

The Highway

*Sanjhee Gianchandani**

To bridge the gap between you and me
I built a highway across the city
Phone calls will no longer be needed
Road trips shall bridge the distance
From seven hours to one and I shall be there
to wipe your tears, but those of mother Earth?

I did not see alas
Thousands eroded from their homes
to build mine and thine
Homeless beggars turned vagabonds
But did I not feed a thousand construction workers?

Does that not absolve me of my guilt?
We dug and dug the ground; mutilated by our axes
Damaged the natural reservoir
that was respite for thousands
Everything is fair in love they say?
For these shall be martyrs in our saga

The land shook with vibrations and animals
hid inside their shelters

Could this lead to an earthquake?
Laughing the chubby head engineer said,
'No, such things happen often here!'
For he too needed to repay the loyalty
Let us not even account for the noise
For that is temporary disturbance
Once the highway is constructed

will it not be a blessing for thousands?
Then everyone shall meet their beloved freely and easily
Is this not social service enough?
For if I have hired underage labour;
it is only to hasten the construction
Activists urge on its impediment to animal movement.
But their ruthless hearts do not pine;
for they have not burnt in the cinders of love
So, what if habitats are lost or fragmented
Can they not be recreated by man?
We are the destructors and the creators
We will bring the necessary change
in the past, present, and future
but will have to pay for what we have deranged

Waves of Change

An entire year has just whooshed by
dates have changed and so have I
gaining experience each day, each instance
without the stress of what would be perchance?
Ups and downs, highs and lows
the undulations of inconstancy;
the fears that I have clung on to, my anxieties
still twirl on my mind
My dreams now seem less distant
even as aspirations tread on thin ice
The past year buries some hidden truths,
false truths, untruths, and secrets in its tomb

and the year to come vests a tiny
spark of hope in its womb
A hope of change for a better tomorrow
of greater happiness and lesser sorrows
of a guiding light through all my battles
and of smiles, laughter, and chuckles
akin to delighted utensils that rattle!

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