

Saman Rizvi

## Leaf of Chinar

DROPS big, small, high and low,  
Blood-absorbed snow  
People rushed but were too late  
As always, MY LOVE, he couldn't wait  
Lips quivered and let out an icy sigh  
Luminous face, calmly he lie  
His frosty breath had iced his heart  
Dried bloody riverbeds on each part.  
Here, I lie awake. My blood-shot eye  
Will he be back if I scream and cry?  
I wonder. I wonder. IF  
If blood covered that mole on his neck?  
What's going on? What the heck!  
. . .  
He promised me once, he will remember my name  
In the other world, to lay a claim  
I fail to fathom the irony of his land  
How to recognise a grown up son just by a hand?  
Heaven as they say or graveyard as they made  
Anonymous tombs, known faces laid  
Women draped in fear and shawl  
Numb and pall  
Children play with kaleidoscope of shards  
Tip-toe, Tip-toe, Tip-toe. On guards!  
It's a strangely strange place  
Muffled history behind each face  
Stifling memories clumsily sewed with scars  
Generations exhausted of guns and wars  
They cut the speaking tongues  
Devoured all the lungs  
Ate away the hopes and dreams  
Left lingering pain and screams.  
Screams

Screams

Screams

Sometimes loud..so loud

So loud - - - it is a shrill

Echo grows larger, hill to hill

River of blood flowing for so long

Ah! Manufacturers of right and wrong

His blood-soaked clothes

Tucked anxiously with woes

Is kept \_\_\_ in Almirah's last chamber

Kindling - - - the ambushed anger

I remember, I remember

I remember he always carried a chinar leaf,

My heart - my heart wakes up in disbelief

The snow must have turned black underneath

Did you all see devil's claws and teeth?

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What?

What did you say?

The sky was darker than tar?

Oh!!!!!!

But,

Just bring me that leaf of chinar!

## **Moon and You**

Moon questioned me the other night.

About you.

Next day he vanished.

Like you.

Lately he feels a little like you,

Comes. Sometimes stays. Sometimes leaves.

I feel there is something he too grieves.

He reveals himself someday, someday he covers half.

It pains a little someday, someday gives a good laugh.

Sometimes it appears for the sake of appearing.

Rarely visible.

Reminds me of your seldom letters,  
Its words barely audible.  
He appears in his charm and stays at length,  
Wonder! Sometime you too show that kind of strength.  
His absence makes the sky go dark.  
Without you, don't I lose my spark?

## Strange Graveyard

I carry a strange graveyard,  
Dark and woeful and deep,  
Spiders crawl on bones charred,  
All buried in restless sleep.

I buried a leg of my last doll,  
And leaves from the last fall,  
...too.....too dear to part,  
Buried deep in my heart.

The swelling count of burials,  
Demanded new rules new ordeals,  
So, I laid with their deadness left behind,  
Played their funeral on rewind.

I kept digging fresh graves,  
Pain: Ebb and flow in waves,  
New departures as they made,  
I recede, I fumble, I run, I wade.

I buried him with muffled cries,  
And slept on a pillow of so many why's,  
Plucked that throbbing fist from chest,  
Buried.....deep.....I put it to rest.

I buried her with stoic eyes,  
No wails screams tears or cries.  
My heart replaced by khand-har,  
Did I survive? I wonder.

Memories just like flesh wilt,  
Shame, blame or guilt?

But secrets pierce to the soul,  
Fossils darker than coal.

Buried one, then another, yet another,  
Couldn't dig wide or any further,  
These mountains of mud of sorrow,  
I defer the funeral. Please tomorrow.

I waited and waited, they didn't arrive,  
Alas! I had to...I had to survive.  
I buried them deeper, then deepest  
Is it a punishment or a test?

I buried but they show up any time,  
Skeletons clatter and clime,  
Lurking from the curtains of reminiscence,  
Nostalgia exhausts with its presence

I carry each grave, new and old,  
Laid my dear ones fold by fold,  
Shoulder drooping with weights of dead,  
Frantically...I... I... cut every thread.

Graveyard sits proudly in my heart's cavity,  
I clutch flesh-deep on to my sanity,  
It's sprawling and growing day by day,  
Another funeral? No no. Not today.

EVERYONE ALIVE AND YET I CARRY THEIR BONE,  
STRANGE GRAVEYARD IT IS THAT I OWN.

## **I Will Own**

I scratched my skin last evening  
It bled but soot didn't go  
I tried every reasoning  
White skin didn't show

I tried every remedy each night  
But no sign of skin getting light

Didn't make a difference; my dimples  
I scratched my pimples

Should I peel off my skin?  
To comfort my kith and kin  
Should I cut off my flesh?  
Will that give me a chance to start afresh?

They told me my voice must be low,  
Or else it will raise several brown  
Lip colour decides my character,  
My life and they're the director

My laughter can attract trouble,  
I am to live in a bubble  
My scarf makes me vulnerable  
I pity! How intolerable!

I refuse to cut and trim  
In accord to your fancies and whim  
I will don my color my soot,  
My inner flames, my root

I will laugh harder than ever,  
Take care of myself whatsoever  
I'm a queen, my body; my throne  
My flesh and bones are all my own  
I will own  
I will own.

## **Red Veil**

She entered the house in the red veil,  
Heightened emotions and face pale,  
Her hand damped with Heena,  
And the holy sound of Saraswati's veena.

She was loaded with the weight of gold,  
Following the tradition and rituals old,  
She had a mixed feeling,

Happiness and parting pain healing.

She sat there and tried to be fastidious,  
She was unaware and wasn't suspicious,  
She was adjusting in the new place,  
And memorizing each face.

But as soon as the guests disappeared,  
She got a feeling so weird,  
Everybody started digging her belonging,  
As if they were lamenting and longing.

She overlooked these activities,  
She tried not to set mentalities,  
She needed someone who would assuage.  
As a new story was being written on her life's page.

Next day everyone started questioning,  
Beyond ethics and reasoning,  
They enquired her about dowry,  
And didn't bother to hear a new story.

No one believed and had pity,  
Told her to bring dowry was her duty.  
She tried to explain about her helpless father,  
But no one really bother.

She couldn't call up any,  
To ask for little more money,  
She knew how she was married,  
How every ritual was carried?

She was given a deadline,  
Or else she wouldn't be fine,  
They threatened her for taking her life,  
For piercing in her body a knife!

She thought about her stranded state,  
And tried to adjust with her fate,  
She kept waiting for the day to arrive,  
Dreaming to live and thrive.

Alas! It didn't turn out,  
They tried to finish her, no doubt,

Once she escaped by luck,  
But that experience in her mind got stuck.

Finally they killed her brutally,  
Her story ended casually,  
Her parents were informed about her demise,  
And were asked to be wise.

A girl who had come in a red veil,  
And had envisaged a happy tale,  
She was now being carried in a shroud,  
Her numb body and stood a fake crowd.

The red veil hung in the room,  
The place seemed like a little doom,  
Even sky appeared to cry,  
Trees didn't move and shy.

They all stood silent on her death,  
Old parents didn't see her at last breath,  
Their little "BITTIYA" got lost,  
In the world of greed on money's cost.

Old couple cried and wailed for her,  
Their eyes still had her childhood's blur,  
They couldn't get back her doll,  
Even after thousands wailing call.

Her story got ended like this,  
Without happy ending or bliss,  
Her parents heart will forever be stuck with a nail,  
Whenever they will see that RED VEIL!

## About the Poet

Saman Rizvi is a dreamer, thinker and an aesthete who hails from Gaya, Bihar. She is a student of English Literature and pursuing her Masters from Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi. She is a graduate of Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh. She is a poetess/writer on days when she can't manage without her words. She loves to read and also writes 'Ghazal' in Urdu. She has

won various poetry competitions. She loves pondering over the enigma of most banal things and everyday mundane moments which invite her to capture them in her words. On odd days, she manages to summon enough words to write a short story. Her writings have not been published anywhere yet but she is starting here on.

Apart from writing, she enjoys speculating the nuances of movies and enjoys anything 'Art'.