

Three Poems

By Waqas Ahmad Khwaja

1

It is the end of the world

Smoke everywhere
Grey and blue, rustling upwards
And thick fumes, darker, denser
Rising mournfully from a charred earth
And behind all this
A searing noise
The hoarse hiss of slowly dying fire

It is the end of the world
Her eyes smolder
The slightly parted lips thick with desire
Ignited by sooted smoke upon his tongue
The cinder stink on his breath

They have just made love
And they will again
Drunk on the burn of tobacco and cured weed
Among blackened, broken walls
On the floor of a bare room
Up a crumbling stairway
In the ruins of a collapsing mansion

Elsewhere, insubstantial words
Are made to bear
The rush of an ardor they cannot sustain
A notion and idea that will not light
And there is nothing at all that survives

Waqas Ahmad Khwaja

Only desperation
Of bodies knotted and tangled among ruins
Finding comfort in famished lips and smelly armpits
Dreaming with glazed eyes
In the fumes of a lighted joint
On the floor of an empty room

2

awakened by a hum

awakened by a hum
a voice, turquoise
like domes of shrines
and mausoleums

blue me in
or green me
if you will

my sepulcher
deepest violet
studded
with splintered sapphire

no sunshine laburnum
but coral twilight
bleeding across
a forehead smudged
by smoke

the sun
sinks into the cauldron
of a seething ocean
I cannot see

Food, where it is needed

In the end, I would like to renounce life
But I don't know why I need to pull
My hair out by the roots to signify this
It is already sparse, and I would
Prefer rather to let whatever of it is left
Grow to the end in straggly strands, to not
Worry about grooming or washing it
Nor violence against the body either
The rest I have no issues with, and in
The forest or wilderness of scrub and bush
I would go about as I am, naked
As far as that is possible, for the hide
May remain a while with me still
Perhaps I will survive on berries
And young shoots, on leaf and thorn fruit
Perhaps I will let myself starve to death
Slowly—that would be best, so I may pass
Into the buzzing soil and insect life
Around me, without disturbing another's
Peace or comfort, but providing rather
Food where it is needed, and compost
It should not be difficult to make
An exit from the world of humans
When all is seen, and said, and done
To step into company far more
Multitudinous and diverse, to be
Many lives unselfconscious and free
Than to be enclosed by consciousness
Confined to the prison house of one

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About the Author

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