

HAIR

ADRITA ZAIMA ISLAM

The different textures of hair never fail to fascinate me. I have my father's hair, not the dash of salt-and-pepper that seems to wipe away the lines on his forehead, but the smooth flatness that remains unfazed even under the most blazing summer sun. My mother's hair is like hay — it jolts me every time I see it because it is so unlike mine when so much of me is simply taken from her, stolen and carved right out of her body against her will. But I didn't start this poem to continue the tradition of coddling blameless mothers and antagonising cruel fathers that we have gotten so comfortable with: I love the texture of your hair and I wanted to tell you about it in far too many words than either you or I are comfortable with. I love the texture of your hair because it is the texture of my hair and it is the texture of my father's hair. I know just what it would feel like to run my fingers through the invisible knots in it; I also know what I would experience while touching the jagged ends of your hair — the remnants of the cool surgery table will coat the bottom of my tongue with a barely bearable tang. I love the texture of your hair because I am familiar with it, I love the texture of your hair because I can ragefully throw it into the shallow depths of the Baltic Sea and not say goodbye, I love the texture of your hair because I am unable to love my own.

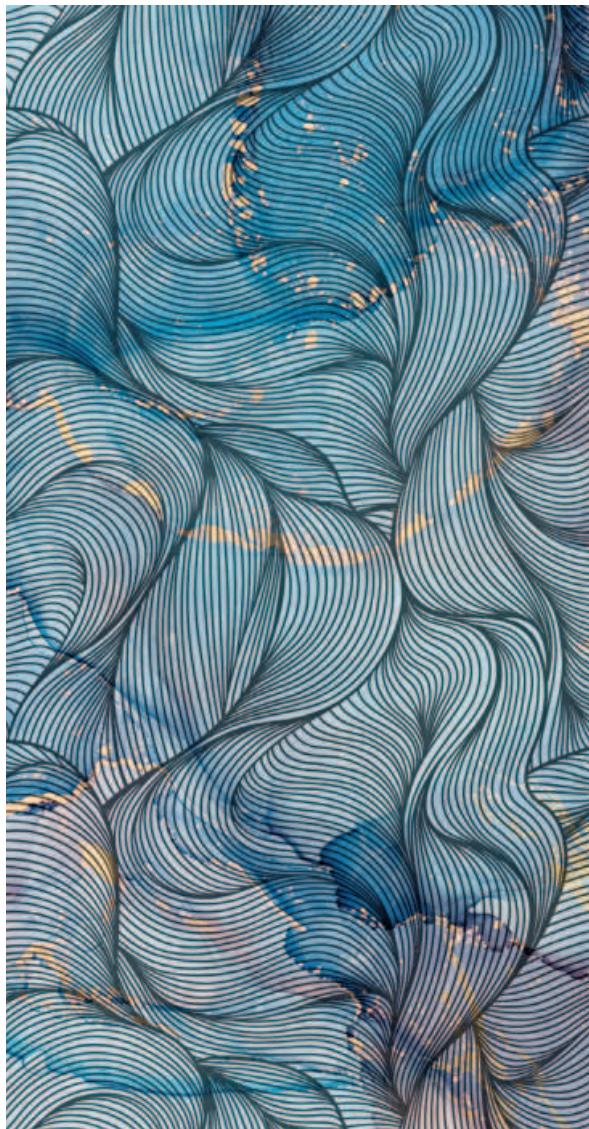


ILLUSTRATION: ADRITA ZAIMA ISLAM



ILLUSTRATION: ABIR HOSSAIN

Little Birdie

SHAIKH SABIK KAMAL

Little Birdie,
Tell me, is there anyone who's not afraid of a little change
In the weather, in the seasons, or in the asymmetry of a daybreak?
If not on these winds, do you believe our wings do thrive
Off of the weight of love brought to us by such little a life?
Well, I do believe when we're together, our hearts are just as good
Following the trails of cotton in lake blue, holding on to such youth
Because I love how my windswept feathers are soft like our gentle whims
And though yours are ruffled, they smell of flowers from the proudest of springs
But it's not the feather, the weather, nor a grassy glide's sweater that completes you
It's the way when you're alive, the hums line up in a perfect tune
And it's not my words of love nor the steady songs of hearth that they're worth
It's the idea of something real, something truly ours to hold
But sometimes the storm and the thunder drinks away our bleeding faith
And the shadow of larger purpose leaves a mark on luck's gates
Sometimes, it just gets so hard to not look down below
To realise that the gambit of the wind is not at all slow
But, just for now, just till we make it, don't look away
Till my wings are just flesh and bones, hold on to this love
Hold on to my love, my love. I'm holding on to yours
We are just birds of the sky, but we can be so much more.

Shaikh Sabik Kamal isn't actually a bird. Convince him otherwise at wolvesandwaffles77@gmail.com

FALLING ABOVE

SABIL SADAT ZAHIR

I kept falling, within my own reverie,
Like a chasm with no end
I kept falling, with no hope to be free –
Surrounded with memories that make my heart bend.
I knew not, where this darkness would take me
With a tenebrosity so comforting.
I knew not, why this darkness had taken me
With a contrition ever unending.
I kept falling, within my own reverie
But the darkness now waned;
I kept falling, with a light ensuing suddenly
The walls were no longer dark, but now inflamed.
Like one of the Malaikah, she caught me there
I fell no more, abated by a lustre.
My soul remained still, but my heart went everywhere
No longer alone, I absconded towards an everafter.
We kept flying, with every inch a new tomorrow
Towards a horizon between love and hope
We kept flying, through the pain and sorrow
The darkness now joy and wonder as an allotrope.
Every dark orifice slowly being rewoven,
We flew together, our hearts intertwined
With every word through her eyes as they close and open
She saved me, from a sadness confined.



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