

The Crow

By Rizwan Akhtar

Death was the midwife that delivered Crow.
Rand Brandes

Walking in the lazy drizzle
I saw the carcass of a crow
pouched in a tuft of grass
legs uplifted
a cargo turned upside down,
ovalish totem
bobbed into a ripped rugby ball
and stiffened into a taxidermists' fancy,
while the beak had gone still,
a question mark
asking me to move on,
I threw a glance around, complicit
in this causality,
the world should have been a museum
for such fossils lying unattended
on the road,
wet with simmering English rain
that crow was not black enough,
not like ours' back home
it had other feathers too
not like the one
we have in the droning hot afternoons
of Lahore
where sun bakes the birds
in its eternal oven—
so I rubbed my eyes

Pakistaniaat: A Journal of Pakistan Studies Vol. 1, No. 2 (2009)

like the wipers working on the wind screen
and hurried on.