

## Broken Plates

(from A. Samad Said's "Pinggan Retak")

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Her love changed between the rows  
of rubber trees, along the fringes  
of mushroom caps,  
only to be revived by the thorns  
of the touch-me-not  
and evening rain.

Happily she ran with the geese,  
catching the blue-crowned parrot  
unaware at the edge of the anthill—  
then uplifted, with the scattering of wings,  
she gazes at the beauty  
of the horizon at dawn.

*Bunga telur* and anklets  
remain below the mosquito-net  
which seems to move and even blink:  
between two small islands  
his boat overturned  
in the swell of the scaly, green sea.

After love's failure, she asks:  
wave-scented coves,  
lace-bordered cushions,  
where have my hair-pins gone?  
Surely many things remain unknowable  
to the oblivious heart,

but to not understand oneself  
results in this (a forlorn silence

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strangles oneself). Chastise yourself  
and then only hope:  
broken plates still remain,  
now serve your memories on them.

## **AK Ramanujan**

His words walk tightrope  
above a lake, transparent to its depths,

and with just a glint of sunlight  
shadows fall on frosted glass.