

Sean Burn

'az the bridge falls in' (for sarah ahmad)

my name is sarah ahmad and i was born in india & live in pakistan. i see myself as a struggling poet and artist as in my world where life is so fragile, not knowing if you will return alive every time you step out of the house, getting someone to acknowledge your art is a real struggle. introduction to this is visual poetry by sarah ahmad (now out ov print)

this pakistani nursing assistant sat w/ me thru sleepless nights ov three tortuous weeks on the warneford / no-one else wanting to sit with me as i wz considered too *other* too violent (to myself) too *beyond* / yet some nurse had to draw the short straw as i wz on level two obs - permanent surveillance - though further than arms-length / thru nights in that psych-bin we discussed voice & writing / i encouraged her to stick at it / she wished me a clean page / somehow reminded ov this as i write *az the bridge falls in* for sarah ahmad / a writer who truly knows *the struggle*

aimed & almed / armed & dirty / wings dancing decay / slender rims that sing rust / a scuffed stone refuting dust / pain brushes scissors axe / fall scatters pools ov atomiser eyes / a rigged bangle hawks / yrs is fight not flight / blowing thorns ov barbed wire / blowing thorns off barbwire / black islands in the stream / no collapsing bridge / but a cowed dream / redeem these dark days all between / crossing borders friendly & un- / their always & exact length a breath / a wee blue pencil split down centre / remember how a sawn-off tree bears no fruit now

questioner ov first-clash / ov beds & under / & sunder serenades / dark dares deems defends / steel steeled steely / its a steal that lung-fuel that long-fall / nightfall lifeblood this longest nest / internal or international off-pillars / yu virusing the code / state unsate / serial concerts rioting worlds centres / the trading & the trade-offs / recurring patterns migrate these net-hair slips / like cd skipping a beat / the lopsided silvering / & what turns hair white? / grids evacuate corded tractable energy / dancer ov light trancer ov light / keep up & to the good / eyes draw walls walls draw eyes

tango-lily-wolf-swan-black-ice / floored-red door-red further misfit a flaw / clown ov pixel ov pigment ov
craquelure / treading honeyed water / & corridors arc w/ yr (burnt) stars / yr starfield eyes most golden-moist
/ mountains raging obsolete the tomorrow / look-glass swallows crazy knot / angel ov anarchy ragging up air
/ dragging half estates there not there / hole this furrowed 'are yu?' / dont let them plough thumbs into eyes /
their stonewall heart no face / handheld hand-hol(e)d blockages & the weather uncertain / pocked fingers all
the way / torture-involuntary-wounds-lie

over the silk-edge yu cannot / cannot reduce to in-breathe-out / do not step? step & on / crayon yr scarlet
nets / whole countries parachuting / out-scratch & a (w)hole out-bombed /
off-mapping / out-tonguing / am we several / whorled pools tempting uz lack / vow avow a vow / yr
chronos-sphere promising trouble - their masque / not slipping but lipping / scrutineer labour no upfront
dealer / no rest days no veneer but seen & seer / what lies outside the glass / dissect the caught / disc the
fraught / narrate the un- / bullet-wanderer what lies inside?

tonguing concrete reve(a)ls throats eyes lid / bait / abate / look or don't / drifting-rude drifting wd / riffing yr
arabesques & glimpse-sing lights / only there is little relief / & then there is none / thickets wolfing / red-
night bridging blue day / leaf eyes dream-tower & a branch ov beaks / one lass one sky one satellite / netting
clocks shoal / in odd & even numbers fly / ever & ever the sun yr heart / eggs in night their talons pulling /
an eye stitched w/in / tunnel the circumscribed / shout whole starfields awake / & drums are breaking out /
the beat? all mouth & drouth

everything against the grain / the blade / the blades / fine az threads / az fine az thread / weave the paper yu
writhe upon / potlatch & those ov uz (l)earning to love our madnesses / love our madnesses learnt to / learnt
to love / our madnesses learnt / what cannot be hoped / fissure-roped / cradled candled handled / at
boundaries and at *beyond* / inner-bird threaded-mouth / one day can be an extra camera in the house / the
face ov mothers : its in their eyes / yr eyes now / look careful be rare & full / yr aria liquescent / we are made
ov stars / mad ov stars - we are

riot the front page / the first age / dont stick to black nor white / yr colour goes deeper / & that last page / that
last age ov all / dialogue out-trapezing new drafts / drafting is to a writer as it is to an army / wont stone new
provocations ov the headscarf frontier / the promise & the compromise / whose flag? / banquets & businesses
& usual / yu prepared the slick cobbles face down? / & the most serious dial rumours / dial pole position /
dives stand-by / hostages replace feet / contaminations preparations discontinuations / ov respect outings
ov / drink a toast to dust

to yell blue steel / reveal bottled light / dream like pencils only fatter / yr fuzzed electric stamped w/ air / suturing all lands / roll on hands climaxing against walls / there is no unlived & / hopped in alarm lipped in rain / yu are legible in beats / sparking in gold dance gold-dancing / chancing the fact we all must sweat in the street / farground rides & over tender rips / dry pressings keep uz wider / give uz more shake / riding the all-rove winning ground / calling planets / tell the riven earth the facts / & ask often the fierce & long / pierced satin youth ov yr unwritten left

shine often & ever charge / buds may wander late beside the coppiced / the sweet-song underfoot / another prodigal loving holler / wz is & always shall be a bone too many / what price now? / unimaginable lands / the what-ails-house / much truth in nursery rhymings / & the great scar-face block issuing / right-angles plump this great heart / drip-rip saline intensive in care / release artful attack / there to hurt others never did / subtle shocks unpick the locks / where no door stood before / asset-(t)ripped ov all that / now aint time for rubbing in / salts ov anger / salts ov hunger

feather yr nest in impossible bonds / tongue-detonate molotovs ov song / tear lyrics from air / tears from the quietened years ahead / skin songs skim songs never to be swansongs / songs ov bond & band / ov lost & sound / amid the dunes leaping sanded bounds / fond songs & found songs / tongue air-to-ground songs / grind yr hips into night songs / long sweet low (chariots) & happy accidents ov / hiding in language / the song-room now / now dream w/out wings / utopia is beyond the border / is anywhere but / is beyond heavy air queueing to get in

the young dream mouldings / smouldering escapes / the dream growing wings / & the language-confetti / this staccato world / such sweet liberation / open uncage unlock / dont demand one pudding / demand the whole bloody bakery / repose in the fury ov laughter / spin the globe / spin spine spun / none is the number where all is planned / the whispers are steel / armaments reveal / ov exits & apocalypse / ov fishes & streams / why whisper? / night-writer - yu are leaving the comfort zone / spin the globe / spin spine spun / yr time is now / uncage unlock

questions continue to take on electric / ache to refrigerate the self / throat redder than octane / navigate a hostile host – surface to stare / walk the wing walk the wings / skim & shimmy among fuel / turns & turn-offs penetrate security / barriers no-go's do not / winging because yu do not / recognise the order / the systems / swear in the pecking order / swear on the line / beyond the line / under the radar / offer absurdity tools / desire the origins ov sung laughter / dissociate disassemble de/struct / departures more important than arriving / how to switch off the pen writing this?