

Sarwar Morshed

Private treaty between a fallen jackfruit leaf and a clod of earth

This story is for him who once took the world for an enchanted land encircled by an ocean of illusory images. This narrative is also meant for him who is happily under the impression that he is an aquatic species of grass in a horizon-kissing waterbody. We intend this story for the great soul who cast a look at the world with insatiable thirst, awe, eagerness and deep passion.

Rupban, the twelve year old folkloristic heroine married to the twelve-day old Rahim Badshah in her arms, was exiled in the ferocious animal infested jungle. Under royal compulsion, she had to rear her own Oedipus in the sylvan surroundings. Bearing this harsh truth, she, alone, all alone, treaded the jungle crying and lamenting, lamenting and crying. The pre-teen Bengal Jocasta kept wandering through the almost virgin wilderness for one, two, three TWELVE l-o-n-g years. We assume, this story has something for the man who like Rupban nurtures some incredibly wonderful and yet painful truth in the core of his very existence.

The humans are perpetual voyagers in the waterscape of innumerable comedy of errors. Men always see days being transformed into nights; but despite this ocular experience, they assert that days are only days and can never turn into nights! They have an inborn tendency to be oblivious of the fact that great Oaks sleep inside tiny acorns! Men love arresting the elementally aromatic air into the plastic shells of Toyota tires! The crane, maybe for this type of human folly, takes recourse to its projectile_winged escape when the *homo sapiens* approach them. People have an inclination towards turning a blind eye to the pique of Shankhamala. Burying her in a heap of sighs, quite sadistically, they adore and poetize the seraphic beauty of her sibling, Meghmala. When pitter patter goes the rain, in those aquatic times, they excavate folk stories of the nuptial of three brides but their fickle minds do not allow them to go beyond the matrimonial phase and this passing over makes them know not what ultimately happens to the three newly-wed girls! Through their transcendental arithmetic, men calculate and measure the success or failure of their peers. To add to their already obese absurdity-profile, humans enjoy burying their Nile-like eyes under the goggles! Sons of Adam do not know that deep love adds sedimentations to their loss! The beguiled, dissatisfied men pose the angry question to their progenitors, 'What have you given us'? The hurt begetters entreat the earth to gorge itself on them! They miserably fail to say, 'You owe your terrestrial existence to us'! This story is also for him who surveys this cartography

of human inanity with his memory-laden eyes and in the lotos-induced, trance-like process who losses yet another year from his life-tree like a fallen leaf.

The flight of the blue-throated *Neelkanthha* bird in the butt-end of the day makes the young girl dreamy. The intoxicating touch of the desired one implants millions of dreams into the eyes of the young lover and being lulled, he happily transmigrates to a fairy land. The young revolutionary who bifurcates the air by his index finger, with his gift of the gab, compels the audience to dream of golden days ahead. The devoted wife keeps dreaming while engrossed in fixing a displaced bottom into the shirt of her man like a galaxy in the nocturnal sky getting a replacement for its lost star. The sharp feminist who neither has a husband nor grown a family, dreams that one day her clan will earn pure equal rights. The bite of the budding teeth on the breast of the mother cannot dissuade her from embroidering dreams! Alas! Someone from somewhere mockingly laughs at this bunch of dreamers – He knows, for sure, all dreams will, one day, be reduced to mere dust! This story is for him whose frail human frame undergoes the ordeal of experiencing the chill of that unseen laughter.

This story is for him who when on the sea-shore embraces pleasant marine defeat – who impatiently courts rendezvous with catastrophe. This is intended for him, who before departure, wants to be bedecked and equipped with light, food, the sky and of course,

passionate love. This is aimed at him whose inflated ego is filtered by a prolonged *Shravana* (rainy season)! Who at times senses the presence of the perfume of good tidings in the air for his fellow species-members, this is for him. A man who thinks that this time the esoteric equations of human relations, the undeciphered codes will be cracked, this story is for him. The man who all on a sudden thinks that he is a feather-light, fatigued leaf of a fern that is even unable to endure the weight of a sorrow-consumed dew-drop - this is for him - who enjoys living being impregnated with pains and pangs and who woos death with all his unbearable heaviness.

This story is not to be told to anyone. This is only to be buried into the vast landscape within. This, in fact, is the story of a fallen jackfruit leaf and a clod of earth.

We don't know how it all happened - one day a fallen jackfruit leaf and a clod of earth cemented the bond of friendship between them. The leaf said to the earth, 'When it will pour, I'll cover and protect you'. In an unpremeditated response, the clod of earth promptly proclaimed, 'When storms will brew and come, I will lend heaviness to protect you.' Days go by and the friends maintain the protocol. When it rains, the jackfruit leaf envelops the clod of earth and when the storm appears, as per the forged treaty, the earth burdens the lightness of the leaf's being. This blissful, unperturbed camaraderie was perhaps designed and doomed to be ephemeral in the celestial smithy. On a star-crossed day, the duo of rain

and storm made a synchronized appearance. The storm lent wings to the jackfruit leaf and it was gone with the wind! And, aha, the clod of earth, by the serrated teeth of the rain was dismembered and ultimately consumed by its source element!

About the Translator

Sarwar Morshed, an Associate Professor of English at the University of Chittagong, Bangladesh is a researcher, columnist, poet and translator. The publications of this Ph. D scholar include *Depoeticized Rhapsody*, *In the Castle of My Mind*, *Figuratively Speaking* and *Rendezvous with Words*. His works, both original and translations, have appeared in *Contemporary Literary Review India*, *The Bosphorus Review of Books*, *The Bombay Literary Magazine*, *City: Journal of South Asian Literature* and *The Ashvamegh* etc. Morshed's books have been reviewed in *The Daily Star*, *The Bangladesh Observer*, *daily sun*, *The Dhaka Courier* (Bangladesh), *Transnational Literature* (Australia), *Asiatic* (Malaysia) and the *Ashvamegh* (India).

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