

**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