

SUDDEN MEETING

(A TRANSLATION OF

RABINDRANATH TAGORE'S BENGALI POEM "HATHAT DEKHA")

(THIS ROMANTIC POEM IS FROM RABINDRANATH TAGORE'S "SHYAMALI".)

By Supriya Mandal

Suddenly we met in the train compartment,
I never thought that it would be possible some day..

I saw her again and again in the past
In red sari-
Red like the flower of pomegranate;
Today she wore a black silk,
On her head she had taken the end of her sari
Surrounding the dolon-chanpa-like lustrous-fair face.
Meseemed, in black colour a deep distance
She had thickened around herself,
That distance which was in the last boundary of mustard-field
In the blue collyrium of sal woods.
My entire mind was stopped;
I saw the known person in unknown gravity..

Suddenly leaving the newspaper
She greeted me namaskar.
The way to social law became open;
I started to talk-
'How are you', 'how is the family going on'Etc.
She remained facing towards outside the window
As if in a glance of passing the touch of near days.
She gave only a few very short replies,
Even did not give some.
She made understand through the restlessness of her hands-

Why such talk,
It was far better to be silent..

I was on another seat with her friends.
In the meantime waving her fingers she told me to come close.
Meseemed no little boldness she had-
I sat with her on the same seat.
Under the noise of train
She spoke in a low voice,
'Do not mind,
Where is time to waste time!
I shall have to get down at the very next station;
You will go far,
We will never meet.
So, the answer of which question is stopped for so long time,
Shall hear from your mouth.
Will you speak the truth?'
I said, 'I will.'
Looking at the sky outside she asked,
'Have gone those days of us
Have gone for ever-
Is nothing left?'

I stayed silent a little;
Then I said,
'All the stars of night
Are in the depth of day-light.'

I doubted whether I had lied.
She said, 'well, now go there.'
All went down at the next station.
I went alone..

Bio:

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