MONOGRAPH

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Remembering the Monocats of 2022

A STUDENT LED MAGAZINE FOR THE ARTS

MONOGRAPH

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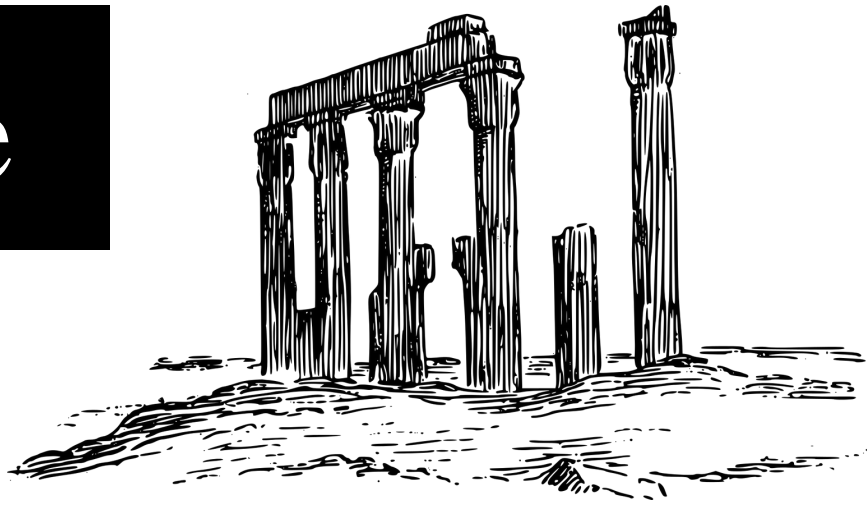
Editor's Note



Some days last for weeks. Yet, years slip away in the blink of an eye. We wish you the happiest new year, and hope it brings you good tidings. It was a big year for Monograph. Not only did we host our first live event, we also started printing our issues. We have always depended on your financial aid to mitigate our work expenses. We thank you kindly for your most wonderful support, and for subscribing to our issues.

This issue has had an ensemble cast, with Amit Shah authoring two pieces. Through the wonderful translator V. Ramaswamy, we have also acquired a translated work of Subimal Misra, the unflinching experimental author who introduced the meta-novel in Bengali. We have Adithya Prakash with their wonderful dissection of In The Mood For Love, along with a few fresh poets who have already become my personal favourites.

We hope you like this issue.

Anuraag Das Sarma
Editor-in-Chief
Monograph

History Rewritten

Caiityya Pillai

Maria Mies in her book, Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale, explains the role of non-wage labour of women and other non-wage labourers upon which capitalist labour is built, and subsequently exploited. In the second chapter, Social Origins of the Sexual Division of Labour, she highlights the patriarchal systematic marginalisation and eradication of midwives.

She elaborates on the systematic approach of the witch hunt, to curb the productive activities of women in general and midwives in specific. These midwives and healers were labelled as witches, to perpetuate the professionalisation of male doctors and create a hierarchy of male productivity over female productivity. Their participation in the economic sphere and right to judgement over procreation was unacceptable in this patriarchal society. The attempt to place male productivity over female productivity, subjugate a woman's autonomy, increase her economic dependency on the male members of society and essentially curb a woman's chores to household labour, led to labelling these midwives as witches.

Household labour and the working force were separated, to perpetuate the illusion of the man as the ‘breadwinner’, and women were systematically eliminated from the working force. The duties of midwives were performed by ‘professional’ male doctors. These male doctors were now the decision-makers in relation to procreation and this economic sector was taken over by the male members of society.

Household labour was essentially, non-wage labour and not considered ‘actual work’. These distinctions were drawn and women were ostracised from the working force to feed the illusion of males being the ‘breadwinners’ and increase female dependency on the men.

The work performed by women; during childbirth, and nurturing the child were characterised as her ‘nature’ and the work performed by men was labelled as productive, through the concept of biological determinism.

Biological determinism refers to understanding that women are more suited for nurturing roles, like that of a housewife, as it is a part of their innate nature since they can reproduce. A man on the other hand is suited for more 'productive' profiles. It fails to consider the systematic ostracization of women from the workforce as elaborated above and aims to supersede this scientific basis over all others to explain the hierarchies in the workforce. It aims to display biological differences as the entire explanation behind unjust patriarchal systems in the economic sphere.

The work of women, such as midwives, was not seen as work and when it threatened men in society these women became victims of the witch hunt. With their eradication male productivity was given precedence over female productivity. The capitalist class was established on the systematic eradication and marginalisation of women from the workforce.

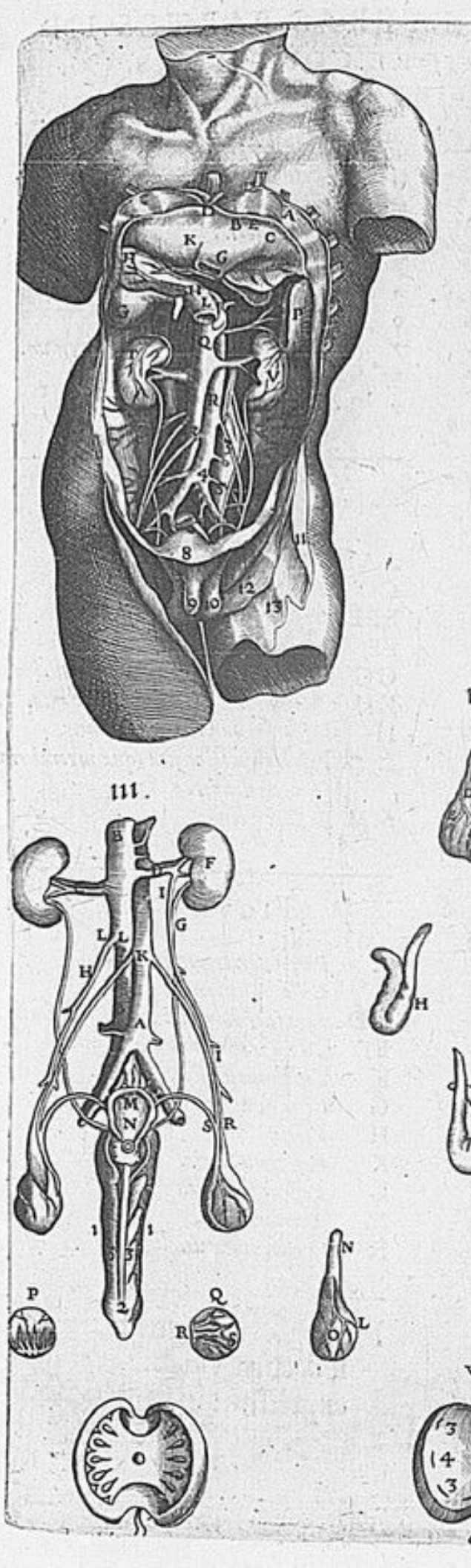
This outlook towards midwives and the prioritisation of male productivity over female productivity can be seen in similarity to the treatment of Anganwadi workers in times as recent as the time of the Covid-19 pandemic.

"Being frontline workers, we were given a 12-hour notice to leave our rented rooms as the landowners grew wary of the new disease.", says Preeti, an Anganwadi worker, "We had to pack everything in a suitcase and move out overnight."

Even though these women face immense hardships as frontline workers and were the light at the end of the tunnel concerning the Covid-19 pandemic, they are still underpaid and unrecognised. These unsung warriors are at best the faceless numbers that form the primary units of the Integrated Child Development Service (ICDS).

As responsibilities increase with reference to the pandemic, their salaries have had an inverse effect. “The government has failed us, we asked for a raise in our salaries but forget meeting our demands for dignity and decent livelihoods, the government has not even paid us our owed salary for 6 months,” says Manu, an Anganwadi worker.

Anganwadi workers are paid an average of Rs. 4760 per month, which is not even half of India's average monthly salary of Rs. 10,360. This reflects the outlook that work done by women can be poorly paid and that it is a ‘normal’ part of ‘work done by women’ and does not require additional skills. This outlook subscribes to the societal understanding of women’s labour as non-wage labour as explained by Maria Mies.



These women are tasked with providing assistance to 88 million beneficiaries, most of who are pregnant and lactating mothers and children under the age of 6. They are the main perpetuators of new government healthcare schemes in the rural areas, provide education on health and nutrition for breastfeeding and pregnant women, weigh babies and maintain records etc.

The pandemic has not only increased the risk they face but also the responsibilities. Health care workers are the most vulnerable section of society with reference to the pandemic, more than 12% of the infected population are frontline workers and 70% of them are women.

These women are now also responsible for informing families about COVID, observing the migrant workers who return to their villages after the disappearance of their urban livelihoods, patrolling containment zones, delivering groceries to quarantined families etc.
These female workers are paid honorariums and their payment is performance-based. This poses many challenges like delays in payment, lack of clarity in the payment process and lack of transparency etc.

Their dissent is portrayed in nationwide protests ranging from the Northern states of Punjab and Delhi to Karnataka and Tamil Nadu in the south.

The umbrella ICDS scheme, the Saksham scheme, in the covid year's budget, highlights how the government has failed to meet its promised expenditure in this sector of women & child development.

Not only has the government failed to meet their estimated expenditure budget in this sector, but the 2020-21 expenditure is also falling short of the previous year's expenditure (2019-2020).

During the pandemic, the government is cutting back on the expenditure for women's work and in the process labelling their work as non-essential.

How is it possible that the expenditure for one of the most crucial frontline forces has not been met, amid a pandemic? This has been done at the expense of these workers and points at the government's grave institutional prejudice towards women workers.

These women are in debt and unable to support their families with the income they bring in. They are being viewed as non-essential workers and being systematically discriminated against. Maria Mies's explanation of eradication of midwives through a systematic process bares similarity to how these women are being forced to conform to the duties of a housewife as opposed to participating in the economy. The distinction between household labour and the workforce and the characterisation of the former as non-wage labour, made women dependant on men then and is still causing the same result.

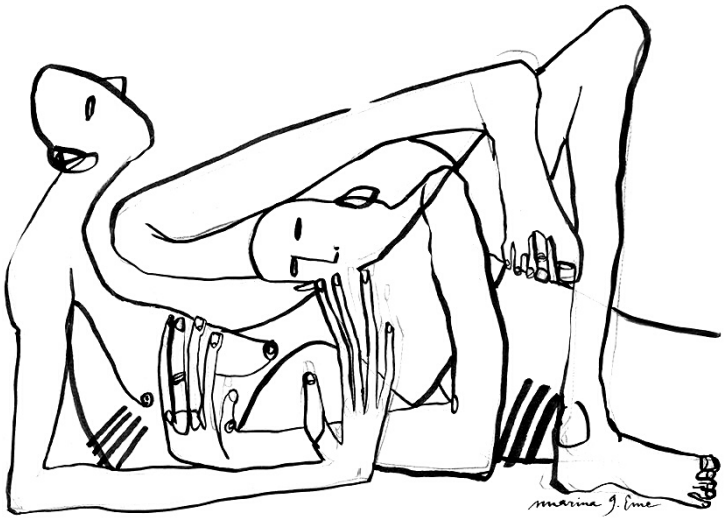
The Real Detective of the Mystery Beneath the Skin

Subimal Misra

Translated from Bengali by V. Ramaswamy

Ami had developed a kind of bodily relation with the books, which was both gradual and incessant, and just after that, problems became manifest. They survive now by eating each other's flesh. Violets are blue, because another body emerges from the body and walks in front of silent Grushenka, all along Khalasitola. As it is the girl was beautiful, her colleagues flattered her calling her a 'paragon of beauty', right from her college days she had observed only entrancement in men's eyes. Perhaps it was this girl who came to meet Ami. He happened to say: Come, come in, I was just thinking about you. But the girl interpreted this in a different way, the eighth colour of the rainbow was about to be discovered. Girls were extremely possessive, for sure, but he was of the opinion that boys were even more possessive than girls.

Now Ami says he is very tired, an infinitude of tiredness. He had been tired for all of the last three decades, which was even longer than he had been alive. And just then, after talking about this and that for about an hour, as she was leaving, he hugged Grushenka. She didn't not resist, releasing herself slowly she said: You're a rogue. He laughs: And you're a treasure trove. You talk rubbish all the time – Grushenka says – Tell me, why do you come so late – don't I worry? Good and evil are one, evil is merely the wrong choice at the moment of truth. If the life I used to lead was a dream then this is a nightmare, and the nightmare didn't end until it was transformed into complete insanity. Ami had just turned forty then. Double the girl's age. A face full of a red beard, two scrawny legs, a short, fat body. His female friends used to smirk, they said: he has the kind of appearance of someone who's eager to establish a physical relationship. When he had no other work he made models with bones. In the course of doing that, he had assembled a complete human skeleton. And in the same way, whatever he wrote, over an entire year, page after page – one night something got into his head and he tore everything into shreds and cast it to the wind. Even before an incident is prepared one ought to arrive at another incident, and from there to yet another incident, perhaps with a diametrically opposite thought, all of which would be created with another arrangement, unconnected, and as a result ambiguity is created, is bound to be. Because, perhaps, Ami, in a particular sense, just like some other writers, was one, the last-writer too. He began to lose touch with the external world, he was also steadily losing his mental balance. He stopped meeting his friends, he used to say that he didn't have clothes to go out in, didn't have shoes. But when he did get some money, he called all the people from the street and organised a grand feast of food and drink.



Towards the end, Ami lived all alone in a one-and-a-half-room flat. His body had somehow come to resemble an old man's, although he was only forty his face bore the stamp of age. And when he was immersed in dreams in his spare time, he could see Theodore staring fixedly at him through the darkness. He had already sent killers. Theodore was passing off in his own name the pages of writing stolen from him, one day he said that a maidservant had mixed a sleeping potion in his tea and stolen some pages from his new writing in order to sell it to Theodore. But the funny thing was that the man who was visible has reached the vicinity of the flyover by now. The boy consoles the girl, just you wait and see – everything will be alright. The car waits. The girl says: You must help me, I beg you, Alyosha, help me. Ami leaves. The girl stands gazing at the door. And then she goes and lies down on the bed that's enveloped in darkness. The sound of a motorcycle starting and then going away can be heard. Who was it that said, life was full of surprises – who said, was it Theodore or Alyosha – or was it both of them? Grandma used to say that when I was a little boy, I apparently used to run around with my arms spread out like a bird's wings. People say, when you dream about flying it means you're growing up. But Ami used to fly even when he was awake and yet he could never grow up. Leaping off a mountain – flying over the ocean – Ami has such dreams even now. As if snatching his words, Theodore says – How amazing, I too was thinking of exactly the same thing at this moment. At one time, there used to be a youth here, on this bed, whose name too was Theodore.

Through this, Ami understands his way of thinking too. Trying to know oneself without any sleight hoodwinking. But, being alone, continuously, and gradually becoming solitary, did not merit blame. After spending the night with Grushenka, the wild-mannered Ami – then, in those days – became endowed with some human qualities. In terms of thought and feeling, another dimension became manifest. And unlike in his youth, when he used to seduce many women, he constantly stayed beside the girl. In his earlier writings, a specific dimension of power, courage and madness was expressed, there was a wild exultation regarding man's aboriginal tendencies. After Grushenka's arrival, a lot of things in him became gentle. There was restraint regarding the perverted expression of flesh, a reflexivity entered his thinking. And the veiled melancholia in the latter phase attained a much higher level than in the former phase. Towards the end, Ami started living with the girl. That's why a melancholy countenance entered his final writings, shielding everything else. The two of them lived together then – Grushenka and Theodore. The gossip was that the girl bore his child in her womb, but that she had been completely unwilling to have an abortion. Changing her clothes and wearing a sari, Grushenka said, See how I look … Come, where will you take me?

He suddenly held her face with his hands and said: Do you know something, Grushenka – do you know that … Notwithstanding her married life with her husband for so long, these words of the man who was her lover made Grushenka's whole being giddy, but she said: I'm not anything to rave about. Ami looked at her and turned grave: If you were a man, you'd understand the fire – the fire you're playing with, Grushenka, standing between father and son. The other level beyond this first level, where he had tried to reach, where there was no compromise, was sexuality. Here you can never be successful through pretence. That means you want to experience the sight of that level through your instincts. Your instincts tell you about your ordinary experiences, which are outside the world of the mind, and through those you enter the world of the mind by means that are bestial or anything else like that – you see that. But, for that, every now and then you have to sleep with other girls too. You have to sleep with them both actively and positively. Only then will you know yourself. Actually I liked this too. I liked it with utmost honesty. I stayed back. I was trying to search for something, I'm still doing that now. In such matters, we either become slaves merely to our own pleasure or accept the girl's happiness as the final word. Both of these are a kind of lie. And lies do not lead to any investigation of truth. I am up to taking this risk. You can enter another secret world through the girl herself. Do you know how you are different from everyone else – Grushenka asks – you know how to listen. Men never listen to what women say. They only think about getting into bed. I don't mind getting into bed, but what's amazing is that you heard me all this while. The truth can't be realized through words. It's correct to say that the moment of pure truth cannot be expressed in the language of any specific person, but it's also possible to create new kinds of signs, which are not used by people, through which the individual in the moment of pure truth can be defined.

It is this that can be called, in Ami's view, the sign of oneself – meaning, one is one's own sign. Looked at in another way, one's own sign is signlessness – whose true nature cannot be expressed in any language in use. Perhaps the only part of our method of logical elaboration that is the real truth is what people cannot easily accept. He lies in bed, away from Calcutta, unwell. He muttered: I want to see the girl. His wife was beside him – his wife of twenty-five years. Those who were near him said: There she is, right beside you. He got annoyed: No, no! Not her, Grushenka. I want to see Grushenka. Bad times have begun for me, brother, I was just recovering from kidney inflammation and now I'm writhing in spinal pain all day. For over a year now I've been unable to sleep in bed. I sit with my back resting on a pillow all day and night, even the hour or two that I sleep for is by resting on the pillow. At first a lung X-ray was taken but nothing was detected. It's been a week now since the spinal X-ray was done. A collapse of the third dorsal vertebrae was detected. Ami came and stood at the door. He stands with his head raised high, towards the darkening sky. Down below, the road going up and down the flank of the mountain recedes into the distance, keeps doing so. Dogs apparently eventually start looking like their masters.

At one time, I used to think that this referred to a resemblance of nature or character. But later I realized it was not that – gradually the dogs began to look as ugly as their masters – the insides of the mouths of both were terribly filthy – a horrible, red, gaping mouth. And thus Ami died one day. According to the hospital records, the cause of death was an apoplectic stroke. After Ami died, when his desk was opened, a large envelope bearing Dostoyevsky's name was found. But it was completely empty. Actually, Ami's case was different. He was merely a trapeze artist. Dressed in gleaming red satin, Ami floats around – swinging from one hand and then the other – from one end to the other end – even when he lets go, emptiness, he is held by an invisible bond. He was incapable of severing that tie, no one was capable. And as he floated in that momentary emptiness, he himself observed his own defeat. At some point, his writings came together and took over his life, it was the blown-away pages of the writing that determined how much of the writer was there or whether at all there was anyone called a writer. Or whether the term 'writer' was actually nothing but an imaginary notion, which had no existence in reality. *The unexamined life is not worth living.* The only way to deny everything that was absurd in the world was to lead one's life in an absurd way. With every new thought, Ami knows he has to attain death again and again.

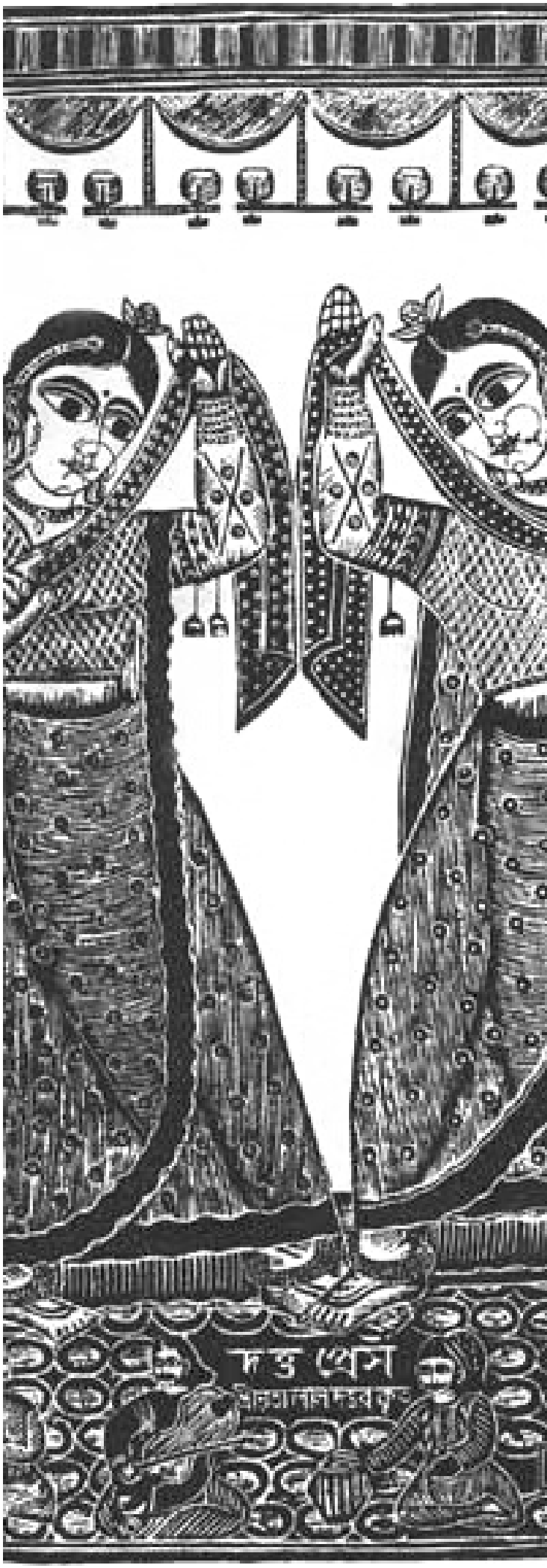
[1993]

Subimal Misra (b.1943) is a Bengali writer, whose name signifies 'anti-establishment' and 'experimental' to his readers. He worked as a school teacher and began writing in 1967, choosing to publish only in 'little magazines'. His first collection of short stories, Haran Majhi's Widow or the Golden Gandhi Statue, was published in 1971. His stories have been called 'anti-stories' for their departure from conventional narrative form. Misra also introduced the language of cinema in Begali literature. Misra attacks the mores of middle-class society (including himself) in his writing and exposes its hypocrisies and oppressions. By the end of the 1970s, Misra was the uncrowned prince of Bengali parallel literature. The 1980s notably saw Misra writing three 'antinovels', collectively called his anti-novel trilogy. The first, Actually This Could Have Become Ramayan Chamar's Tale, is a meta-fiction. Misra stopped writing in 2012, owing to poor health and eyesight. His stories, novellas, novels, a play, essays and interviews comprise over thirty volumes. His last book, Cupid's Corpse Doesn't Drown, an experimental prose work, was published in 2010.

V. Ramaswamy lives in Kolkata. He is a literary translator from Bangla, of voices from the margins. He has been engaged in a long-term project of translating the short fiction of Subimal Misra. His Misra translations include, The Golden Gandhi Statue from America: Early Stories (2010), Wild Animals Prohibited: Stories, Anti-Stories (2015) and This Could Have Become Ramayan Chamar's Tale: Two Anti-Novels (2019). His translation of a final collection of Misra's antistories is forthcoming.

A Cold Case

Amit Shah



She was born on September 11th, 1922, and was my Boromashi (oldest aunt), my mother's sister, a year younger than her. I don't know when she died. One day in 2003, she left a house in a plush residential neighborhood in Calcutta (now Kolkata) and disappeared into the maw of that pullulating city. No one that I know ever saw her again.

Purnima (pronounced Poor-nima), full moon in Sanskrit, was the second child, daughter of a homemaker and a civil servant. There would be two other siblings, a younger sister, four years later and a brother, born posthumously nine years later.

Boromashi was my favorite aunt. She was my favorite relative bar none. I don't know exactly why. I just know she made me happy and feel adventurous. She didn't cook great meals. She didn't tell great stories. She did the following:

- Dress impeccably. Her armoire was like shelves in an Indian fabric store - folded, color- coordinated, fabrics, sarees, blouses, shawls, and undergarments - often silk, washed and ironed.
- She laughed a lot. She gossiped. She had a take-no-prisoners straightforwardness that she used like a machete in a fight.
- She was my "spinster" aunt. She never married and I never knew her to have a romantic relationship. In the world she lived in, this was striking indeed.
- She worked in secretarial positions all her life.
- She never owned a car or any other transportation, and elbowed her way through the overburdened transit system.
- She read constantly, both in English and Bengali.
- She watched movies every week.
- And she'd talk to my sister and me. She'd write us long letters when we were away during summers. And she gave us gifts, carefully selected, perfectly wrapped, bought from her meager salary, for birthdays and holidays.

Like most Bengali families of my generation, I think, there was far more below the surface than we could imagine. A few years ago, I was in New Delhi, sitting with one of my cousins (the child of my youngest aunt) and his wife told me that she had heard from Boromashi that my father wanted to marry her and not my mother, but my grandmother said that as the oldest daughter, my mother, was the one to be married first.

Also, I imagine, Boromashi had far more earning capacity as a trained secretarial help, knowing the essentials of shorthand and typing that were prerequisites of office work, than my mother who'd gone to college and was supposed to be headed for a school teaching career, if any.

My grandmother was widowed at age 32 with 3 girls under 12 and a new-born boy in the early 1930s. She became a sewing instructor in a girl's school and took in kids, tutoring them in English and elementary math. The story goes that when my father wanted to marry my mother, my grandmother agreed with one proviso - that he look after the whole family till they got settled. That was the agreement and that's what I witnessed. My youngest aunt was my dad's secretary. She was apparently a whiz at shorthand. When one day she was faltering while he was dictating and then burst into tears, he found out that she'd met a young guy and was in love but too scared to talk to my grandmother. What a great story. I never checked it out. I was an usher in my first pair of long pants, age 6, at her wedding. That I remember.

Boromashi took over as my dad's secretary. She was very much like my father. Fastidious, tidy to a fault, very well attired, and a perfectionist. Sometimes I'd go after school in the late afternoons to her office and help her stuff envelopes for some mailing. Also, Boromashi had a remarkable ability possessed by no one else that I knew in my life at that point. She could tell my father that she disagreed with him and that he was wrong, and my father would listen.

Long after both my parents had died, Boromashi showed me a photograph of my father that she kept by her bedside. She told me how much she liked him. She didn't say love. But that's what I think they had. There was a period when I was in my early teens when my father was traveling a lot between Bihar (where we had a house) and Calcutta. Boromashi went with him. Once when I was in single digits, Boromashi disappeared. There was a frenzy in our home. I tried to find cover by diving into books or going out to play soccer in the rain with friends while the adults tried not to raise their voices, but the ceilings rose and fell with the anxieties in the rooms. Later, I found out that my father had gone to all the YWCA rooming houses and was finally able to track her down. Of course, I never asked her any of this. Today, I could write a soap opera. Was it a love affair gone sour? Was it an affair with a man or a woman? And on and on.

For a chunk of time when I was growing up, Boromashi lived with us. My grandmother had given up her rented apartment and lived in our house in Bihar. Boromashi went away each Saturday to be with her friend, a woman who was a teacher and her husband who was a dentist. They lived in the posh part of Calcutta near restaurant row and "New Market," which was built in 1874 as a covered market housing over 2,000 separate stores.

It was originally built so that the colonizer Brits didn't have to mingle shoulder-to-shoulder with the "natives." I wanted to hang out with her and resented this departure, I remember. She'd always come back with tales of the movies they saw, the food they ate, and how late they stayed up at night. After my father died, my mother came back to Calcutta to live with Boromashi, in the same house that they had grown up in, where my grandmother had a share in a joint-family Indo-Victorian two-story house with a courtyard. Number 3 Mullen Street. It was worth a fortune in real-estate by then. Now there's a skyscraper of boxed condos on the site. Five years later, my mother had died and that was the last I saw of Boromashi, in 1988.

In 2004, my friend drove Arnav, my oldest son, then thirteen, and I into an unpaved alley, masquerading as a single-lane road and parked in front of a corrugated gate in the eastern edge of the city, close to where I grew up. This was a home for the indigent, widows, women who had no families, were old and sometimes mad, living out the last few years of their lives.

A shelter of sorts. I'd visited a few shelters for women of domestic violence. I'd spoken to the administrators through barred windows, explaining in Bengali I was looking for my aunt who'd disappeared and rattling off my antecedents (the school that my father ran was known throughout the city) to prove that I was legit. No luck. And so, I enter the courtyard with scraggly grass and withering flower beds and shingle-roofed one-story rooms in an L-shape. I see women mainly in white cotton sarees (the sign of widowhood) gawking at me. Some openly curious and some through a miasma of failed yesterdays. I wanted, oh how I wanted, to suddenly recognize some gnarled bent-over woman, however lost to this world, as my Boromashi. If I were writing a soap-opera, I could make it work my way. All I could do is to remember her, combed and pulled back hair in a bun, starched clothes, thin as a rail, proud and loving. And, what would be in character, saying "fuck you," though she never cursed in real life.

Cheongsams, Corridors and Cigarettes: The In-Between Spaces of *In The Mood For Love*

Adithya Prakash

So much of life passes by in the space between things and moments. In these interstices of time is a world detached from our senses; the realm of mind-numbing tedium, a meditative space to ruminate in and connect with, vacuums liberated from action now awaiting a reaction. In the journey to achieving what we want is a landscape of unobtrusive beauty. The process of fulfilling our goals sees an inordinate amount of effort and time put into it. Yet we do not pay heed to it. Getting from one place to another disregards the journey in between because the terminal points are what matter here. We wait; this is a great deal of existence in a nutshell. Waiting, in expectation of a signal; a drop in temperature, a change of scenery, any catalyst for getting what we want. Once we receive this sign, we move towards the next stage and, depending on the outcome, the in-between moments are seen as redemption or suffering. These sensations between inertia and movement, when we are left with ourselves while the

world changes are shelved in the corners of our consciousness. The only feelings that matter are the ones we can create a story out of. The rest are swept off as trivial; rightly so, why must one consider waiting sacrosanct, boredom a gift from the gods or monotony the path to reaching destiny? They hold no weight in how it changes our lives. Even if we were to account for them, we'd label them in a few words, sans the detail of the work applied. Such ephemeral moments are consequential to the goal at hand, whether it be living or surviving.

But from the remains of the insignificant, the skeletal tedium on which we achieve and fail in our humanity holds the nature of life. Life is a series of waiting for things, getting them and waiting some more. What is a success but a tedious cycle of falling down and getting back up, the desire being fame and achievement? Isn't working but an inherently monotonous process of obtaining money, security and happiness? Everything we attain, receive or achieve is a cumulative outcome of these in-between moments; cloaked by the headrush of fulfilling desires, found in these disregarded times are a myriad of efforts— messy, indistinct, subjective albeit unmistakably composing the outcome in the end, like putting together the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle, the image being apparent only after it's assembled and hung on a wall. In the realm of emotions, desires do not make themselves obvious to attain; they lurk and creep, and make sense of the tedium you suffered for much too late. In retrospect, you will realise the world was very much present, very much in your control, even when it didn't demand anything. Because inaction is action at its purest, self-control is chaos within constraints, and silence is the loudest whisper one can vocalise.

Wong Kar-Wai's *In the Mood for Love* is a story built on these in-between moments; a hypnotising mosaic of elegant bodies moving here and there, talking this and that, without realising every word uttered, every act of affection shown, will forever alter their lives in damaging ways. And this realisation is of utter, subtle devastation. Set in 1960's Hong Kong, the film centres on the lives of the spouses of two couples, husband Mr Chow and wife Mrs Chen. The Chens and Chows have just become next-door neighbours, renting a room in adjacent apartments. They acquaint themselves in their new locale, eventually becoming friendly with each other, playing mahjong with their landlords, exchanging newspapers and the usual pleasantries. Mr Chow is a journalist and Mrs Chen is a secretary at a shipping company. The both of them rarely meet their spouses because of their busy schedules; they'd either be working overtime or on business trips. Mr Chow's wife is on a business trip quite indefinitely, and so is Mrs Chen's husband. One day, Mr Chow and Mrs Chen go out for dinner and discuss the gifts they've received from their

respective spouses which are, coincidentally, identical. It was coming, their spouses have been cheating on them. This realisation doesn't faze them like it is supposed to; they accept it in calm defeat. They make a vow to never be like them. Thus begins Mr Chow and Mrs Chen's journey to making sense of this dilemma. Affection grows and blossoms between the two lonely souls, who unfortunately find their morality tested, their bond questioned and their relationship threatened, as they realise there's more to them than simply being each other's company. Revelations stir emotions, they skin alive words; movements suggest things; secrets spill, some let out from the pain of restraint, some choking words, some laying chaos to mind and body. Because all of this culminates into a haunting climax of suffocating hopelessness and staggering honesty.

In the Mood for Love as the title suggests, is a love story. But without ever uttering those three words, never laying it bare in sentences, never making it mind-numbingly obvious. And the answer to how Wong Kar-Wai, or WKW as he is lovingly called, treats this deceptively simple story, lies in the title itself; mood. A skilful director lauded for his meticulous world-building and immersive atmospheres, WKW's stylistic decisions are the magic sauce here, adding nuance to elevate the elementary storyline into a profound exploration of desire, relationships, intimacy and memory. The fluid narrative and minimal character development, undeniably detrimental to the integrity of a film, are cancelled by the visuals and overall mood of the film – the style is tweaked to the level of its substance. This allows for a freer, subjective interpretation of the film's themes.

In the Mood for Love is a passionate, despairing journey into the realm of emotions, but subverting our preconceived notions of romance and love. There are no unabashed displays of affection, no upbeat montages of how love takes place, and no happy ending. But rather, in its place, affection is in the invisible, the ordinary; love takes place secretly and quietly, unnoticeable at first, seemingly trivial; by the time the film ends, tragedy, in its totality, consumes viewer and characters alike. The language of its narrative and the method of communicating its themes lies in subtlety. The film's plot is simply a placeholder for the style. Each beat of the narrative is an opportunity for stylistic imposition. So, the memories you take are the details conjured by its atmosphere; the billows of cigarette smoke, the paranoia of eagle-eyed judgement, the rosy feelings of new affection. Mr Chow and Mrs Chen's forbidden games of unrequited love, and its despondency, would go as far as to elicit certain remembrances in you as well.

Despite its minimal focus on creating a compelling narrative, the most luminous aspect is its story. The tragic tone of the film, its erotic melancholy, comes from the inevitable outcome: Mr Chow and Mrs Chen falling in love with each other.

This is not shocking but it's the element of fantasy that intrigues us. The midpoint of the film is when they reach the conclusion their spouses are cheating. They proceed to play a game; they act as their significant other and re-enact how they might have fallen in love. Mr Chow gives direction to Mrs Chen as to how his wife would've acted, and Mrs Chen the same by assuming Mr Chow to be her husband. They first debate who would've made the first move, and act how they would've done it. Next, for their dinners, they order for the other the same dishes their significant order would order. A new tenderness appears between them, later becoming affection. Love begins as a performance; to love and be loved, one must play the role of the lover. And once the immersion breaks, when the fantasy dissipates and the truth thaws, there can only be two outcomes; ruin or acceptance. *In the Mood for Love* takes the former, hence the tragic ending because they are married and infidelity is an undesired mark on their character. It's a role easy to be consumed by. When Mr Chow admits to Mrs Chen, he couldn't believe it himself. "Feelings can just creep up like that. I thought I was in control," he confesses. There is no distinction as to when the fantasy ends and reality begins in the film; it's fair to assume their fantasy began colliding with their reality. And their performances became true. It's interesting to note that in preventing them from being like their spouses, they unconsciously fulfilled the role itself. They have no faith in their platonic relation so, they snoop around and are careful in their interactions. They take refuge in hotels, they spend hours in each other's rooms, they go out often. For the outsider, suspicions are natural. The audience however knows the truth. Yet this feels too extreme to entertain; the element of fantasy is not explicit, nor does it feel earned. The audience, like its characters, has three questions to solve: how and when did Mr Chow and Mrs Chen fall in love and, do they still love each other?

The answer to this is in the subtlety of its frames. Inserted in the film is a series of slow-motion sequences — with Shigeru Umebayashí's haunting theme playing, its two characters are in focus doing various things. The style and atmosphere imbibe an other-worldly charm; the burgeoning desire for each other's bodies, the faintly underlined eroticism marked by movement, feels detached from reality. It's engrossing to watch. The perfect scene is when they imagine how their spouses must've cheated on them, with both characters playing in for them. It's beautiful and elegant. Yet WKW doesn't restrict himself to fantasy. It extends to the monotonous and mundane— getting noodles, waiting for the rain to pass, or walking around a temple. There's intent in its chosen activities; it is from these insignificant moments their love blossomed. The seeds of their desire, the winds of passion passed by before their eyes because the tedium of the moment blinded them. Perhaps the purpose of the slow motion is to signify their obliviousness; they simply assumed life to be just passing by, but the emotional complications they both will share later on, was taking shape in their ignorance. There are numerous times when their love reveals unabashedly under the veil of friendship. When Mr Chow is sick, Mrs Chen gets to know from his friend Ah Ping, of his craving for black sesame syrup and makes it for him, pinning it on the sheer coincidence that she made extra when he thanks her later.

When Mr Chow quit his job to focus on his martial art series, Mrs Chen accompanied him, meeting him at the hotel he stayed at and coming home late. She was his creative equal, helping and supporting him in his endeavours. It is fair to generalise that all love comes from friendship, and, at such a nascent stage, love builds in these deceptive acts of kindness, full of yearning and desire. There is one unmistakable aspect in these in-between moments: sensuality. Desire's imprints have been imperceptible all along. And the answer was staring them in the face; this was reason enough for their unnervingly calm acceptance.

The in-between moments, unlike the usual conventions of romance, emphasise secrecy and elusiveness. There's a reason for this. A pervasive sense of claustrophobia imposes on our viewing experience. The apartments are cramped, the hallways and streets narrow and dilapidated, not to mention the 1.66:1 aspect ratio feels invasive, as though we're watching them discreetly from corners and windows. The characters are constantly evading the suspicion of infidelity. This increases the stakes when Mr Chow and Mrs Chen are with each other. They fear persecution from their elderly landlords who might evict them. Mrs Chen is even morally policed by her landlord for going out at night too much. Youth's rebelliousness is often associated with sexual liberation and freedom, which extends to debauchery and infidelity, frowned upon by the elder generation. But their hypocrisy is made evident when Mrs Chen is asked by her boss to buy a dress for his mistress. Desire isn't a privilege of the young. The old are simply vexed to see them live with freedom, when emotions are what decide one's path and not the involuntary, essential responsibilities of age. Or can this be a sign that desire is simply uncontrollable and once it consumes

someone, convictions and beliefs dissolve like sand in water?

The colours of the film are vivid and powerful; the liberal use of primary colours draws us effortlessly into this magical world. Soft orange light, the occasional green tinge, and deep and consuming reds flirt with cigarette smoke to beget elegant swirls. Bodies feel as imposing as statues, yet a delicate aura threatens their idea. The slightest of movements is made important; the twitch of an eyebrow feels momentous in this painfully subtle film. Loss and yearning define their features, highlight their doom. There is great, irrevocable pain, the one where words feel flaccid to entertain so silence lends its tongue. Tony Leung Chiu-wai and Maggie Cheung's performances as the titular characters are absolutely astonishing. The film premiered at the 2001 Cannes Film Festival, bagging the Best Actor award, and is now widely regarded as one of the greatest films ever made with one of the best performances ever put on screen. The restraint of their passion is utterly intoxicating. The palpable sexual tension feels strained and melancholic, with both actors basing their performance on actions and limiting dialogue to a minimum. Leung's steely-eyed gaze pierces like a laser, his unwavering cynicism is complemented by Cheung's emotional lifting. The costume design is also worth the mention with Mrs Chen seen in 20 different cheongsams. The film swoons in secret; it yearns, it aches, it feels like someone ripped your heart out, put it on a platter and is stabbing it with poise and elegance.

The brilliance of their performance shines in their final scenes. Their spouses are coming back, so Mrs Chen rehearses her confrontation with her husband. It seems their dedication for their roles have become a tool to cope with reality.

But she's unable to maintain her composure. They've acknowledged their love for each other, and brace themselves for the destruction to unfold. Before he leaves for Singapore for a job, Mr Chow asks Mrs Chen to elope with him. But they've made the promise of not turning like their spouses. So, she stays. The fate of their marriages is left unknown. While in a restaurant with Ah Ping, Mr Chow tells how back in the day, when a person had a secret, they would go atop a mountain, carve a hole in a tree, whisper into it and cover it with mud. Mrs Chen arrives in Singapore one day, a year later, at Mr Chow's apartment when he's not there. He discovers her presence when she leaves behind a lipstick-stained cigarette butt. The spectre of their unrequited love still haunts them.

The years pass. Mrs Chen buys the apartment from her landlord, who's emigrating to the U.S. This is her final scene: looking sorrowfully from a window into the apartment Mr Chow lived in, tears flow down her cheek as she remembers those sweet times. Mr Chow also comes back to his apartment to visit his former landlords. He enquires who's living next door; it's a young woman and her son. He looks from the window into the adjacent apartment, with a pained smile, knowing it's Mrs Chen, knowing their story has ended, and knowing it's pointless to continue.

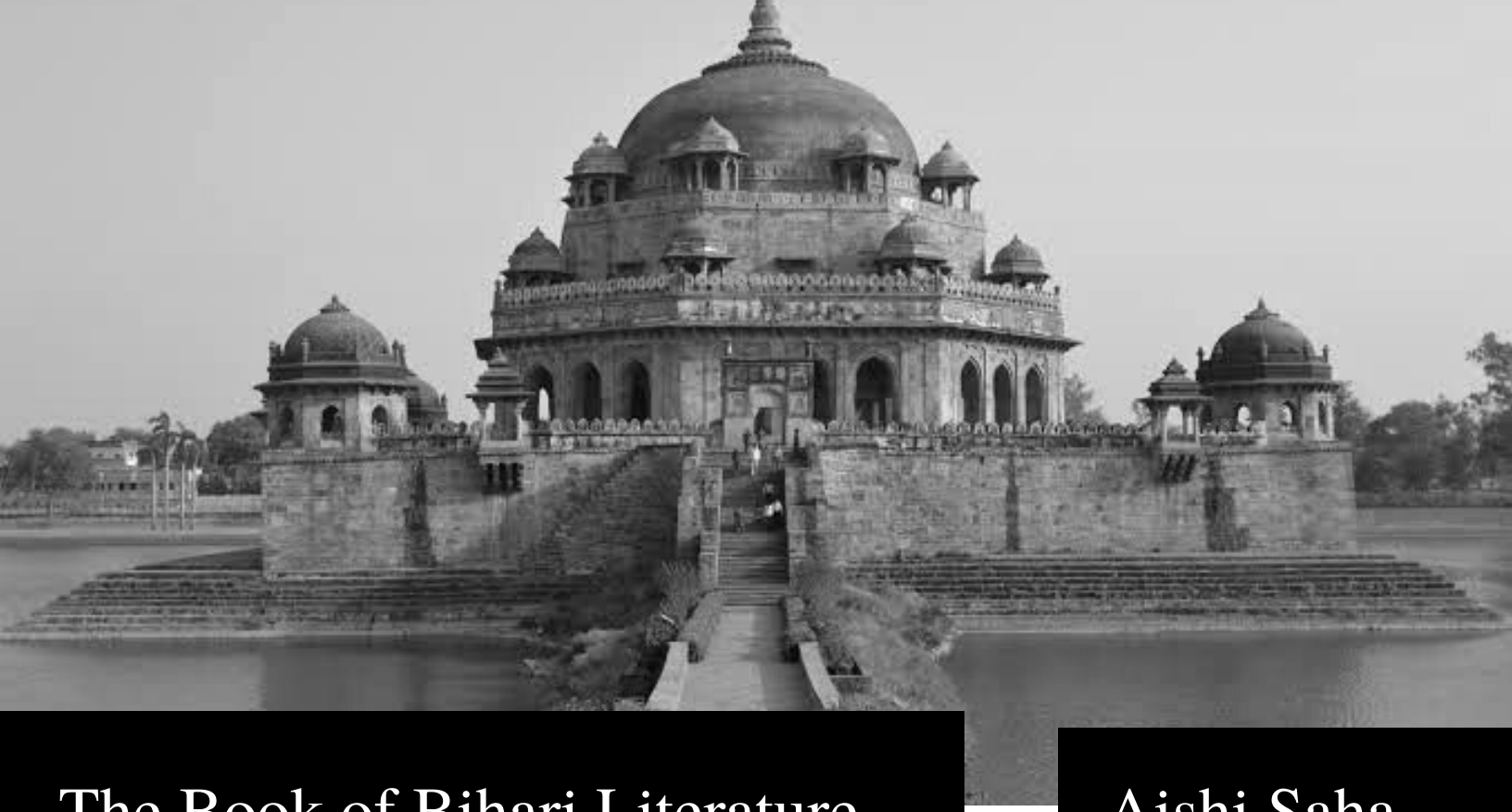
He waits outside her apartment door, contemplating whether he should ring the bell. But an intertitle interrupt: “That era has passed. Nothing that belonged to it exists anymore”. Another stab to the heart.

The final sequence sees him in Angkor Wat, where he whispers something in a hole in the ruins’ wall, and covers it with dirt. It’s a secret; maybe Mr Chow is human after all. A series of stunning shots of the ancient temple constitutes the ending. The doomed romance has come to an end; all that remains is the memory of a beauty so great, it collapsed under the weight of its passion. And we are left with this enigmatic climax. Perhaps what he whispered was everything he wanted to say to Mrs Chen but couldn’t or it could be an apology for betraying his promise. The ending is what we make of it. Love blossomed and withered at an equal pace. Yet, there is one universal fact we can gather from this film.

Love begins from the mundane. It sprouts elusively, it grows out of absence, it feeds on the insulting banality of barely living and fully dying. The tenderness of loving and being loved is stirring for it emerges out of subtlety. It is not grandiose, there are no fireworks, no feuds or death or killings, and it demands no entrance. It announces its arrival wordlessly and settles in the temple of the body. It is to feel the balmy air of a new change when you let down your guard. It is to betray your self-control. It is to give in, even when you have nothing else to give. Perhaps if one were to look into their life, love becomes less obvious. Love is a big thing made up of small things, a feeling so real, words need to be abstract to fully encompass it, trivial enough to describe it, senseless enough to capture its chaos. In retrospect, love was always in the details. It was always there.

It is in the brush of a shoulder, the pleasant nod, a rogue smile. It is in taking care of them through sickness. It is in the willingness to run through the rain to get an umbrella so they don't get drenched. It is in peering over their shoulder and seeing them decipher a writer's block. It is playing the role of a lover and being consumed by it; a perverted performance embraced and lauded and grieved by poets and people alike, for love is a perversion, make no mistake of it. It is a walk, a stumble, a grin, a frown, a few words swallowed, tears shed, laughter shared, the sum of all those dreaded miracles and happy accidents.

Yes. It is that, precisely that. It always was. When was it ever not?



The Book of Bihari Literature

Aishi Saha

‘The Book of Bihari Literature’ edited by Abhay K. is possibly the most fascinating anthology I have come across in recent years. The title itself commanded immediate interest as I have lately been reading ancient Indian history and the region of present-day Bihar forms a major chunk of it. The very first names from history that come to one’s mind are that of the Maurya and the Gupta kings who ruled over this region, previously called Pataliputra. The book has literary pieces spanning over two millennia. It contains translations of works in not a singular Bihari language – in fact, the editor makes it clear at the very beginning that there is no language called ‘Bihari.’ Various languages fall under this category – Magahi, Bhojpuri, Maithili, Angika, Bajika, Hindi, Urdu, Farsi, English, Sanskrit and Pali. However, most people identify Bhojpuri as what they understand ‘Bihari’ as a language to be.

The anthology begins with two short poems by Mutta and Sumangalmata, both Buddhist monks who wrote in the classical language of Pali. Both poems celebrate the moment of emancipation. The first one is more general in tone, the second is about the liberation of women from the fetters of patriarchy. It is quite courageous in that it explicitly cites the domestic ties that weigh women down and the attainment of a universal feeling of freedom. Next is an excerpt from Kautilya's 'Chanakya Niti' written in Sanskrit. Most of us know Chanakya as the ancient Indian philosopher and polymath who played an integral role in the building of the Maurya empire. His two most famous works are 'Arthashastra' and 'Chanakya Niti.' As the title suggests, the excerpts from 'Chanakya Niti' are philosophic codes to live by. Though some of it sounds too traditional to fit the reality of modern society, there is no denying the importance of Kautilya's texts in the context of ancient Indian literature.

Two short verses written by Dharmakirti reminded me acutely of some of the poems I read in an anthology of Chinese love poems recently. Dharmakirti was an ancient Buddhist philosopher, usually associated with the Yogacara and Sautrantika schools. The first poem – 'Making Love to Her' is a raw and honest confession of an individual besotted with a girl with whom their love-making has only lasted a moment but this lovestruck individual has replayed that single moment numerous times. The next verse is titled 'The Moon and Your Face.' The name itself suggests a very common literary comparison in the Indian canon, of that between the lover's countenance and the moon. The moon imagery also plays a very important role in many ancient Chinese love poems. To name a few – Tsin Tsan's 'A Spring Dream,' Chiang Che-Kin's 'Watching the Moon' and quite a few pieces from 'The Book of Songs.' There are also some quite erotic poems by Vidyapati and Vatsyayana that reveal the sensuousness of our predecessors as opposed to the prudery that modern Indian society usually expects of us.

What intrigued me next was Avadh Behari Lall's poem called 'An Epistle to the Right Hon'ble Alfred Lord Tennyson, Poet-Laureate, England.' At first, I thought that the title was a sure mockery and the poem would actually go on to criticize how much of Tennyson's poetry represents the colonizer's gaze and thus in the process looks down upon the colonized. I am thinking of 'Ulysses' as an allegory of the same – 'I mete and dole unequal laws unto a savage race.' However, Behari Lall's poem is not at all what I expected. Perhaps I was biased in thinking that it would turn out to be a subtle mockery but it is quite the opposite. Behari Lall looks up to Tennyson to the extent of praying for his happiness and good health from a small town in Bengal.

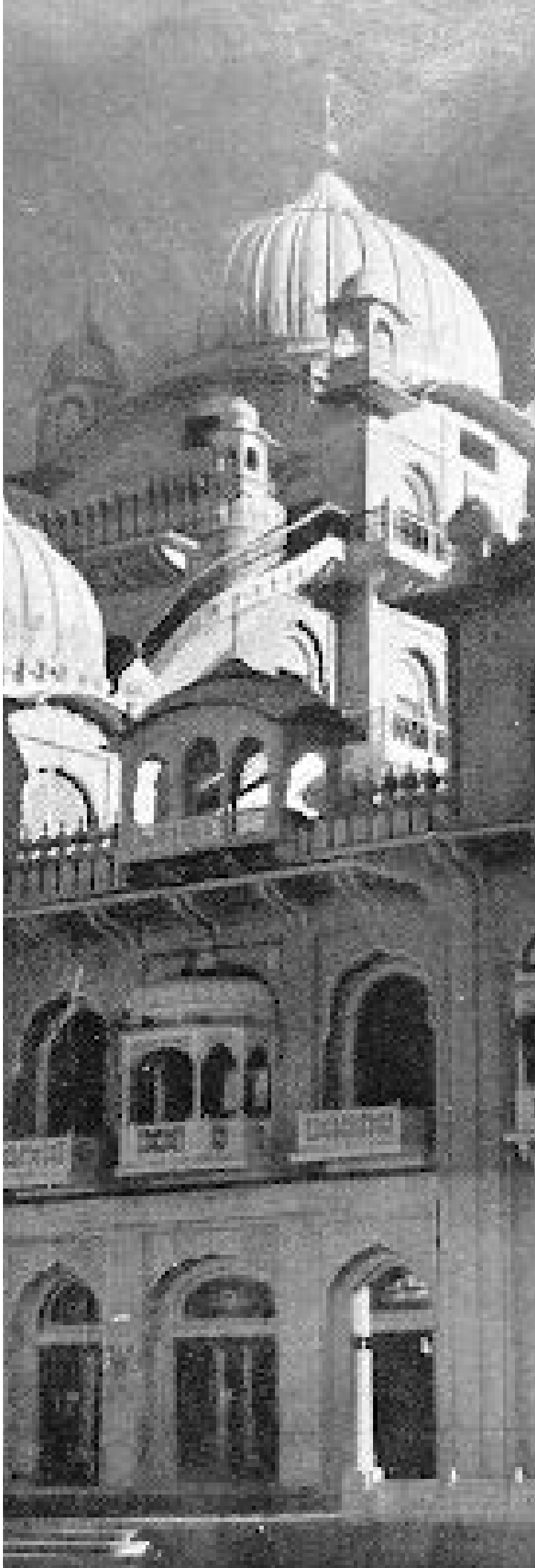
In the short story 'The Key,' Acharya Shivpujan Sahay builds up the narrative to a struggle between the material desires of human beings and that of ultimate liberation of the spirit. Rambriksh Benipuri's 'Budhia' is an excellent character sketch of a rural, Bihari girl before and after her marriage. It also brings to the fore some very intrinsic attitudes that men have towards women in society.

There is also a marked trope reversal in this story wherein Budhia is compared to Krishna who was always surrounded by gopis. She is the "Radha of the Dvapar Yuga…avenging herself through Budhia in this Kali Yuga." Nagarjun's 'Famine and After' translated by Nalini Taneja has a stark touch of modernity in its diction and imagery. 'A Hindu Parrot' by Pandey Surendra explores the story of a parrot taken in a Muslim family which turns out to be 'Hindu,' as it repeats the names of Hindu gods. It takes us through a journey of the protagonist's past, a Muslim woman who had run away with a Hindu-born man. It is a poignant tale of love having no boundaries of caste, creed or religion.

'The Untouchable's Complaint' written by Heera Dom is a one of a kind piece of Dalit literature. The caste system that has been used unjustly to mete out discrimination and injustice to those termed 'untouchables' is criticized in this work. As Tagore observes, the problem of caste in India is the same as the problem of race in America. What struck me as remarkably powerful was the attack on religion, on Hindu gods, as Heera Dom cites examples from legends and myths wherein gods performed miracles in order to help people. However, the same gods have seemingly no sympathy for the lower caste. The poet, in a mocking tone, asks – "Where are you asleep now, callously, are you afraid of touching us Doms?" It is quite a strong voice of rebellion in the face of the religious orthodoxy of Hinduism in India.

Abdus Samad's 'Journey in a Burnt Boat' is a story about the elopement of a woman who returns to her village after several years thinking that she would never be forgiven by her family. In 'Deception' and 'Fellowman,' the themes of Hindu-Muslim unity and fallout are explored from close quarters.

The anthology ends with two ‘Nalanda Poems’ by the editor himself. It recounts the story of the violent birth and rise of the empire of Magadha in Nalanda. It sums up the spirit of the book very aptly. In the introductory editor’s note, Abhay K. writes that until very recently, he was completely unaware of the existence of Magahi literature. So much so that he even penned ‘A Poem in Magahi’ to fill that gap, only to find out that he has been largely ignorant in assuming that Magahi had no rich literary canon of its own. This also perfectly conveys the purpose of this anthology – to take Bihari literature before a wider audience which has been ignorant of its treasures for the longest time. This book, in Jenny Bhatt’s words, fleshes out an ”enduring Bihar state of mind.”



Watching the Fog

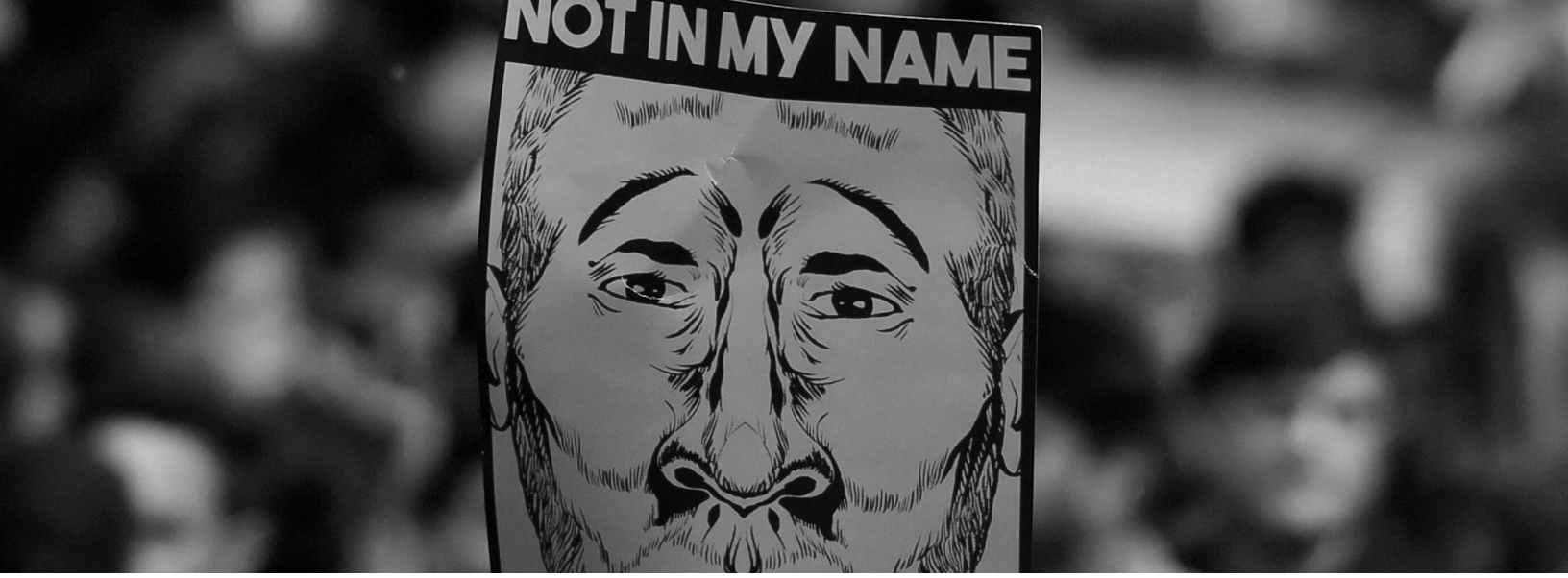
Amit Shah

She's telling me about one of her cats. Taking her to the vet yesterday, the reason she couldn't call. I'm waiting for a break in the flow of words. *How are you? HOW are you? How ARE you?*

The waiting, she says, is a prison sentence in itself. Life on hold. Life uncertain. Will it be just one of them? Or both? Who will look after the cats? Who will look after an ageing parent? The architect is ready with his plans for the house she and her partner want to build high in the fog-draped northern mountains. Where I'd go from the smog-choked capital city, on my next trip. We'd sit out in the courtyard and look at the peaks now appearing and now not, as the fog rolls and tumbles not far above our heads. Drinking cardamom-laced hot tea, snug under my shawl; snug in the warmth of the caress and compassion of my two friends, today on the other end of the thousands of miles of underwater cables, crossing continents. How ARE you?

I was over sixty when I met her. It was she I met first. I'd read an essay she'd written in an online magazine about a misogynistic set of events at the famous college where such things weren't supposed to happen, that we both had attended, though decades apart. I was agape at her forthrightness and brio. I wrote to her. We began corresponding and then we met in person on one of my trips to her city. She took me to a café in the now-trendy alleys of Hauz Khas, the old Mughal medieval portion of the city near a reservoir. Hauz = tank of water; Khas = royal. The royal tank. There for the next few hours we cemented our relationship as only a long-seeking brother can for a sister.

Her partner, a gentle man with a soft voice and creativity to spare (filmmaker, writer, organizer) and I felt a kinship. They'd be my friends in college but here I was in my sixties and somehow, over vast distances, we became friends. Many of her friends are mine. I've never met them in real life, only on social media. We've traded messages, opinions and, rarely, when I say something snarky to one of them, they DM me to ask, like a sister, why I'm getting pissed. All this on that dark and nasty "social media highway" where trolls and hackers camp like thuggees (right, thugs, India's contribution to the English language).



She had seven cats at one point. How could I not love this woman? She and her partner made short documentaries. Together and separately. They traveled abroad to tour with their films, mainly in universities. We'd have coffee and croissants in Harvard's architecture school cafeteria without showing IDs (we belonged, right?) and look for sushi bars.

They belonged to a land where knifing someone because of their religion or caste wasn't an anomaly. As vigilantism mounted in their homeland in recent years, she called for citizen protests through social media and a nationwide series of protests, "Not In My Name," spread far and wide - without political affiliations or backing. And that was possibly where the glare of state surveillance first landed on these two souls. It intensified, no doubt, as they organized a massive food distribution of cooked meals for migrant laborers walking from their cities to their villages when a national - a national - lockdown was announced with four hours' notice. The trajectory of public protests as the authorities of their homeland kept introducing more and more stringent and highly undemocratic bills reached pitch point in late 2019 and early 2020. The authorities had a bigger weapon than legislated bills, they had special powers and detention laws that could be applied without trial. In that eddy of circumstances, my cat-loving friend and her soft-spoken partner have been swept up.

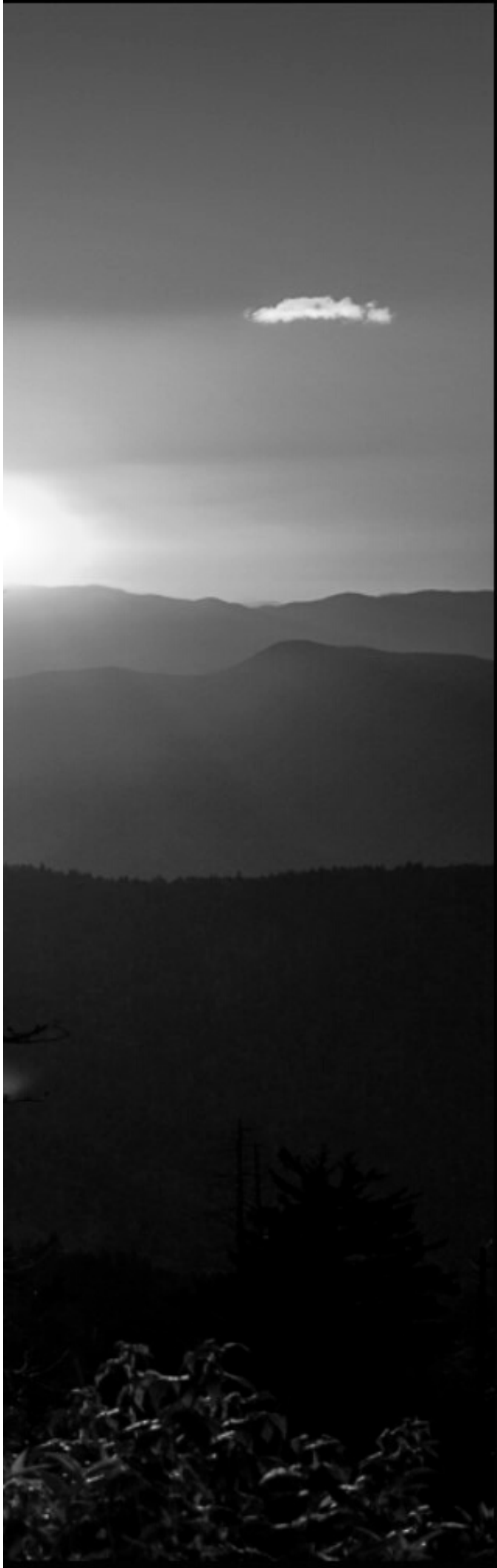
She's telling me about what could be the worst-case. My chest is almost ready to explode. I'm holding my breath; my eyes swell with tears. I can't speak. We hug across the featureless expanse, all three of us.

Amidst the churnings of the last few years, she's written her first book, a subject that she'd first come across when she was researching a documentary, on tawaifs, the complex courtesans of the Mughal period. Her perspective was not the male gaze, which had been the case before but from the stories of many of these women. She won a big prize too. In it, she quotes a song by one of them written in 1921, at the beginning of India's independence movement:

"You can pluck all the flowers you want
You can destroy the garden that is India
You can try and silence us, throw us into jails
You can kill all those willing to die for the Motherland
But India will no longer remain your prison house
This age brings with it the call for freedom
No one fears your jail, your oppression
Martyrdom has become for us child's play

India is our country, we are the children of India
For our mother's freedom, we will sacrifice our lives."

I switch off the phone. I let my breath out. The tears roll out in spasms. I close my eyes and see the peaks as the sun eats at the edges of the fog, clearing the air. I wait for my tea and my friends to step into the courtyard again.



shatter/sonnet

Chetan Ashish

snakeskin lying in a field burning with
an unknown flower, let's call it desire
but it might as well be grief's
afterbloom
for now I will shed the name of the
vase
I used for flower arrangement before
quitting, the fish bowl of my body and
ask myself how much can a sonnet
hold
until it can only be imagined
as after the moment of shattering?

the fields have been slashed and
burned, a woman
watches as the fire sets over Yanam
she turns around and speaks at the
same time
as I do "are we really this brittle?"

killing home.

Aishee Ghoshal

There is a house
At the edge of the
Ink-spilled universe
Where poems go

(to die.)

I met you there, once or twice.

That house built by two
Counterfeit art curated
By two pairs of careful hands-
Now dusted by the only pair

(left behind)

I met you there, once or twice.

I met you there, once or twice.

And our four shadows superimposed
An ancient code, as the two suns
Drowned painlessly in the dead red
Sea. I get lost in endless imagery-

(be brief)

I have fallen there, once or twice

Over and over, all
Around you and for you.
We'll keep it brief then,
We'll keep it unnamed
Unwritten- how love
Whimpers. No point in rhyming

(a death rattle)

I will leave you buried,

With your bluegreen walls-
With my love that cannot possibly be
In a forgotten urn in a forgetting home,
Love, dear love. I will leave
You behind, you'll see.
Six feet under the dead red sea.
I'll let you go, if only, if only
you'd let me.

Monograph Concerts: Look, The Sky is Falling

Ayush Chakraborty

KOLKATA – An unassuming alley a few steps away from everyday traffic came to life on the evening of 27th. Monograph Magazine hosted “Look, The Sky Has Fallen”, an intimate garage concert by darlings of the Kolkata scene: Raiko & Rizvi. This indie-pop duo – comprisied of Sushen Mitra (Raiko) as the pianist/songwriter and Aamir Rizvi as the guitarist/lead vocals – has recently put out an EP titled “Provence” which marks their third original work. The concert itself was named after their upcoming release which is a full-length album coming out early next year.

As the audience poured in through the gates, the event was kicked off with an opening performance by Aditya Majumdar. He didn’t need anything more than his guitar and his vocals to set the stage for what was to come. After playing a brilliant original titled *Damage Control*, Aditya graced everyone’s ears with his soulful cover of *Hallelujah*. The song which took Cohen around five years to write and an upwards of 150 draft verses danced around the yellow-lit walls of the garage. The audience grew so enthralled as to ask Aditya to stay a little longer, a request he met with his rendition of *Autumn Leaves*.

It was then time for Raiko & Rizvi to begin their much-awaited set. Song requests were being put up before they even took to the stage. The duo began with an iridescent performance of Still – an unreleased track from the upcoming album – and proceeded to cut through the garage with the innocence of their first ever release: Couldn't You See.

Raiko & Rizvi's sound signature has evolved quite a bit. The first two releases were quite barebones in terms of the ambience: Billy Joel-esque piano riffs accompanied by ever-so-sweet vocals. With the release of the "Provence" EP, the duo takes on a warmer and a more layered approach. Describing their current work as "impressionistic", Raiko comments that their past releases made sense for "a boy sitting at the piano and a boy sitting at the guitar". He says that their music has always been a reflection of what they were feeling at the time – "…two years ago, we were feeling the simple acoustic arrangement. Now, because of our influences, because of our tastes and styles changing, we sound a lot more bedroom pop, a lot more indie pop, a lot more ambient."

The venue, albeit small, provided a lot of room for the audience to interact with the duo while they continued with their setlist. With the charming catalogue of music and the occasional bits of banter in between, it never seemed as though the walls would ever close in. Raiko & Rizvi took the audience on a journey from the garage to the lavender fields of Provence as they flipped through covers like that of Prateek Kuhad's cold/mess and unreleased originals like Take 83.

The set had extended well past the given time-frameb but the crowd was not done and the duo still had a few tracks left. Evening turned to night as Raiko & Rizvi finished their set with Same Old Stories. Afterwards, the audience would move into a hall where Monograph Magazine had put up a stall for merchandise, and the night would slowly come to an end, having left a lasting impression on everyone and the garage itself.

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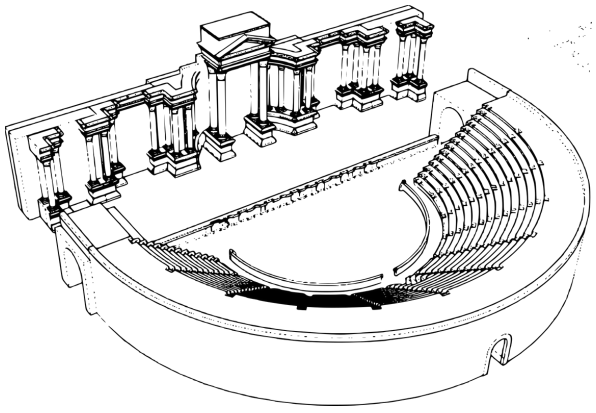

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