

FABLE FACTORY



PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

[You stand here again]

RAIAN ABEDIN

You stand where you always have –
 You are five, you are seven;
 You are as many years as you've ever been.
 And something about the night and the way
 The tree bends in the fields where
 The blowers lift everything
 But you – because you have smoothed your creases over –
 Is reminiscent of how all loose threads belong to the same web,
 You listen to hushed conversations
 You shouldn't, nor should the trees listen to you
 But they do, because what is living if not
 Defiance against absolution. You think of running
 Away, and the tree understands, because the tree knows.
 But living is defying, and you are living.
 Or so you tell yourself.

Raian aims to be a poet of great renown someday.



PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

Curtain call

SARA KABIR

The curtain rises,
 Silence engulfs the theatre,
 All eyes fixed on her.

A lone figure stands,
 Centre stage with bated breath,
 Heart pounding, shaking.

A sea of faces,
 In anticipation held,
 For the grand debut.

A soft drumming beat,
 From the orchestra below,
 Sets the stage aglow.

Words churn the play,
 A world of make-believe spun,
 Enrapturing all.

Tension builds and ebbs,
 Emotions raw, bittersweet,
 The story unfolds.

The performer glides,
 Across the boards with such grace,
 Transfixed, the crowd stares.

The plot thickens fast,
 A drama of love and loss,
 And twisted kismet.

A grand finale.
 Audience too stunned to speak,
 A magic spell cast.

She takes a last bow,
 The curtains fall to applause,
 The show ends in bliss.

BLUE CLAY

SYEDA ERUM NOOR

The blue model of clay vices
 That sits in a house of glass
 Will shrink about three sizes
 As it waits for the moon to pass.

With her hair moulded perfectly,
 and her eyes shaped to cry,
 Her blue clay turns to burgundy
 As darkness drains the sky.

She sits in the clear palace –
 Picture perfect in her place,
 Unaware of the mould and its malice
 Inching into her embrace.

Like promises made in secrecy,
 It tells her sweet, green lies
 While spreading through her sheepishly
 Like poison does to flies.

She's frozen in her state of being
 A model built to die
 With smooth skin that is for pleasing
 But a heart built to deny.

So, the mould extends its ugly tendrils
 Of deceit that it will preach.
 While she stays set on her lovely end trail
 Where she's never meant to reach

So doomed the blue clay princess

Her skin now turns grey
 Too lost to even witness
 The crime that was at play.

Her hand perched atop her side,
 Her head turned to the sky,
 She looks to darkness to confide
 But the moon passes her by.

Her eyes frozen in memory
 And skin broken in plea
 She begs, but not for mercy
 But only for her fee.

The one she'd earned for holding
 The impossible serenity
 That had the glass house going
 While she lost her sanity.

But alas the mould is rigid
 As it crawls into her ears
 While she stands still and she listens
 She sheds not one stray tear.

And while her colour slowly fades
 And her blue clay turns to dark stone
 No part of her is jaded
 And no part of her, her own.

*Syeda Erum Noor is dangerously oblivious
 and has no sense of time. Send help at
 erum.noor1998@gmail.com*



ILLUSTRATION: FATIMA JAHAN ENA

Send your short stories, poetry and illustrations to shoutfablefactory@gmail.com