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A Red Foetus

Kabir Deb

I always stand like an old temple
-- broken on the edge, trying
to sustain everyone's
life in me - from someone's sigh
to a gentleman's illicit affair,
-- I can't take a million
bullets like everyone else -- plied
on my body are names and
years, to remind myself
the cry of a worried corpse,
and the silence of a breathing
body -- I've in me the pretentious
stories of a restroom - unholy
paintings of a dead painter,
they spill their secrets,
clot and rainbows to keep me
alive - I guess, I listen like a baby
to be sure of "my immortality",
-- I may speak in gibberish
during your most important time
and I still try to wear nothing
when I'm empty of love,
I listen to everything but prayers,
and I speak like a sloth,
- I fall in love when I'm alone,
I spread hatred when I am lonely,
-- I seek for peace when I am

in peace, and I fight the
war when I've a war growing
in me; I do everything humans do
to be a little less human, the
spring looks empty when
the air doesn't smell of winter,
words can't be written over words!

I've the wisdom of a foetus; to not
live the life of some mammoth,
to not swallow everything
like a hurricane - a window knows
when to open behind the door,
and the roof shows them the time
to stay shut -- a foetus grows
like a product, it is fed like
every other form of life which
must feed us -- my wisdom lies in
knowing the truth before a lie,
the state of a mother when
she's cursing her husband for
the baby - pain gives an uneasy
stare - the stare that's not volatile;
I look around myself everyday
to see no one remembering
the foetus they once used to be,
although we know where a queen
hid all her secret affairs;
the fight of kings for nothing

but a piece of land -
the foetus grows in love,
the mother learns how to love,
-- we aren't taught of the learning
between a woman and a story
that has no title' -- I tremble
when I touch myself, the time
of a mother grows on me like any
climber - I was told to forget
how my fingers came out
after a separation - I am told
of nights like it is something new,
I remember everything, I act
like a baby without a mother,
- I know how I was born to not die
without sharing the wisdom
I am not being taught,
the wisdom that's only mine;
I can't graze on someone else's
thought; the sky gives us a choice,
not a billion times, but once,
just once - it's a true wicked game.

Bio:

Kabir Deb is an author/ poet based in Karimganj, Assam. He works for the Punjab National Bank and has completed his Masters in Life Sciences from Assam University and is presently pursuing his MCW from Oxford University, London. He is the recipient of Social Journalism Award, 2017; Reuel International Award for Best Upcoming poet, 2019; and Nissim International Award, 2021 for Excellence in Literature for his book 'Irrfan: His Life, Philosophy And Shades'. He runs a mental

health library named ‘The Pandora’s box to a Society called Happiness’ in Barak Valley. He reviews books, many of which have been published in magazines like Outlook, Usawa Literary Review, The Financial Express, Cafe Dissensus, Sahitya Akademi etc. He currently also works as the Interview Editor of the Usawa Literary Review.