ERATURE



ESSAY

A SURREAL GRAPHIC NOVEL by Subimal Misra

As I read Subimal Misra-I was therefore seized by the urge to bring out his stories, or "anti-stories", in graphic form. And thus began a parallel quest even as I translated Misra, to find an artist who would collaborate with me on this. In 2009, I came upon the three volumes of stories by Yoshihiro Tatsumi—and felt that Misra was a Bengali Tatsumi in words, or that Tatsumi was the Japanese Misra in visual storytellingtheir work seemed similar to me despite all the obvious differences.

V RAMASWAMY

I first heard the name of Subimal Misra in 2005, from my friend, Dr Mrinal Bose. I began translating his short fiction soon after that. But by this time I had become entranced with the medium of graphic novels, ever since I discovered Maus by Art Spiegelman in the 1990s, and went on to read and collect the work of some of the major names associated with this genre, like Osamu Tezuka, Will Eisner, Joe Sacco, Marjane Satrapi, etc.-all now available thanks to the internet and Amazon.

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Subimal Misra's writing is very visual, in fact for him the stories are



"films". Influenced by Eisenstein and Godard, he tried to introduce cinematic language into Bangla writing. So there are compelling reasons to think of a graphic interpretation of his stories.

After I had given up on my "Subimal-Sambaran Das, thanks to film-maker Nilanjan Bhattacharya, and soon after the "Subimal-graphic" project, towards vernacular popular visual culture.

a volume of Misra stories in graphic telling. Sambaran selected a story to begin with, "An Evening in December '72", and devoting as much time as he could spare, he completed his drawing work in September 2018.

Although Sambaran and I had an English version in mind as our output, the idea of a standalone Bangla version also came up. After all, it is only appropriate that it is a Banglareading audience that welcomes the publication of a graphic novel by Subimal Misra.

So here at last, is a Subimal Misra story in graphic telling, and I hope this signals the beginning of a whole new domain of Subimal readership, and provides inspiration to a host of creative artists to jump in. We in South Asia have prodigious talent; it is time for us to make a mark in graphic literature. This work is a small step in that direction.

V. Ramaswamy's translation of The Earth Quakes: Late Anti-Stories by graphic" quest, in late 2017, I met Subimal Misra was published in 2024. **Sambaran Das** is a multidisciplinary practising artist, with a focus on that, he committed to collaborating on the decadent metropolis and its

PURBITA DAS

Glamorous lightweight raindrops from the October sky keep my swollen heart in a secluded place, mostly on Sunday nights. These readymade, numerous notions of making progress, at once, turn my methodical garden of words upside down and

i end up getting the constant feel of



ILLUSTRATION: MAISHA SYEDA

being one of the most miserable pieces on this planet, called Mother Earth. Truth be told, while feeling an abrupt urge of being a perfectionist in words and creating suspense, i keep on building

up a mock-epic out of my legendary hours spent on endless failures in this line-making process.

The regret remains and also prepares my sanity to head over for a long holiday and turn my bedtime stories into like an impure incense to

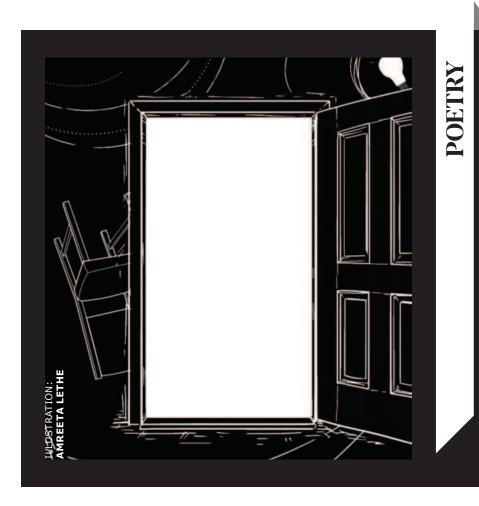
spread their vaporous nuisance all over my overwhelming chest.

The reverse energy to fight the fear of being a loser at the climax point of writing does not seem to make my heart happy

at those miserable hours with scribbling. Thus, my nights are put to an improper sleep and i have the most horrible dreams about the funnel of my insane voyages to fantasy

let me tell you beforehand that every freaking time it only leads to a long time to lament until the discovery of a new story.

Purbita Das is currently trying to find the lost pieces of her existence through words, at the same time, doing her post graduation in Linguistics and ELT at the University of Dhaka.



Silence

AHADUZZAMAN MOHAMMAD ALI

A star fell on the ground in the windy night,

Since then a silence envelops the entire space,

Everyone knew this;

Members of the family at home knew this, People outside the home also knew this, The little kitten at home,

Even my bed, table and chair,

All furniture knew this,

Only I didn't know what happened.

I was kept in a closed room,

There the musical notes of five poets were audible all the time.

The astronomical findings say my days should be full of music, I must be kept far from silence.

But nobody understood I couldn't take in the soothing sound of music.

Ahaduzzaman Mohammad Ali is a former professor of Dhaka University.

