AMIR HUSSAIN

Night Poem

this is the sleeping sleepless face of the parent
this is the cry of the father
   a long letter the owl keeps in his feathers
this is the sunflower teapot, the sunflower
   fading on the black and white porcelain form
the voice you cannot listen to, you do not want to hear

this is the sleepless sleeping face of your parents
the cat biting its paw in the dark
the shade that goes up, against which rain patters
   carried by wind, flute, and drum

this is the chime in the temple that is pressed by the hands
this is the still silence of sand and wet as a flower
the home of the red desert
   where children touch the feet of their parents

if I could change one thing it would be in childhood
to have touched the feet of my parents
   white bulb onion of my mother’s feet
   brown earth soil of my father’s feet

nowadays my feet are sand and I walk toward them
toward home, toward the funeral of rain
toward the rice paddy and the clay saucer for tea
the tea leaf in the soil growing tall as I walk