

An Afternoon at Snowfall

by Dilawar Karadaghi

The literal translation of this poem was made by [Choman Hardi](#)

I'm not here.

What a shame, tomorrow day will break

and I won't be here anymore.

Shame, I won't be here tomorrow

when someone opens the window,

when someone writes a name

on the window's mist,

when someone waters the flower pots

and, with an intense gaze,

observes the confusion of fallen sparrows.

I'm not here.

What a shame, I won't be here tomorrow

when someone,

still drenched in a blue dream,

slowly staggers towards the mirror,

runs the tap,

and tells the lonely man in the mirror -

a man who has turned to mist,

to a grain of sand,

to a drop of dew -

You silly thing, what a strange dream I had about you!

I swear, you came into my dreams

more than a hundred times last night.

I'm not here  
What a shame, I won't be here  
when, in the light snowfall one morning,  
his heart racing,  
somebody suddenly starts worrying without reason,  
wishing that someone,  
someone who no longer walks the streets,  
someone who no longer walks out the door,  
or stares out the window,  
will walk past  
and say:  
I haven't seen you for ages, my friend!

I'm not here.  
Shame, I won't be here tomorrow  
when someone in a fast train  
passes by a small brooding cloud  
above a mournful station  
and, having a sudden premonition,  
calls to the cloud,  
raises his hand,  
turning round to look back  
as it vanishes out of sight,  
muttering under his breath:  
Maybe that's him?  
Maybe that's the one who doesn't exist,

someone who can't ever stop  
at a single station anywhere.

I'm not here.

Shame, I won't be here  
when in a drizzly hour one morning  
in a library --  
a library dressed in a tarboush  
and a suit,  
a library stuffed full of musty books --  
a sad poem, sitting in  
its own attic of solitude --  
a poem which still gazes expectantly  
and speaks as clear as a mirror --  
is picked up by someone,  
the kindest person in the world,  
who takes it by the hand  
and helps it off the shelf.  
Together they leave for  
a teahouse near the library  
where they sit in the sun  
and laugh in the rain,  
and putting their hands in their pockets,  
they whistle in the snow.  
As the world passes by,  
they think about life, considering  
all the the things that are important

all the things that are simple

and new.

They consider the things

that have been fenced off,

that have been disappeared

and pushed to one side.

They consider a poem

that has not come to life.

They consider an infant

wrapped up in a blanket patterned with butterflies.

They consider an orange seller.

They consider a kite threaded to childhood.

They consider their morning sweet tea.

They consider a blade of grass.

They consider a baby sparrow

risking its first flight through the rain.

They consider a crushed can

tinkling downstream at siesta-time.

I'm not here.

Shame I won't be here

when a door is opened

but no one walks through.

When a window is open

but no pollen-down drifts in with the evening.

When a ladder dies from waiting

for someone to climb it

carrying a bunch of grapes  
up to the roof on a warm summer night.  
When a road pines away from loneliness  
and no one gives it a hug.  
When a tree collapses  
and no one remembers its colours.  
When a garden is overgrown  
and its flowers are never worn anymore.

I'm not here.  
Shame I won't be here  
when you come out to the courtyard one evening  
and it isn't me  
whose finger presses the doorbell,  
waiting by the door  
with a heart full of doubt like green grapes.

I'm not here.  
Shame I won't be here  
when in a cold hour one winter afternoon  
you walk out all worried  
and it won't be me  
who stares like a child at the rising wind  
and the falling rain.

I'm not here.  
Shame I won't be here  
when one afternoon at snowfall

you walk through the city looking for me.

You search for me under the wing of a bat.

You knock on the door of an ant friend of mine;  
worried, you ask, Haven't you seen him today?

You stop a drunk squirrel's truck.

You enter an owl's florist shop.

You coo along with a pessimistic pigeon.

You stop by a garden related to me  
to look through the closed fists of flowers.

You search through the straw under the house of a stork,  
in the beaks of fledgling sparrows,  
in the claws of a hedgehog.

You look through the depths of a drop of water for me,  
you search under a ladybird's feet,  
beneath a crumb of clay,  
inside the warm heart of a stalk of wheat,  
in the bitterness of a haw,  
under a bruised leaf of basil,  
beneath the tongue of a speechless cicada,  
in the corner of a dank pocket of a story,  
in the iris of a bead,  
in the sleeve of a rhubarb stalk,  
on the roof of a fresh smell,  
in the middle of a bundle of dreams,  
under the skin of a snowflake,  
in the heartbeat of a pomegranate seed --

in everything.

You will search for me in everything.

What a shame that at that sad hour of the afternoon

you'll be looking for me

but I won't be here,

what a shame that

on this afternoon as snow falls

I'm

not

here

anymore.

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