

The Needs of A Mustard Seed

A poem by Shekinah Singh

Shekinah is a young artist from West London. Her poetry often retraces the vibrant footprints of her childhood, the experience of listening to two languages incessantly wrestle in her mouth, the highs and lows of hightailing through your 20s and the unavoidable existence of her faith. Here, she illuminates that it's no bigger and no less whole than that of a mustard seed. Worth the read, especially on a rainy day (as recommended by the poet herself).

I don't think I ever fell as
hard as this
Straight through the
scratches, wounds, and
pain
In through the cracks that
tore me to shreds
Before which even the
bronze snake itself would
retreat
Who knew that on my way
down I'd meet
A landing many do not
return from
In a garden fruitless and full
of thorns

So I ask you what have you
to say
In making me this way
What is my heart now if it is
this forgetful
In even after seeing me,
It no longer cares to know
me
The body that had held it
throughout
Is now unclean and
unfamiliar ground
I see only projections of
ones who nurtured me with

unripe words
I hear the hypnotic howls
that lost me from my
shepherd
So even if I could ask how
How am I to search for you
now?
Even if I wanted to allow
I don't think my head has
any dignity left worthy to
bow

To your feet
Or to their light that sits
above and underneath
But, also answer a question
that taunts when it knows
its limit is to tease
Why didn't you catch me?
I wonder this since I have
nothing left to want or need
I flip it over like an old coin
and think again
Was it fun to have watched
me slip then?
Maybe you enjoyed it
I imagine your untouchable
elation
As I burned in the red oil of
humiliation

As my parasites swallowed
me into retribution
Why didn't you put me back
under your wings of
protection?

Then you spoke
Oh my ruby and my pearl
You said to me
My silver and my gold
We have been melted
together
Since before you knew that
we could ever
Before I pulled light from
darkness
Don't be fooled by this
state's harshness
You can leave this rootless
tuft
Don't you think you have
weeded enough?

The words came like a wave
Smooth and sudden
As if it was easy
As if they were never hidden
Wrong
It's never that simple to find
The Truth that left you
behind
I guess that's when it
stopped, time

My dearest child
Don't you feel me here?
I didn't catch you?
I already fell before you
So you might not be alone
I already bled for you
So that agony you would
never need to know
I already broke for you

So that I could ensure that
you would grow
Everything you endured I
have felt seven thousand
times over
Just so I might know where
you are
What made you believe I
would ever go far?

Far from mockery
I cried when I heard your
tears fall
Oh my all
You are not a city to be
walled
You are guarded by a Way
stronger than every pillar of
salt
Don't you think I go
searching for your returning
call?
And all your injuries
From every time you've
entered this pit
Fill my own nail driven
palms, that's where we fit

Not in the way you
understand
But I do hear your desires
And I do hear your demands
I will always be here
Maybe not as you planned
But whenever you are ready
to leave this land
I will carry you out my love
I will carry you if you let me
So we left

And then it rained
And rained
And rained