

Poetry

The Moth and the Flame

Ananya Roy

(I)

The flame wavered just as did the old man in the wicker chair;
The growing darkness of the evening slowly bringing us near.
Often have I seen him on the verandah adjacent to mine-
Finding him deeply immersed either in a word or a line.

Today as I lay stretched against the wall after a long day of class,
I found him immersed not in a book but in a glass.
I knew it was no cola, for no cola could make one that limp,
Shiver he did, but not from the mildly pleasant breeze
But from something of his own lease.
His chin wobbled as his toothless gums clanged,
Clattering like a machine out of order.

From being scolded by the day nurse to hiding
In defeat and distress, the figure resigned in tremor,
Slowly giving way to counting his days-
As he lay shivering still, like the last fallen leaves of Autumn

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(II)

Between Shades of Oblivion

When the cold winds of the winter blow against the window pane
 Making the unstable plastic material shiver from pain,
 I'd feel the warmth of her clammy palm against my arm.
Fingers far fatigued from the day's cry, peacefully resting in calm;
 "Anna!" she'd call out to me, always with an exclamation,
 As if expecting something new to come every day, upon
 The nurse's waking her up to being fed till she slept
A curious smile gracing that oblivious woman's body and heart.

 As she'd befriend the flower pots and dogs in retreat,
 The evening sun in the western sky lowering the heat.
Sporting a cheerful smile bright enough to illumine the world
 But Dark enough to crumble our world.
 Every time I'd tuck her in the bed, she'd smile
 All the sparklers at me, making me smile.
Every morning I'd brace my heart to look at her wrinkly face
As she'd innocently say, "I'm going to school, tie on my shoe-lace!"

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