

Leftovers of a Tsunami

Sanket Mhatre

A cold hand hails a cab
The taxi driver recognizes these homeless eyes
He stops (more out of melancholy than trepidation)
Takes the silent passenger in.
The driver and the driven
Both gauge –
Who will disappear into the mist, first?

The wave was as soft as a knife through butter
A seismic breath that lasted too long
Putting half a generation to sleep
leaving the other half to look for lost addresses
trapping souls between death and depth
Replacing blood with water
Faces dissolving into more faces
Ghosts couldn't tell the difference between life and after-life
Because it was grey in both the worlds

Limbless homes, torsos perched on top of each other
A ship over a rundown hotel
Dilapidated classrooms with textbooks still open
The half-wiped face of a town
An endless abstraction fusing into the void
A masterpiece painted by Tsunami
Solo art fenced with dead bodies

The shockwave through the skin of the sea
wasn't just a game between land and water
But earth, simply cleaning the bile from its throat
Leaving a bitter after taste of forest fires and radiation.

Until All the Lights Go Out

Sanket Mhatre

The last patch of sky in Andheri East
is a melting stream of plastic
Crimson blood flowing
through patches of dusted leaves

The streets are hand crafted with a montage of stubborn cultures
Where there was once an earth
are now sutured roads sewn into the back of their skin –
running into starving JCBs
Devouring the last known sediments from bruised intestines

Diversions everywhere
Trapping taxis in a fishing net
Endless brick game of docking – undocking
Played by those who have quit to reach home early

Numbers are new words
Statistics is pure literature
Data embedded into our blood stream
while we un-think, podcast our mind

when everything blends into everything
there's only darkness left

Andheri East doesn't realize
that its sleeping in a belly of void
It's only a matter of time
until all the lights go out

Code

Sanket Mhatre

Words trickle on screen
The scent of your skin in every alphabet
I took home last evening
While moving through your rhythmic valleys
Invading countries on your sea-washed lips
I rang the church bell in your navel with my tongue
Found a lake between two mountains and a chin
Will binaries ever understand
Why letters are so reckless and impatient,
to reach your inbox so quick
as if they were rockets launched to discover you
untimed, yet precise.
Between you and me
lies this programmed distance
And words are spaceships trying
to diminish the space within
I question algorithms when they cannot hear your breath
and relay it back to me
Empty text bars without your words
are like vortices without gods
I question interwebs and text commands when silence reigns
on our keypads
and unfinished words, like unmade love
takes the place of poetry;
I'm attached to wires that gag my face
And yet I smile when I watch a punctuation drop from the tree
you planted on my chest
Could this dot.net ever take the heart beat and place it on your screen
Could cursors protest and yank you straight on my desktop?
Could these bits pile up, make a pedestal for you?
This language has to take us to the edge of beyond.
So you might traverse on these pure whites while I write you
In an eternal sentence
no code can ever defy.