

Poems by Asha Viswas

A Longing, Sharp As Knife

I walk through the rooms
Nothing is lost, not even the sounds.
I rummage through the many cupboards
Where dream and memory live together.

As I open the door, another dream sprouts
An old, gentle but sad face
That still waits for a fistful of light
Through the darkened road .

The dream stops at the edge of a thought-
A paradigm for a few question marks.
Realizing that I am encroaching
On somebody else's dream, I shut the door.

Slowly the house turns into an allegory of words
Without a future, without a past
Mere syllables, and not a trace of you.
I wish the ghosts could sleep forever in peace.

The Two Hemispheres

We are the two hemispheres
So opposed to each other-
My days are your nights
And my winters your summers .

My brown skin so discernibly
different from your white, with
a sprinkling of reluctant brown hair,
Our differences need no witnesses.

The roads between us are many
But steep and narrow, and even
If we climb those brown and blue mounts
through horizontal rain, often coming
as hail and snow, both of us know
We will not meet again.

Traces

Memory tries to trace
the long lost ancestral house ,
Winds have not yet swept
faces hidden in the mist of time .

I wonder if you remember
that mango tree where we sat ,
played with afternoon shadows ,
and wove the myriad yarns .

Surely you cannot forget the morning
when grand-mother died
and there were no tears in my eyes

you squeezed me to make me cry .

and that chamber of grand-father
crowded with lots of sunshine ,
there in the secrecy of the night
you wrote an au revoir on my eyes .