

Kaushik Baiswas's Poems

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The Leaves are Mine Until They Fall

The leaves are mine until they fall
The stars mine until they shine
The grass is mine, too
Until it's enveloped in dew

And this poem was mine
Until I handed it over
To you

Familiar poems

(1)

From the clothesline stretched at the backyard
Flutters a cat
In the wind

A carcass

I watched it for a moment
And looked away

Between us
The rain passed

(2)

I am alone at home
Maa has left for the Women's Day celebrations

The maid mops the floor
From one end to the other

In between, I inquire what happened
To the one who parted with
Her toddler at home
And left
After floggings from
The husband

"She's been brought back."

The maid called out after a while
Baba, I have finished the day's work
Please close the door behind me

Now, I am alone at home
Standing sentry
Maa is off to celebrate
The Women's Day

(3)

Music from the neighbour's Holi party
Reverberates around the soul

Of my house

His Excellency has announced
That he won't play Holi this year

I overheard some people say
That He has already played it
With blood

I do not seem to recall
When I played Holi for the last time

Like the awkwardness at meeting
An old friend who spreads stories about you
The itching on my body
Owes more to the smirks
Than to the coloured powders

(4)

He came to my house
Riding on my back

Now the time is up
And he prepares to leave after
A weeklong stay

I just saw
The lifeless spider
At the tip of Maa's broom

And I felt I saw Shaheen Bagh
In front of my eyes

(5)

A man sips tea
A man talks
A man chuckles
A man sits in solitude

The evening is turned evocative
By a busy man

(6)

Kamal-da was saying the other day
How
Eventhough the earth looks so pretty
And everything happens rhythmically

The back-story of its origins is not as smooth
It is instead quite violent

Today
As I sat down to appreciate the rhythm
In the marble cutter machine
And in the sound emitting from
The filter of the aquarium

The silent sound of the falling leaf
And the sound of the scooter passing by

I felt I was saying a hi
To the beast inside

Translated by Jyotirmoy Talukdar

Kaushik Baiswas is a young Assamese poet who is presently working as a senior resident in Department of Radiation Oncology, AMCH. He has published two collections of poems *Babari Bilas* and *Ei Batakhinikei Dilo*.

Jyotirmoy Talukdar works as a senior writing fellow in Asoka University, New Delhi.