

ANJUM HASAN  
**JUST RAIN**

It's another rain-grey day here and I think,  
the rain's no metaphor for sodden sadness, packed clouds  
no parallel to being shut in, anxious, but too easy to say the rain's  
to blame, yet careful on algae-painted pavements the rain made,  
recalling that old rain-people fetish about never building houses  
on hilltops—the gods of rain, wind, and lightning could get you—  
and hearing under rain-blanching sky your beloved poet: *We stood by a pond  
that winter day, And the sun was white, as though chidden of God*, rainless  
but as unblessed, yes it's raining dreams of you, *His face menacing in a cloud  
over the waters of childhood*, but yours showing through moderate rain,  
and you are smilier there than rainy here where Little Father Time ends  
so badly, where crest-high concrete coffins caving in from rain and dark  
huddle of barflies on mouldy bench, keeping out of rain, *the apparition  
of these faces in the crowd: Petals on a wet black bough*, rain's done  
the cemetery in, and the papers say there will be more rain, and the new  
Red Cross shelter built in the rain is taking in the damp souls, to be  
gone for rainy eternity is to be always putting on that record  
*the wind came blowing through the town, whooo*, joy unqualified as rain,  
slicker than pain, you'd quote *zameen badla falak badla*, and I'd say rain,  
to this incontrovertible charge of change and change and change, just rain.