

Monsoon Sonnets

What's Not in a Name?

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I don't have a name, properly speaking;
you can call me by any name you want.
No, no, there's no reason to hesitate:
Andrew, Ram, Salman, Sam – any of these
brilliant names would do for me. Believe me
I'm not the least fussy about what people
call me by. I even don't bother
if you call me by a so-called feminine
name such as Behula, Juliet, Lailee
or Radhika. It's all the same by
whatever name you call me. Just make sure –
and I'd much appreciate if you do so –
you don't deface it by mispronunciation:
a name is a whole human person.

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When I'm Gone

On some rainy day when I'm gone I try
to imagine what you'd be doing –
would you imagine you're seeing me
in a human-shaped cloud that drifts lazily
across the sky and then dissolves into
heart, head, hands, and other bits and pieces?

Would you think I've come back to surprise you
on a moonlight-washed night when the front door
swings open by the sudden press of the wind?
Would a stray tune from Kishore take you back
to those days when we strolled from bookshops to
bookshops, not to buy books, but just to be
together?

Or would you be sad to know
in that throaty voice that tune would never glow?

The Day It Rains All Day

I leave my door ajar the day it rains
all day; the hours drag on; nothing happens;
there's nothing to do; I don't even feel
like going out to check the post; sometimes
with a hot mug of tea or coffee, I
sit by the window and watch the slow
traffic on the wet road glistening at dusk,
lost in reverie;

 a rubbery screech

or a sharp horn clips my wings and I fall
back into coffee, evening, rain, window.
The day it rains the whole day my door creaks
on its rusty hinges, rocked by the wind.
Nothing happens the day it rains all day:
it's just your memory won't go away.