



ILLUSTRATION: FAISAL BIN IQBAL



ILLUSTRATION: FATIMA JAHAN ENA

# EPHEMERAL

MORIUM KULSUM

We can run away from this sad city,  
And roam around as if we were to just merely  
exist.

No need to be anything more or anything less,  
No need to make believe all of it makes sense.  
My soul desires to be free,  
Like a bird in flight.  
Making the most of these momentary moments,  
Without the fear of the future or the past.

I'd rather chase the last rays of the dying sun,  
And explore the stories of those twenty-one pilots  
with you by my side.  
So that I can eventually tell you everything I  
couldn't say to you before,  
Tell you that I never imagined I'd meet you where  
I met you.  
But I won't take for granted that November  
afternoon,  
When you first said your hello.  
My six-yard drape, your smile  
And the crowded hallway,  
I still remember how you'd break all the social  
conventions  
Just to make me stay.

I knew we'd make it work,  
Anywhere away from here.  
But in this lifetime, we'll never know what we  
could've become,  
If we only had the courage to ask for this love.  
But I'm convinced it doesn't have to be forever  
To leave an everlasting mark on our souls  
Or make us come back for more  
Even when we've drawn the line between us two.  
Cause some things can be remarkable,  
Even when they're ephemeral.  
Just like the last rays of the dying sun.  
Just like our few moments,  
Between the sweet hello and the forlorn goodbye.  
Just like the little infinity that we call life.  
So remarkable, yet so ephemeral.

# Dreams I Dare Not Dream

SHAHBAZ MAHMUD

You wish me to speak of my despair  
Then I shall tell you of the dreams I dare not dream.  
To live simply under an old banyan tree by the stream –  
Clean, pristine, free of sin.  
You by my side, what could've been.

You ask me to speak of my sorrows  
Then I shall show you the tears of my mother as she prays for  
me.  
They fall with the heft of a lifetime of worries  
Splashing into a pool of silken misery,  
Breaking my heart as I hear her plea.  
For me, to be holy, wholly.

You ask me of my rage.  
I take you to the window and show you the city –  
I rage not at the city, but for it.  
I rage for it not being allowed to love me,  
I rage for not allowing myself to love it,  
I rage, I rage, I rage, knowing it rages with me.

And then I rage at you, gently,  
With these questions, you kill me softly.  
You never ask of my joy, my love, my hope,  
You don't ask of my victories or even laugh at my jokes.

Nevertheless, I will tell you of my joy –  
It is belly laughing with my friends after a day of endless  
woes,  
It is the smell of *gorom khichuri* during a downpour,  
It is the juicy kick of an orange on a cold winter night  
And the silent comfort of sharing them with you by my side.

And about my love?  
Boundless, insatiable, untapped.  
It seeps out of me every chance it gets  
It flies, it runs, it even crawls, for what?  
For a pair of open arms,  
For the warmth of a forehead kiss,  
For a home.

For hope,  
For hope is when I  
dream those dreams I  
dared not dream.  
It is fantasy and  
delusion and reality  
and everything in  
between,  
Hope is when I look  
out at the world and see a place for you and me  
Dancing in childlike glee, carefree, under that old banyan  
tree.



ILLUSTRATION: ABIR HOSSAIN