

PART II: UNPUBLISHED POEMS

the psychopath

(for all psychopaths)

Omar Mohd. Noor

To the Psychopaths feeling butterflies in their stomachs
Uncertain of the end of this confined and dreary life, a necessity
A form of protection society takes against a minor society
Putting the sickly minds with normal physique behind
Special institutions and sanatoriums, partly barred, partly unbarred.

Psychopaths of various types, old and young, doing unknowing acts
Of guilt, yet their guilt cannot earn a sure punishment
For their stains of innocence, they surely deserve corrective treatment
Leading to eventual rehabilitation in a world they have
Grown up, after being exported to a smaller world, a rare microcosm
Coming out to live in a corrected world, to live a
Pattern of life broken by patches of time a place.

Fears of different nature, fear of strangling a foster-mother
Fear of beating children and domesticated animals
Fear of having to kill a wife, as if under hypnotic orders
From an inexplicable god somewhere in the region of the mind.

We, who are not Psychopaths cannot sit and pass judgements
Pertaining to the types of punishment they shall be given
Because we are unlucky not to have felt these
Feeling of butterflies in their stomach when the urge to
Destroy overrules reason and feeling of humanity
Psychopaths are feeling the unfelt
A feeling that keeps psychiatrists baffled and guessing
For us to pass uninvolved judgements will be a grave moral fault.

27th march, 1964.

thoughts before suicide

Omar Mohd. Noor

Having had a deadly dialogue with her conscience
aggressive certainty professed
life with its meaning of infinite nothingness
sense of nothing lose, gain unforeseeable
taking a risk with the rewards. of dying and death
flirting with death
thoughts ogling, inviting the coming of death
to put a real end to
sufferings caused by unfulfillment
making life a big jigsaw puzzle
to be pieced together
thoughts confused by fragments of life
for her to put together
is an effort that clicks her death-wish.

Pace of life being run without
provision for those not fast enough
to follow the gruelling happy-unhappy pace
where to run at one's best speed is wrong
not to tag along at one's own speed seems wrong, too
life, she thought, ought to be run at one's own speed
inability to follow

ability to think of being left behind
leads to the race of a neared life, suicide.

weapons of killing oneself are plentiful
bottles with white contents
knives shining silvery sharp
pistols shining as black polish in the dark
ropes to choke and break the precarious neck
gas hindering breathing
torture gnawing the will to live
seconds and minutes of torments
to time the stop of life
to time the beginning of suicidal death.

an escapism
a new journey leading her to
a new mode of existence
which inhabitants have not written to tell us
imagination, eyes full of analysis
fail to imagine concretely
the thoughts before suicide.

19th april, 1964.

confusion

Omar Mohd. Noor

Advertisement of confusion

On a face reflecting

Confusions caused by advertisements.

Values, low made high

Thoughts zooming, breaking sound barrier

Soundless, values at fault

Faulty commerce, faulty customers.

Attractions gaming in the mind

Non-existing values made real

Reality crumbling, cigarettes crumbling

To ashes.

Values ought to have crashed, on the ground.

Confusion at large, mind pictures

Mirage of values, according to

Frequency of advertisements

Non-advertisements, values unknown.

Scenery that mind cannot pin down

Rushed and brushed through,

On the way to town, daylight

Scenery set rights, while bright

Coming back, darkness

Trees and darkness mixed

Landmarks recognized in daytime

Lost at night

Instinct pins them correctly.

Movements of people

Actions follows!

Behaviours'-words marriage

Meanings necessitating actions

Divorced after actions and movements.

Values constantly shifting

Doubt upon doubt

Certainty getting as precarious

Roofs with worn-out support.

Devaluation and evaluation

Taking place concurrently

Matters to be valued, vague

Methods of valuing, being

Under pressurized guidance

Values lost, certainty shaken

Values of confusion

Being valued

Problems leading to problems.

Any period of confusion is a period

Period of unsettlement

20th april, 1964.

where are we going?

(for kassim ahmad and malay intellectuals)

Omar Mohd. Noor

kassim ahmad brings us to parliament road
who will bring us to other useful roads
beyond parliament road?
no one! no one!
Allah cries looking at malays with
symposia and new debates
intending to remedy the faces and soles
of malays till the heights of gunung kinabalu,
the organisers of the symposia are not at fault
the fault is with those who do not listen
incapable of understanding letting out words
rude words pinning
dirty and subversive aims to god-clean minds
intending to clean-pure soles and feet
and faces of malays who become victims
of divisions in front the bridges of their noses
and in newspaper columns afraid
of publishing letters
written with the ink of truth and futility
we trust parliament, parliament eats voters
and the country bulges with poverty at its heart

kassim warns us of the draught in the valley
most ignore this, stupid!
only a finger-fill of people understand realistically the title
by an author who likes to
analyse anything thoroughly
the newspapers only screams about the weaknesses of malay students
in the field of science

by printing pictures of women in bikinis
and youths with pop song and pop clothes
where are the science articles screamed about?
is science in between the thighs of women?

who shall bring us
to technology road?
ghafar baba or dr ungku umar?
or kassim ahmad or syed husin ali
or ghazalie shafie with a fingerful of degrees?
it should be ten thousands
malay sons, and daughters,
not a meagre fingerful only!

no one! no one!
it should be
there is! there is!
who will lead us to syurga road
where we can bang our chests loudly and say
aku melayu!
after crushing a thousand enemies
battering others even while sitting

who? who?

bedong, 7th october 1967

a flight into poetry? listening to jazz

Omar Mohd. Noor

Printed words of poetry in an American anthology
running smooth, written freely and unacademic
the "Styx" is being played, trumpet solos and drums
coincide with "INDIGNITY", in Robin Blaser's poem
further reading meets "WINDOW" in Philip Lamantia's poem
words wooing music
mind being the honorary middleman
romance ignited, first stage of ignition
leading to marriage, a finality,
wallowing alto-sax interrupted after
interruption of reading of poem

eyes fixed on poem to poems
ears fixed by musical rods,
entrances, not exits, of jazz
anthology closed, eyes fixing
to words written, cigarettes
smokes searching areas of words

once cold and bright, hot
deep inquisitiveness becomes screw-driver
trying to unscrew meanings and associations
glued between lines, by inability.

"Charon's Ferry" playing, drum beats
in between raindrops, miniature drum-beats
tapped by nature, wind instruments become
midnight trains amidst rainfalls, the end
of the piece being the destination

Blown breath, instruments ready recipients
piano slowing the speed for correct arrival
bassist sounding imminence of stop made
by brakes of trumpets, trombones and saxophones
blown slowly before stopping.

Cover of anthology, red thick lines
black, blue and grey letters on a white
background, similar to record cover
with flags of seven artistic countries
lettering in red and black.

Jazz has controlled disturbances
poetry healing, second security measures
poetry becomes sleeping pills
jazz, water to gulp them down,
prelude to a good day, the next morning.

28th april, 1964.

an american marine talked to me in his death

Omar Mohd. Noor

I died to protect the lives of puny asians
who demonstrate against me and my country
even on my foreign and unamerican grave
resembling the swamps of tennessee

my brave death is made null and void,
i died for my country and all asians including backstabbers
although 'm imprisoning some negroes in their
guttersnipe ghettos;
asians with left-handed placards
point at me with words depicting
the politician-directed innocent soldiers
as the torturer of vietcong women
and demand my thin blood even
in my dry grave
i died but my grave is trampled on
by children-stealing commies who
stuff foods of ideology and subversionism
into the stomachs of believing parents
and innocent americans like me

i have no choice, kennedy grabbed me
and johnson tied me to war
that isn't even of civil-american wish
i die and my parents curse all those
who are responsible for my death
planes, ships, politicians, sailors,
generals embattled for stars
politicians embattled for power and politics

that send innocent americans like me
to a swampy asian grave
congress sentence me to death, the supreme court keep quiet

asians are too hopeless to run their own countries
(many wear neckties)
characterised by inadequacies and plain inefficiency
america and americans become targets
of ideological missiles and words
like 'stop bombing hanoi' when
it should actually read 'Bomb Peking'
the home of yellow bastards with slit eyes
all children of the archbastard mao tse tong
and their american-trained scientists to make
a bamboo bomb to blast Allah and the world

my wound is still deep, the poison
in the bamboo pikes pierces me
even in my death
for all these
asian socialists hiding their commie skins
call me a yankee!
had i a choice
i wouldn't be in asia
i would enjoying the great society
which is coming to my own backyard
asians' wars must be settled by asians!
asian inefficiencies cannot blame america!
if offered my hand of help
it is kicked as if it were a pig's
(animals are more grateful than this)
if asian politicians talk so much

about independence and ideologies
why must they come to america
to discuss their economics?
to discuss their constitutional problems?
they can't expect to get rich
by planting american soldiers
in their uneducated soil!

i died in biting bitterness
my services humiliated
my wishes not consulted and adhered to
by asian leftists and mad american
journalists and professors who
take demonstrations as exercises in free-love!

who weeps for me but my innocent parents!
who asks whether i've got problems
who is going to look after my one wife and one child!!!
will have to answer to God
for thinking that you are cleverer than He!!!
I hope to see all who are responsible for my death
on Judgement Day and find out the judas that assassinated kennedy
till then, to each his sins

the battle for peace is a long and lonely battle-jfk

sg patani, 7th october 1967

mending a childhood

Omar Mohd. Noor

i

my childhood needs mending;
a charcoal-like childhood
bringing one to tears
on the first day at school
of many inevitable inadequacies
learning the then three r's
now converted to three mild m's
going and returning from school
loaded with lean knowledge of
amoral advancements to come
with a life not tuned to
the needs and whispers of a world
committing suicide in worship houses
by wanting to know whether Allah
is capable of forgiving
must we deal with what is the obvious about God?

ii

early errors in arithmetic deprive me
of many academic haunts
early errors in arithmetic deprive me
of many philosophies;
i could become a mathematical poet

introducing mathematical fiction
when mathematical and arithmetical facts
clash to become poetry-in-mathematics
(my two stacks of books throw shadows looking like the face of a man)

iii

my punctured childhood needs
an immediate mending to
enable me to look at myself
in the min-or on mathematical terms
with the me made by languages;
the two languages won the race for
my loyalty right from small,
i could utter english words
before realising I was a malay,
entertaining dream-thoughts
of going to england and writing poems in english
(as i am doing now)
long before elementary education
could make a mathematician of me
arithmetic made a fool of me in primary school
mathematics and a teacher humiliated me in secondary schools
only languages and literatures stood silently-steadfast
till the very end of school
making me editor of school magazines,
english prodded me into
unknown areas of ideas and communications
and people living in word-haunted homes

bringing out their best casually,
like a cat shying at the moon,
Malay became a stranger for some time
because of its inability to attract my rude attention
focused on a second language

iv

looking back at a childhood needing mending
when one is just released out of its
sure, steady and slow curse of ignorance
later leading to adult-ideas
and dream-thoughts as far as arabia,
this wall of childhood is like a broken dam
releasing. unused water collected by
the pool of childhood
going to the river of life,
i am released by this dam of childhood
that collected me in my infancy
letting me go only after a half-war and a
half-compromise;

v

here i am today covering the twenty sixth
milestone in my mood-filled education
rousing the road of life heading for a knowledge-station
to refill my mind that is fast running short of educated ideas
leading to educated feelings

and actions and deeds
happily heralding in an ebullient era of happy-peace,
work mows me down to onion roots
a learned degree can lift me skyscraper-high
for letting me have and know that
i have always wanted to have since childhood,
knowledge and study coming along with a few degrees,
i feel naked without knowledge
and a long stay at a good academe

vi

that's why i am mending my childhood
as parents must mend parenthood...

vii

i must take to smoking life

sg patani, 14th october 1967

search for a refuge

Omar Mohd. Noor

where would we be if the present evades us perennially
the younger generations will raise their forefingers
and point strongly at us for not giving humanized directions
how can we give them humanized directions when we ourselves have none
we lack the very human connections that can make us better human beings
loneliness breeds on our frail throats waiting to choke us any moment
we are off our very casual guard

I am not philosophising, I am not a philosopher
this age has no need for philosophers
this is a mechanical age that has estranged reason and philosophers
behind computers

I am a teacher
but I don't want to be one
who feeds his pupils
as sausages are fed into a guiding machine

7th September 1969.

ostentational

Omar Mohd. Noor

the school is being officially opened today

the overtly-dressed teachers

become well-behaved

overnight

the minister of education

the chief education officer

are followed by a sheepish entourage

of headmasters and servants

the parents are here too

but this time not to be politically impoverished

the slaughter the last time pained them

past experiences have toughened them

they are no longer obtuse

those who ever work seriously

suddenly become industrious

and they are people to see their industry

flag-waving children are left

neglected into oblivion

they also protest those

who stand and observe

a town is not a home

Omar Mohd. Noor

there is no mental comfort in a town
where life is an immensely raucous talker
and communicating is not a sharpshooter,
living becomes an immense confusion
nearly making me mad with rage
because no pabulum is available,
if you seek mental quiet and comfort
start looking at the tigers in the clouds
where there is immense simplicity

there is no home in a town
enslaving some men and some women
minting them, making them coins and bills
instead of being thankful to God
for giving innumerable godly endowments
forgetting that they and their children
the priceless beads designed by God,
a town is an immensely confusing din
a town is an immense slave camp
ill guarded by elected guardians
wasting their time and our money
by courting idleness and scrutinising golfholes
in which immense pleasures are hidden
together with neglected duties promised in election campaigns
nearly turning this town into
hostile political camps characterised by
artificial differences
hammered by warring political taskmasters
wanting to enslave us
according to their misplanned manifestoes

a town is a ghetto
where politicians make their quick dollar,
where politicians make their solidly-built homes
a town is a political cake
to be cut to satiate their political appetites

let them have this town
there is no home in it,
let them have this town
there is no law in it,
let them cut this political cake
there is no icing on it,
responsibility is made to hide in golfholes
respectability evaporates and disappears
idleness and complacency are bred
making this town the idle complacency it is
and confusion becomes an immensely thick fog,
let them make this town political
politically drunk

i'll make a home, but not in a foggy town
quiet is my home
uninhabited by complacency, confusion, rush,
irresponsibility, arrogance and irreligiosity
quiet makes people masters
and nobody's slave
love glides about the air
unable to land because of the immense fog

since a town is no noisy dungeon
quiet cannot become a home in it,
i'll build my home somewhere else



Omar Mohd. Noor and his sons, courtesy of Annuar bin Omar