

## Poems by Asha Viswas

### *A Longing, Sharp As Knife*

I walk through the rooms  
Nothing is lost, not even the sounds.  
I rummage through the many cupboards  
Where dream and memory live together.

As I open the door, another dream sprouts  
An old, gentle but sad face  
That still waits for a fistful of light  
Through the darkened road .

The dream stops at the edge of a thought-  
A paradigm for a few question marks.  
Realizing that I am encroaching  
On somebody else's dream, I shut the door.

Slowly the house turns into an allegory of words  
Without a future, without a past  
Mere syllables, and not a trace of you.  
I wish the ghosts could sleep forever in peace.

### *The Two Hemispheres*

We are the two hemispheres  
So opposed to each other-  
My days are your nights  
And my winters your summers .

My brown skin so discernibly  
different from your white, with  
a sprinkling of reluctant brown hair,  
Our differences need no witnesses.

The roads between us are many  
But steep and narrow, and even  
If we climb those brown and blue mounts  
through horizontal rain, often coming  
as hail and snow, both of us know  
We will not meet again.

### **Traces**

Memory tries to trace  
the long lost ancestral house ,  
Winds have not yet swept  
faces hidden in the mist of time .

I wonder if you remember  
that mango tree where we sat ,  
played with afternoon shadows ,  
and wove the myriad yarns .

Surely you cannot forget the morning  
when grand-mother died  
and there were no tears in my eyes

you squeezed me to make me cry .

and that chamber of grand-father  
crowded with lots of sunshine ,  
there in the secrecy of the night  
you wrote an au revoir on my eyes .