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Malhaar

A Requiem for Water

I. Holy Water

Sakal jal hai pavan
is amrut ko naman.
(*All water is holy water.*
Bow in reverence to this divine elixir)

The cloud is free only
to go with the wind.
The rain is free
only in falling.
The water is free only
in its gathering together,
in its downward courses,
in its rising into air.

– Wendell Berry
(from “The Law That Marries All Things”)

Kyrie eleison.
(*God have mercy.*)

II. Requiem Aeternam

Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine:
et lux perpetua luceat eis.
(*Grant them eternal peace, Lord,*
and let perpetual light shine upon them.)

III. Skeptical Bell

Skeptical bell, fierce certainty of dust,
the snow-covered mountain
no longer hears its own ringing.
It knows no fear.
In its language
will does not exist.
Its rivers carry
the bast in snow
that no longer falls.

– William O’Daly
(“The Dream of Mount Liberty”)

Interlude I

Sakhi Neer bharan kaise jaao?
Sookhi Nadiya ki pyaas kaise bujhaao?
(*O Friend, how will I go to fill water?*
How will I extinguish this thirst from a dry stream?)

IV. Lacrimosa / This ever-descending water

Is this ever-descending water
human tears? Do they mean nothing?

Will the stone heads that weep
in the late afternoon fade away?

Without you, how will we weep
when we need to?

How will the earth smell
after the last drops of rain?

– William O’Daly
(“In Franconia Gorge”)

Lacrimosa dies illa,
Qua resurget ex favilla.
Iudicandus homo reus:
Huic ergo parce, Deus.
Dona eis Requiem.
(*Full of tears shall be that day*
when from the ashes shall arise
the guilt man to be judged:
Spare them by your mercy, Lord.
May they rest in peace.)

Interlude II (reprise)

Sakhi Neer bharan kaise jaao?
Sookhi Nadiya ki pyaas kaise bujhaao?
(*O Friend, how will I go to fill water?*
How will I extinguish this thirst from a dry stream?)

V. Agnus Dei / He Kartar

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi:
dona eis requiem sempiternam.
(*Lamb of god, who takes away the sins of
the world, grant them eternal peace.*)

He kartar karunaghan
Sakal bihgan kar vinash
De shanti, de prakash
(*O God, full of mercy
Please take away all our sorrow
Give us peace, give us light*)

VI. Questions for God

Have I arrived?
Why am I here?

When will I leave
for the other shore?

Who will I be there
where I once was?

And what sea is this?
is it mine, is it yours?

If it is ours,
where are we?

— William O'Daly
(“Questions for God”)

VI. The Dream of the Waterfall / In Paradisum

The old stones stream in the arteries
of the gods, and every moment the river
changes, our bodies change, love changes
everything and we will never be the same.
(O'Daly)

In paradisum deducant te Angeli
Chorus Angelorum te suscipiant, et
cum Lazaro quondam paupere
aeternam habeas requiem.
(*May the angels lead you into paradise
May the choir of angels receive you
and with Lazarus, once poor,
May you have eternal rest.*)

The river empties into the burning field,
collides in light and shadow,
where in the caves of forgotten animals
the prehistoric dream is in motion.
It flows on in darkness. It does not stop.

— William O'Daly
(“The Dream of the Waterfall”)

The water is free only
in its gathering together,
in its downward courses,
in its rising into air.

— Wendell Berry (reprise)
(from “The Law That Marries All Things”)

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