“Love the Wander” - Fahmida Raiz

Love, the wanderer

The traveler is gone!

Not even his fragrance lingers that would give away his whereabouts

Nor a footprint

Nor any sign of him

Not even bitterness at the bottom of a goblet did he leave behind

Life remains!

A serious laugh

Like a thought settling in the heart

The rapid breaths

A snared thought in the mind, intermittently, throbs like a splinter

And in the aching heart,

An afflicted wound

But it is not a terrible wound

The pain does not remain.

But it cannot be persuaded

A remorseful heart

Upon changing its mind

Surprised itself.

What does it know about its own self?

Such is the human heart

It is not a stone!

Upon which, once a line is drawn, it cannot be erased. (pp. 20-21)

“A High School Heartbreak” -Whitney McLaughlin

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“The Could Messenger” - Fahmida Raiz

Thundering

Rumbling

He arrived!

Seated on the chariot of the wind

My cloud-god

On the shoulders of the winds

His free-flowing hair

His purple (jamuni) body

Spread across the sky

The thunder echoed for miles

The ground trembled

The sky recoiled

With an impenetrable thunder

It burst forth with rain

And I closed my eyes

With palms outstretched

Ran away

Touching with my body

The blue of his body

I am the daughter of separation (hijr)

There is such a fire in me

For me

Even union is separation

I have such a thirst

Soaked in the juice of the dark cloud

Breathless, in the moment

My heart says

This is it

The time of the sweetness of union. (Riaz, 1974, pp. 35-36.)

“Clarity within Chaos” – Whitney McLaughlin

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“Challenging Man and Community” –Kishwar Farrukhi and Naheed Naheed

Even if my eyes become the soles of your feet

Even so, the fear will not leave you

That though I cannot see

I can feel bodies and sentences

Like a fragrance

Even if, for my own safety,

I rub my nose in the dirt till it becomes invisible

Even so, this fear will not leave you

That though I cannot smell

I can still say something.

Even if my lips, singing praises of your godliness

Become dry and soulless

Even so, this fear will not leave you

That though I cannot speak

I can still walk.

Even after you have tied the chains of domesticity,

Shame and modesty around my feet

Even after you have paralyzed me

This fear will not leave you

That even though I cannot walk

I can still think.

Your fear

Of my being free, being alive

And able to think

Might lead you, who knows, into what travails. (Naheed & Farrukhi, 2001, p. 58)

“What You Do To Me”- Whitney McLaughlin

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