
FADING PICTURES “(A short story) written in Urdu by Nasim Ashk & translated in English by Raushan Zamir

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There was a crowd of people all around. There was confusion. I also came out of the room and walked among the people. Some of them began to look at my form. Since I was new to the city, I did not find it strange to see them. I enquired about the matter from an old man. The old man said smiling.

Babu! all this happens every day. Today is his, tomorrow is ours. I don't understand it! .I tried to find out the details. He guessed very well that this is a stranger who is not aware of the rules and laws of this city. He said.

Babu! the days of sheep and goats are numbered. We are all sheep and goats– Today one goat is less. A person died of tiredness from constant starvation and poverty.

He begins to laugh. There were millions of sorrows in his laughter. His laughter was asking me hundreds of questions.

When this universe belongs to the creator, it should be ruled by him. He said to me.

Babu ! You look new in this city. Where do you live?

I said that I was writing a story. In this case, I had to come to this city because my story ends in this city.

He began to look at me in surprise and said wow ! You also write stories like these big Sahib. Wow Sahib ! look at how many stories are born here every day. They see an old man spitting blood, a worker working on a four storied building, a group of hungry naked people, cursing mothers their wombs, that graveyard -traveller in search of home.

Seeing my lack of interest, he changed the scenario.

Babu Sahib ! come here. Look at these blooming flowers, look at this mountain, look at the tall buildings.

I said stopping him. I' m running late. I have to go.

And I walked towards the house with fast steps. He stopped me and said.

Babu Sahib ! those big Sahib also come here. They represent our life. They are great artists whenever they come here, they surely keep a cloth over their mouth and a mineral water in their

hand. People say that there is great pain in their hearts for the poor. Are you a big artist too?" No! I am not a great artist."

The old man says with smile. I know you are not a great artist otherwise how can you stand here without a cloth on your face and you don't even have mineral water in your hand.

I started from there without saying anything. I was starting to feel nervous. That old man's talk was disturbing me.

I closed the door of the room and left one side of the windows open so that the outside talk can come in. Human nature works every where. The room was completely dark. There was load-shedding. I lighted the candle and wanted to take the story forward by opening the diary. Then suddenly, the story teller in me appeared. He was constantly laughing at me.

You create standard literature. How long has this addiction been on you.?Have you ever looked into their lives?whose pictures you make with words on pages. If not, why do you make such people your role? Whether the flowers bloom in Spring or not,It is more important that no one sleeps hungry. Those whose skin burns in the heat of the sun, they know the intensity of the sun.Without feeling, You cannot express in words .Where is the true picture of life found in palaces? She sleeps on the side walk. What do you know about the poverty involved in the luxury of your life?

I got lost in the words of this storyteller. I was shocked by his words. In the city of dreams, the night was dark. I don't know when I got lost.

I had found the end of the story. (Unpublished)

Mobile No. 9163711047 (W. B.) India.