

DEAL

Two old trees stood on either side walls
Of the three storeyed abode made of concrete and Sal
And as a kid I would often think,
What if the trees grew taller than our roof?
And hid us completely?
Or if, they just curve round the corners to meet each other,
Form an arched company?
Well, I would then swing my way to either sides,
The trees seemed more like a family.
It took me long to know that they grow just straight and tall
Staying just where they are, on either side of the wall.

Yet,
They were trimmed thrice a year,
Long outgrown branches, untamed twigs, dead leaves hanging,
Were broken, burnt and disappeared.
Often I wondered if the trees could grow any taller more,
I would reach the moon and glide above the rainbow.

It was one summer that one of them shed too many leaves,
And no amount of water or love would suffice,
For I would cry hours long near it and yet,
Within weeks, the tree turned black and withered away!

So they burned it down, it no more was auspicious.
I cried.
My father got two strong ropes with a log of wood from this tree
And hung that.
Onto the other one which stood there now, calmly.
He made me a swing. He said I could touch skies with it.
I tried. I would plan my dream sequence too.
But to no avail.

One night I sneaked out of my room,
Carefully closing the door of the three storeyed home.
Taking the swing down with all my might,
I took that log out
From the binds of the rope that caught hold of it.

With the ashes of the burnt tree still smeared around the place,
I kept the log there.
The next morning when my father saw that, he smiled.
He taught me how we would plant a tree. With love and care.
Patience was always the key.
That afternoon, the other tree shed all its leaves, though it wasn't
autumn.
And my father said, it too, was starting over, again.

Over years, I saw them grow again. Together.
And they still stand there, after all this time,
Even with both the walls broken down.

“So it wasn't only me who felt they were one, no?”
I once asked my father and he laughed a hearty one.

“Do this when you know not what to do. Deal?” he enquired.
“Deal”, I replied.

So when you asked me how I started over,
With the same soul who left,
It was just this deal, and the promise I made, I kept.