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Noumenon

The clouds shook
his head. It rained
over the razed stubs
in a dream. His ribs
aching to pierce out
from needy flesh brushed
the first harvest.

This is where the country could be.

A smile of the bride opening inside a prickly
thatch is a place the moon visits,
like we do the moon.
Something stirs and light dismantles
us, we are this and our origins become unspeakable.

What the voice says is:

I am hunting for the voice.

The arm of regret is how far the bird
is now, where it will migrate.
The way, the way is happening,
history travels and finds us
thinking through its dark hair, finds
the poor throb in our beds, and how we,
despite pledging a tired stillness, without moving
to know anymore, keep being scattered,
keep happening within.
Homecomings

Charm of observation doesn't stir
much. Sometimes
fog is just fog it only
passes and how
it descends over the dark, its wetness, kinship with our skin;
is not asked.

It could be that what remains of memory is what it is going to be,
not what was.
The return to our own happenings
is exiled.

After twelve years you walk into your favorite park.
The old woman who once chased you isn't there.

You're not sure if you'll run if she came now.

There is no strength to be
amazed even when
your head becomes,
bends grass,
rubs green into green into greener
shocks.

The beetle still scuttles
root to root
with a clarity that could save the universe.

You never touch the undergrowth
without remembering a hairy sickness
in the bedroom probably

eating an ice-cream
naked

waiting
Word

*after Franz Wright*

Shut eyelids of the house.
Water trickling over them. Follow
the sound into a dark harvest
rearing invisibly night after night.
All my blind fingers
gather at the tap's mouth
reach out
return
to its old house of touch.

Hairy absence
   i bend
as gesture, as prayer
for ones
who burned to weave
an embrace to fit you.

each twitch gushing toward
   night's deep feet
every body wholly
   without
in weeping dark—

we believed we were consolable
when we heard the speechless air whirring
behind the word.

We keep hearing it and
it kills.

Among the dialect of leaves:
note of *almost*,
a drizzle of keys.

*In the beginning was the word.*
Hold

if i could hold
uttering the word *night*

it might be understood
**Author Notes**

A. B. Datta lives in Bombay, India, and is currently a student of literature in the University of Mumbai. He also edits Nether, a new independent Indian journal for writing and the arts.